

**Mid Term Review of
Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation
July-September 2017**

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1 Acronyms

AEPC	Alternative Energy Promotion Corporation
ARC	American Red Cross
BRC	British Red Cross
CDO	Community Development Office
CDMC	Community Disaster Management Committee
CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
CfW	Cash for Work
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CMM	Cooperation Management Meeting (NRCS, IFRC, ICRC)
DCC	District Coordination Committee (previously DDC – Development Committee)
DDRC	District Disaster Relief Committee
DLA	District Lead Agency
DLO	District Livestock Office
DPC	Damp-Proof Course
DUDBC	Department of Urban Development and Building Construction
D-WASH-CC	District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Coordination Committee
DWSS	Department of Water Supply and Sewerage
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FCHV	Female Community Health Volunteer
GoN	Government of Nepal
HH	Household
HRRP	Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform
ICB	Institutional Capacity Building
IPRA	Integrated Participatory Rural Appraisal
JRC	Japanese Red Cross
KII	Key Informant Interview
LDRMC	Local Disaster Response Management Committee
NHQ	National Headquarters of Nepal Red Cross Society
NRA	National Reconstruction Authority
NRC	Norwegian Red Cross
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
ODF	Open Defecation Free
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PASSA	Participatory Approach to Safer Shelter Awareness
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment produced by GoN
PWD	People with Disabilities
RAG	Recovery Action Groups
SC	Steering Committee
SM	Social Mobiliser
SRC	Spanish Red Cross
ToR	Terms of Reference
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
VDC	Village Development Committee
VWASHCC	Village WASH Coordination Committee
WCF	Ward Citizen Forum
WUC	Water User Committee

2 Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the morning of 25 April 2015 which was felt across 57 of Nepal's 75 districts¹ and a series of aftershocks caused further damage and loss of life. The combined impact caused the death of at least 8,856 people, injured more than 18,000 people and caused extensive destruction and damage to housing and livelihoods affecting more than 1.1 million families, with 700,000 families displaced, 600,000 houses fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged, together with schools, health facilities, bridges and roads.

Following initial emergency relief activities, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC and 10 partner National Societies in-country) is supporting recovery activities in the 14*² government identified priority districts through a Movement Recovery Plan agreed in June 2016 which built on the Recovery Framework endorsed at a partnership meeting in June 2015. This plan aimed to ensure a coherent Movement-wide approach under the leadership of NRCS. The plan promotes an integrated approach bringing together shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), livelihoods and health activities, together with NRCS institutional capacity building (the so-called "4 + 1" approach).

The roll out of the plan has been considerably delayed, due both to external factors related to the creation of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) by the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the development of policies to guide the recovery process, but also internal factors as the NRCS and RCM similarly scaled up its capacity to respond to the challenges of delivering a largescale recovery programme across many districts.

REVIEW PURPOSE, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The mid-term review (MTR) process (see Terms of Reference annex 1) is designed to help the RCM reflect upon progress to date and identify both how to build on past successes but also to recommend improvements in order to better address the recovery needs of affected communities on the ground. The objectives are: 1) to assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNS's structure, system and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively; 2) to review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms; and 3) to identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach and make recommendations as to how identified weaknesses may be addressed.

An independent evaluation team of two consultants (an international team leader and a national team member) was hired through competitive tender. Following an inception visit to Nepal in May 2017 (see inception report annex 2), the main data collection activity started at the beginning of July 2017. Methodology was tested in the first district, following which each consultant visited two districts, undertaking a series of key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). In total, 197 informants were interviewed (47 female, 150 male) and 12 focus groups were held, involving 142 people (58 female, 84 male). Meetings and interviews were held without the presence of ERO/chapter staff or NRCS volunteers, the purpose and confidentiality of the discussion was explained. Detailed interviews were then carried out in Kathmandu with informants from NRCS national headquarters (NHQ), IFRC, ICRC, PNSs and key government line agencies and a set of documents was provided by IFRC. Data collected through KIIs, FGDs and primary and secondary document review was triangulated in order for themes and issues to be identified. On 20 July, the evaluators gave a presentation of the initial findings to a Movement Coordination meeting attended by all the main RCM actors, following which the report was put together.

Limitations of the MTR included the inability to randomly sample districts due to monsoon making access to some districts and communities difficult/impossible, only visiting five of the districts where the operation is being implemented, meaning that findings may not be representative of the operation as a whole. The timing

¹ Taken from NRCS assessment report.

² RCM is working in the 14 priority A districts plus two further districts that were categorised as priority B but were where the NRCS and partners had been working prior to the earthquake. This report will therefore refer to 14* districts (with the asterisk recognising that activities are being undertaken in two further districts).

of the review coincided with much shelter-related activity, resulting in FGDs and interviews tending to concentrate on these activities.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance and Appropriateness

The One Plan is contributing to a common approach being implemented across the districts in the four sectoral areas of shelter, WASH, livelihoods and health, with NRCS policies and frameworks generally used to guide activities. The majority of line agencies and community members interviewed believe that the RCM is providing a comprehensive recovery package that is relevant and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, particularly the construction/re-construction of water systems, support for the construction of houses and toilets and livelihood activities. While the decision was taken by NRCS to be actively involved throughout the recovery phase in identified communities in all the GoN designated priority A districts³, it is unclear whether alternative approaches or the consequences of this decision were seriously explored. It is similarly unclear what approach was followed to determine how the RCM partners would support work in the different districts or to what extent decisions were made guided by beneficiary numbers/need or the availability of funds, presence of other organisations, etc. The review team believes that the RCM should have focused its integrated recovery work in less well-covered districts and perhaps considered a lighter, more targeted 'gap-filling' approach that built directly on Red Cross core competence in districts such as Ghorka and Sindhupalchok where many actors are active.

The RCM aimed to target the most vulnerable people within the communities they served, being guided by the NRA's beneficiary lists at ward level for shelter activities, together a combination of participation in the Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), convening specific community meetings and house-to-house survey samples. Kavre is the only district that decided to follow the guidance of the Recovery Framework and use Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology, with community members themselves identifying the caseload. The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised and that communities better understood these decisions.

The omission of an organisational scale-up strategy to accompany the Recovery Plan, together with the loss of detail underpinning the Recovery Framework (resulting in the omission of much of the nuance of how the Movement would work together) and the short timescale of the plan, with no time dedicated to organisational planning and preparation, meant that in the view of the reviewers, the plan was not appropriate to the circumstances.

Achievements to date

Shelter: Following substantial delays in 2016, RCM work in shelter (both software and hardware-related) is now considerably enhancing the capacity of the Government of Nepal to deliver earthquake-resistant housing to families who lost their houses, both through the direct support to the construction of 7,000 houses in seven districts, together with supporting the training of masons and provision of close technical supervision. A widespread view shared with the reviewers was that the RCM could have had greater impact if it had focused in shelter entirely on the provision of mason training, site monitoring through engineers etc, in this way bolstering the capacity of the NRA/DUDBC. FGDs and KIIs suggested that 300,000 rupees was insufficient for the construction of a new house with knock-on negative consequences. The RCM is finding soft ways to support vulnerable households to overcome this, for example by providing materials for toilet construction.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): The focus on the construction of drinking water systems within this programme is highly valued by affected communities, together with the work it is carrying out to support household toilet construction, with FGDs suggesting that this intervention will have an important impact, improving the situation pre-earthquake in many instances. Notwithstanding this, KIIs revealed a widespread view that work on water schemes should (and could) have started much earlier. There are some good

³ Together with two districts from the B priority list where NRCS and partners had been working immediately prior to the earthquake.

examples of nuanced community labour/cash for work contributions to water scheme development projects. Appropriate consideration of the sustainability of the water schemes was evidenced.

Livelihood: This component has gained momentum in yielding some initial impacts and is roundly supported by community members, although its delayed roll out in some locations undermines its impact as a recovery strategy for affected households in some instances. Some KIIs with NRCS informants were critical of the approach being advanced by the Red Cross Livelihoods Centre, suggesting that it was not adapted sufficiently to the Nepal context. The MTR noted that different amounts of conditional cash grants were provided in different districts (between 20,000 and 40,000 rupees) and was not clear how the amounts were arrived at; agreeing a shared approach across the districts would have given more coherence to the operation nationally. The focus on livestock was broadly welcomed, although there were mixed views regarding cash for work activities.

Health: The software components are generally well advanced and are reportedly well-coordinated between the ERO and the NRCS health department. Most districts visited expect to have completed the majority of these by the end of 2017. While FGDs with both volunteers and social mobilisers revealed their enthusiasm for their work, it proved difficult to gather views of community members, few of whom seemed to recall these activities unprompted, with the exception of the winterisation (*nanojhola*) programme; feedback suggested that this activity had a highly positive impact and was well-timed. The construction of health posts in a number of districts is generally delayed for a variety of reasons. Concerned line agencies and stakeholders were generally happy with the quality of the construction work when it has finally got underway, although critical of the delays and some now disagree with the decision to support the construction of pre-fabricated “temporary” structures given the amount of time it has taken to get the constructions finished.

Institutional Capacity Building (ICB): This sector focuses on capacity building at NHQ and chapter levels, together with rebuilding damaged chapter buildings and training of volunteers, with the reconstruction activities yet to have been implemented in the districts visited, although training opportunities are being provided to NRCS volunteers in a range of subject areas. Retention of capacities will be an issue, within a context where many volunteer positions are filled by people recruited from outside the NRCS and the district level ERO structures are predominantly staffed by personnel coming from outside the NRCS and outside the district, so attention will need to be paid to ensuring that skills are not lost when the operation ends. There has been insufficient investment in district chapter level administrative capacity, in particular related to financial management and the Recovery Plan has not focused sufficiently on encouraging chapters to become active participants in the implementation of the operation or in extending learning and capacity building opportunities across the wider organisation, although some limited opportunities have been provided.

To date **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)** has not been central to the plans in a number of the districts visited, which represents a lost opportunity, particularly in terms of not using VCA as the key assessment and community engagement approach, an approach that is also useful for longer term sustainability reasons. The inclusion of a **Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)** unit within the ERO has been an important support to the ERO operation and to the PMER officers placed in each of the districts. The focus on the collection of gender disaggregated data was particularly noted.

Effectiveness and Timeliness

While too early to undertake a deep analysis of the effectiveness of the operation, FGDs and KIIs with beneficiary communities confirm that the operation is now beginning to meet the priority needs of people affected by the earthquake in the VDCs where the RCM is working; the early recovery contributions of the operation, particularly the winterisation project and the unconditional cash grants were also identified as effective support strategies. However, KIIs revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction throughout all parts of the Movement (and echoed by some line agencies) that the operation took more than eighteen months to get going, due both to external delays related to government but also the slowness of the internal decision-making, which led over time to increasing strains upon the relationship between NRCS and its partners and informants continue to be concerned about extended delays in decision-making.

Sustainability and Strengthening Local Capacity

As many of the activities are still mid-implementation, it is too early to say to what extent the operation is contributing to strengthening local community capacity overall. A number of inputs are supporting existing structures and are strengthening the connectedness of communities to line agencies and district level resource organisations which is contributing to overall resilience building, although there are lost opportunities in linking communities to local level structures such as the CDMC (Community Disaster Management Committee) rather than creating temporary groups (such as Recovery Action Groups) that will be dissolved when the operation is completed. The recruitment of volunteers and social mobilisers from the local communities where the RC is working can also be considered a contribution to strengthening local capacity. By working closely alongside line agencies such as DWASH, NRA, DUDBC, DoH, etc, the programme has boosted the capacity of these agencies to respond to community priorities at the local level, although informants from these bodies were also critical of delays in some instances. The operation is funding a number of positions at NHQ in areas such as communications, GESI, CEA etc that are not sustainable beyond the lifetime of the operation. However, efforts are being made to train and support resource people at chapter level who may be able to continue the focus on these issues.

Communication, Access, Participation, Complaints and Feedback

The operation has invested time and resources into community engagement and accountability (CEA) processes which was evident during the district level visits. Feedback from line agencies shows that they are generally happy with the complaints mechanisms put in place by the NRCS. Following some initial reluctance to follow a targeting rather than blanket approach, the recovery operation is now demonstrating various efforts to ensure that it is targeting the most vulnerable members affected by the earthquake and in each district visited there was strong recognition of the importance of following NRCS's GESI policies and there was clear commitment to gathering gender disaggregated data, although there was evidence that the organisation needs to consider other strategies in order to improve access, particularly for women.

Integration, External Coordination and Learning

An integrated multi-sector strategy is being achieved in VDCs/wards where the RC is the main (or only) organisation, although it is proving more difficult to roll out as planned in districts where other organisations have been allocated responsibilities. Having multidisciplinary social mobilisers is a good strategy for promoting integration at the community level.

Feedback from the districts and at central levels show that NRCS has generally maintained a high level of coordination with government line agencies, although there were requests for the NRCS to provide regular written updates on work in the form of monthly or quarterly progress reports and to participate in more regular meetings, rather than relying on informal contacts.

While the Recovery Framework presented a compelling vision of how an integrated recovery programme could be implemented in a theoretical context, it was not built upon sufficient analysis, of the wider Nepal context and there was insufficient reflection on recent previous RCM operations (such as the floods in Pakistan), resulting in what a number of informants saw as the repetition of mistakes seen in previous operations. Having to rely on a series of short-term recovery advisers, rather than being able to bring in a longer-term recovery expert at an early stage in the relief phase with a brief to research and understand that broader context was seen to be detrimental. CEA mechanisms are allowing the district EROs to adapt programming approaches to feedback received from community members. ERO staff at the district level regret that there were few opportunities to meet (either in person or through online forums) with technical counterparts in other districts to share experiences and ideas.

Efficiency, Management, Governance and Partnership

A key failing of the operation is its inability so far to deliver against one of the visions presented within the Recovery Framework, namely that the recovery operation would be characterised as one demonstrating *“joint responsibility, light coordination (and) swift decision making”*⁴.

⁴ NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015, p11

Management, governance and decision-making: While it was a good decision to create a separate ERO Steering Committee (SC), there appears to have been insufficient definition of its roles and levels of responsibilities, while the closed nature of the SC, without representation of partners, is seen to be an impediment to inculcating the spirit of partnership and joint responsibility that is at the heart of the Recovery Framework's intentions. Slow decision-making at the central level has significantly slowed down the pace at which the district EROs could roll out programming at the community level. Most informants believe that decision-making authority, together with financial authority levels, need to be delegated, both within the ERO at NHQ level but particularly down to the district level, with the SC focusing on taking high-level strategic decisions, delegating the managerial decisions to the ERO as close as possible to where the decisions are implemented. The decision to manage the recovery operation using the existing procedures of the NRCS, without an examination as to whether they would meet the requirements of a USD100M recovery operation that needs to be swift and agile was generally seen to be a mistake; most informants believe that the recovery operation should be supported by a set of agile recovery policies and procedures. This particularly related to the NRCS procurement and human resource recruitment processes.

Governance at the district level: As at the central level, there was some concern regarding the lack of clarity of the role of the district chapter steering committee, with some district EROs experiencing long delays in decisions being made by the district SC. At least one district ERO has been experiencing political interference in the operation from the SC, while another district is currently under investigation for alleged improper use of funds. A number of district chapters believed that sub-chapters should be more closely involved in the implementation of the operation.

The ERO structure is generally believed to be an appropriate structure although there are concerns about the time it took to create and staff the unit, the fact that it was not supported by appropriate policies and procedures and the fact that the ERO did not become the "home" of the Movement as the Recovery Framework described it, which has resulted in the proliferation of PNS structures and the loss of significant potential capacity building opportunities for the NRCS. Had the Movement put in place a human resource strategy to accompany the recovery plan to consider how it could use the technical capacity of Movement partners in the short and medium term to bolster NRCS capacity while it was in the process of hiring ERO staff, this could have resulted in considerable benefits for all parties.

Different implementation models

The original Recovery Framework contemplated a common model of implementation across all districts, something that has not really materialised, although the concept of a consortia approach with a lead PNS has been applied in all but one of the districts. The preferred model of implementation in the view of many NRCS informants was the Kavre model, involving the light presence of the PNS at the district level supporting in specific technical areas; this seems to be closest to the modus operandi envisaged in the Recovery Framework. It is difficult to say without considerable comparative analysis whether it is delivering in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Coordination within the Movement

Efforts to ensure that there is close collaboration and coordination throughout the operation have been made, but some of these initiatives have failed to achieve their potential. Sectoral technical working groups have become infrequent and in some cases ceased to meet, although there has been some recent success in reinvigorating some of the groups. For most informants, the IFRC is seen to have little influencing power within the Movement dynamics in Nepal, partly due to having no role within the SC, and partly because it is also acting as a donor in three districts, which in the view of some informants compromises its capacity to be able to act as the neutral arbiter and Movement coordinator. Movement coordination meetings do not meet the expectations of partners, partly as it seems that NRCS leadership participation has been low.

Partnership

It is clear from interviews is that the concept of partnership, joint responsibility and co-management that the Recovery Framework articulates and the Movement-wide approach is predicated upon has not materialised

as anticipated, resulting in a deterioration in the levels of mutual trust and openness between NRCS and its partners. Each side feels that its views and opinions are not valued or listened to by the other. The next phase of the operation needs to find ways of returning to a position where a positive, trustful and respectful partnership can be re-established for the mutual benefit of the operation and its ability to deliver to affected communities. It would seem that not enough attention was given at the start of the recovery programme to identifying how to develop a true partnership approach, for example how to orientate staff (NRCS and partners, both new and existing) related to how partnership translates into norms and behaviours. Staff turnover, particularly within the partners, has not helped in this regard. That fact that it did not prove possible to roll out an ERO structure where technical personnel from the partners were inside the structure working closely with NS counterparts has meant that a crucial way of exercising partnership has not materialised.

Resource Management and Cost Effectiveness

The current RCM recovery set up, working across 14* districts with management structures in each, is clearly a structure-heavy - and therefore costly - way of working (recognising that the extent of the area across which the RCM is working and the challenging and isolated conditions where many of the people affected by the earthquake are living means that the operation would always be an expensive one to mount). It is not clear to what extent the RCM examined the likely cost effectiveness of the approach or whether serious consideration was given to implementing alternative recovery strategies that might have prioritised humanitarian need over consideration of internal RCM influences. Some districts believe that the staffing structures were too heavy and positions could have been effectively streamlined.

Staff from the ERO (both in districts and NHQ) and PNSs were extremely concerned by the expenditure ratio between support costs and direct programme costs of the operation, with a number of PNS informants believing that perhaps only between 40-60% of the funds raised will go directly to beneficiary activities, due both to the logistical challenges of access to affected people mentioned previously, but also to the fact that support structures were maintained over relatively long periods of time when the operation was delivering little (for the reasons mentioned before). Although attempts have been made by IFRC to gather data from partners regarding direct and indirect costs per district, without a common understanding of what constitutes a direct and indirect cost, this exercise cannot be undertaken. The MTR team suggests that this exercise would be valuable but should be managed at a higher level, for example IFRC Geneva or Kuala Lumpur.

Transition and Exit Strategy

The MTR noted a level of confusion and anxiety at district levels related to messages coming from the ERO centrally regarding transition; it seems that for some, the concepts of transition and exit planning have been erroneously conflated to mean that they need to rush to finish activities before the end of 2017 and feel under enormous pressure to spend. Some informants regret that there is a strong narrative related to phasing out the ERO structure just at the time when it is now working relatively effectively and the operation still has much to achieve. The MTR team suggests that the districts review their plans activity by activity, community by community, ensuring that a sustainability strategy for each activity is put in place and worked through. Having this information in place will allow an appropriate transition plan to be developed at central level

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations focus on different aspects of the next phase of the Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation, with a separate section focusing on recommendations for the wider Red Cross Movement coming out of the Nepal experience to date.

Recommendations for the Next Phase of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation

Recovery operation planning	Planning should start at the district level, activity by activity, community by community. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff (both at district and central levels) and delegates which will feed into a Movement-wide staffing plan, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers and bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts
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	NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget for each district is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC and the steering committee to oversee progress in the district.
	The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extend support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc.
	NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families are being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.
	Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.
	The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation, beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters. The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.
ERO structure and processes	NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.
	Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.
	Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.
Rebuilding relationships	Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to reflect upon their own behaviours and processes, understand the views and opinions of all parties, confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties for mutual benefit.
	A peer review process could be considered to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made in order to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.
ERO governance	The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.
	The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.
	It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.
	Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made available to all RCM actors in Nepal.
	It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (eg the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that

	can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required. NRCS partners (line agencies, NGOs and PNS) should input into this review.
	An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. The DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.
Movement-wide reflection	A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – ie is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

Reflections from Nepal recovery operation to the wider RCM

The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and fully understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a minimum of six months.
Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.
It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.
As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to <i>how</i> this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.
The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.
The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.

3 Background

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the morning of 25 April 2015. The epicentre was 80 kilometres northwest of Kathmandu but its impact was felt across 57 of Nepal's 75 districts⁵ and a series of aftershocks caused further damage and loss of life. The strongest aftershock, measuring 7.3 magnitude, struck on 12 May. The combined impact of the 25 April quake and the 12 May aftershock caused the death of at least 8,856 people, injured more than 18,000 people and caused extensive destruction and damage to housing and livelihoods affecting more than 1.1 million families. 700,000 families were displaced, with around 600,000 houses fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged, together with infrastructure (including schools, health facilities, bridges and roads).

Following initial emergency relief activities, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC and 10 partner National Societies [PNS] in-country) is now

⁵ Taken from NRCS assessment report.

supporting recovery activities in the 14*⁶ government identified priority districts through a Movement Recovery Plan agreed in June 2016 which built on the Recovery Framework endorsed at a partnership meeting in June 2015. This plan aimed to ensure a coherent Movement-wide approach under the leadership of NRCS. The plan promotes an integrated approach bringing together shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), livelihoods and health activities, together with NRCS institutional capacity building (the so-called “4 + 1” approach).

The roll out of the plan has been considerably delayed, due both to external factors related to the creation of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) by the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the development of policies to guide the recovery process, but also internal factors as the NRCS and RCM similarly scaled up its capacity to respond to the challenges of delivering a largescale recovery programme across many districts.

4 Review Purpose, Methodology and Limitations

Two years after the approval of the Recovery Framework, the mid-term review (MTR) process is designed to help the RCM reflect upon progress to date and to identify both how to build on past successes but also to recommend improvements in order to better address the recovery needs of affected communities on the ground. The MTR objectives as specified in the Terms of Reference (annex 1) are: 1) to assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNSs’ structures, systems and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively; 2) to review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms; and 3) to identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach and make recommendations as to how identified weaknesses may be addressed. The guiding criteria for the review follow the OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria and have been defined as:

1. The relevance, appropriateness and coverage of the recovery operations;
2. The efficiency and effectiveness, especially to meet the intended results;
3. Coordination within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors;
4. The sustainability and connectedness of the recovery operations.

An independent evaluation team (comprising an international team leader and a national team member) was hired through competitive tender. The team leader made an initial inception visit to Nepal in May 2017 to carry out a round of interviews with key interlocutors from NRCS, IFRC and PNS partners, following which an inception report (annex 2) was written, criteria were determined for the identification of five representative districts to be visited and a review matrix developed. This matrix brought together the evaluation criteria and key questions from the ToR, together with quality criteria taken from the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), in order to ensure that the MTR would maintain focus on the ability of the Earthquake Response Operation (ERO) to deliver to affected communities while at the same time concentrating on systems, processes and relationships. It is likely that the approach to the identification of the districts to be visited may have resulted in some positive bias.

The main data collection activity started at the beginning of July 2017 with the team (now joined by a staff member from the Karachi branch of the Pakistan Red Crescent and a staff member from NRCS) being fully briefed in Kathmandu, before moving to the first district to pilot, review and refine the methodology and tools, following which they split into two teams to carry out field visits in the other four districts. In each district, an agenda for the field visit was developed by the ERO District Programme Coordinator (DPC) following the guideline provided in the inception report and instructions from the head of the ERO; a minimum of two focus group discussions (FGDs) with between 10 and 15 community members invited were held, plus FGDs with volunteers and social mobilisers. It is likely that focus group participants possessed strong feelings about the programme which will have prompted them to attend, which may have introduced positive/negative bias into the sampling. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were also arranged with interlocutors from the NRCS chapter,

⁶ RCM is working in the 14 priority A districts plus two further districts that were categorised as priority B but were where the NRCS and partners had been working prior to the earthquake. This report will therefore refer to 14* districts (with the asterisk recognising that activities are being undertaken in two further districts).

government line agencies, NGOs working in the district where possible and all ERO officers. In total, 197 informants were interviewed (47 female, 150 male) and 12 focus groups were held involving 142 people (58 female, 84 male) – some of these FGDs were mixed female and male, some were women or men only, advised by the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) in each district.

Meetings and interviews were held without the presence of ERO/chapter staff or NRCS volunteers. At the start of each meeting the purpose (and confidentiality) of the discussion was explained and participants asked if they were comfortable to proceed. Any photographs taken were with participants' permission. FGDs generally took around one hour following a semi-structured format based on relevant questions from the review matrix (with the consultant taking notes throughout) and were, where possible, followed by a walk-about with either residents or staff to get to know the community, talk in a more informal atmosphere and where relevant, to visit sites where infrastructure and/or shelter work was proceeding, again noted and photographed.

On returning to Kathmandu, the evaluation team carried out detailed interviews with a large number of informants coming from NRCS national headquarters (NHQ), IFRC, ICRC, PNSs and key government line agencies. A set of documents was provided by IFRC to support the review process drawn from NRCS, NRA, IFRC and partners, with additional documents collected during the field visits. On 20 July, the evaluators gave a presentation of the initial findings to a Movement Coordination meeting attended by all the main RCM actors, after which further interviews were carried out. Data collected through KIIs, FGDs and primary and secondary document review was triangulated to identify themes and issues. A review report was drafted that brought together the reviewed/triangulated primary and secondary data; unless pointed out in the report, issues are only reported upon where there are multiple sources.

A number of limitations were experienced by the MTR team. This included the timing of the review during the monsoon period, which meant that the opportunity to randomly sample districts was severely constrained by logistical considerations (some districts and many communities were deemed too difficult to get to, due to the road conditions). The fact that the MTR team was only able to visit five of the districts where the operation is being implemented was also a limitation, meaning that findings may not be representative of the operation as a whole; although attempts were made to gather data, views and opinions related to other districts, it is inevitable that the report reflects more upon the operation as witnessed in these five districts. It would also have been useful for the team to have consulted with other chapters of NRCS outside the priority districts, to gather their views on the earthquake operation and how the focus on the priority districts has impacted upon them. It was also noted that the timing of the review coincided with much shelter-related activity in the majority of the districts being visited. This resulted in FGDs and interviewees tending to concentrate more on shelter activities and it proved more difficult to gather detailed data related to health activities (most of which had been completed at the time of the visit) or livelihood activities (which in some districts were only just starting to scale).

The review findings are laid out following the structure of the MTR Review Matrix. Each section starts with an introduction, with sub-sections exploring each issue raised in more depth.

5 Key Findings

5.1 *Relevance and Appropriateness*

The MTR visits to five of the priority districts revealed the extent to which the One Plan is contributing to a common approach being implemented across the districts. Although there is some variation in *how* particular activities are rolling out (which will be touched on later in this report), the fact that in most districts the RCM is aiming to meet priority needs in the four sectoral areas of shelter, WASH, livelihoods and health by implementing a similar range of activities was notable. While NRCS and partners may be more aware of what separates them, from an external perspective this commonality in approach was striking, as was the fact that NRCS programmatic policies and frameworks are generally being used to guide activities. In the view of the majority of line agencies and community members interviewed, in

the communities where it is working, the RCM is providing a comprehensive recovery package made up of a range of activities that are relevant and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, although there are concerns related to the approaches taken to district and community level targeting and needs assessment processes used. This section of the report examines these issues and concerns in more detail.

5.1.1 Relevance of activities for affected communities

FGDs and KIIs with beneficiaries from affected communities at district level all confirm that the main activities of the Recovery Plan are responding to their key concerns, most particularly those related to the construction/re-construction of water systems and support for the construction of houses and toilets, with livelihood activities generally seen as the third priority. The work supporting the rehabilitation of health posts was identified as being relevant and appropriate particularly by those people directly involved in the provision of health services. While focus groups generally did not identify or mention the soft health-related activities without prompting (except the '*nanajhola*' winterisation programme, which FGD informants valued highly), people working as volunteers with either the district health office or NRCS believed that some of the health interventions at community level had contributed to positively changing behaviours, particularly in isolated communities. See 5.2 for more information regarding the sectors.

5.1.2 District and community targeting

While all NRCS district chapters were involved to different degrees in supporting people who had been affected by the disaster during the relief phase, an early decision was taken by NRCS to be actively involved throughout the recovery phase in all the GoN designated priority A districts⁷ and the recovery framework was developed around this decision, with subsequent identification of one or more VDC per district. It is unclear whether alternative approaches were seriously considered at this time⁸, for example whether to focus full-scale integrated recovery support in a larger number of communities in a limited number of districts or to what extent the down sides of this broad approach (such as the costs related to setting up support structures in all the districts) were discussed.

It is similarly unclear what approach was followed to determine how the RCM partners would support the different districts. Some partners (eg American, Danish and British RC) wished to continue to work where they had been working prior to the earthquake, a decision which had logic to it (and as the Recovery Framework pointed out could 'provide an excellent entry point for recovery programming'⁹), but other partners seemed to make choices based on less sound reasons, such as where their Emergency Response Unit had been allocated as part of the relief operation for a few months, a decision that makes little strategic sense. It is not clear to what extent decisions were made guided by beneficiary numbers/need or the availability of funds (this is pertinent as today there are notable differences in the financial size of programming per district (even adjusting for the fact that some districts are providing shelter cash grants)¹⁰).

While the decision to have RCM presence in each of the 14 prioritised districts implementing the 4+1 programme in a small number of Village Development Committees (VDCs) was defended by a number of informants who believed that it was appropriate for NRCS to follow the GoN prioritisation approach, others expressed their view that the RCM should have concentrated full recovery programming in a limited number of locations, focusing on harder-to-reach, more vulnerable communities in districts receiving less national and international attention from NGOs/INGOs and aiming for wider coverage within a smaller geographical area. In the light of experience in Ghorka and Sindhupalchok (where the RCM had little space to develop an integrated approach due to the large number of other actors, these

⁷ Together with two districts from the B priority list where NRCS and partners had been working immediately prior to the earthquake.

⁸ Some IFRC informants suggested that this had been raised as an issue but had not been seriously considered.

⁹ Draft Recovery Framework dated 9 November, 2015, p6

¹⁰ The team would have liked to have further explored this issue but the absence of directly comparable data related to funds meant that this was not possible.

being two of the most-affected districts) and Ramechhap (where few other organisations are working, meaning that the RCM is able to implement an integrated approach at the community level), the review team believes that the RCM should have focused its integrated recovery work in less well-covered districts and perhaps considered a lighter, more targeted 'gap-filling' approach in districts such as Ghorka and Sindhupalchok that built directly on Red Cross core competence.

The other side of this focus on priority A districts is that the institutional capacity building (ICB) activities incorporated into the Recovery Plan (primarily interpreted as rebuilding of damaged chapter buildings and training for volunteers) are also focused on these districts and a valuable opportunity to extent ICB activities to involve staff and volunteers from all districts so that the entire organisation could learn and develop through the experience of recovery programming has yet to be taken advantage of sufficiently. This is taken up in 5.2.

Within each district, decisions regarding which VDC or wards RCM operations would support were taken in close consultation with the District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC) and validated by NRCS NHQ; interviews at district level suggested that chapters and sub-chapters should have been more proactively included and involved in this process. Most line agencies and elected authorities interviewed at the district level believed that RC should have covered more VDCs. This was particularly the case in districts such as Lalitpur and Ramechhap, where fewer NGOs and INGOs are working, resulting in very different levels of support being provided between VDCs, possibly fuelling resentment for people living in VDCs with little external support. In Rasuwa the NRCS district chapter was unhappy that it was not able to prioritise communities in the upper, more vulnerable parts of the district as well as the lower part, reportedly due to the insistence of the PNS to only select communities in the project area it was supporting prior to the earthquake.

5.1.3 Targeting the most vulnerable people within the community

While RCM shelter-related activities follow the NRA's beneficiary lists at ward level, in the majority of districts a combination of participation in the Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), convening specific community meetings and house-to-house surveys through sampling was used to carry out needs assessment and determine beneficiaries for different activities, although it is understood that some districts used more participative approaches than others. Kavre is the only district that decided to follow the guidance of the Recovery Framework and use Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology across all communities so that community members themselves identified beneficiaries for each of the main activities¹¹. In most FGDs (although notably not in Kavre) participants articulated a measure of confusion, disappointment or resentment related to vulnerable people being omitted from beneficiary lists; had these districts followed the participative processes of VCA this may have been avoided, as well as establishing a strong basis for ongoing community engagement throughout the operation and beyond. Given the VCA experience that NRCS has developed (and the fact that it could have been adapted to be completely appropriate to the recovery environment), the review team consider this to have been a lost opportunity¹². It is understood that NRCS was initially reluctant to target the most vulnerable people within a community in some instances, preferring to opt for a blanket approach, but this reportedly changed over time and the targeted approach was approved of by the vast majority of informants.

KIs provided evidence that in some districts NRCS has had some success in advocating for the inclusion of people who have been left off the government beneficiary lists, although it was suggested that it was less successful at raising awareness of people on the lists who were in fact ineligible¹³. The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most

¹¹ Although there were some cases of pilot VCAs that were undertaken, for example in Sindhupalchok, which also piloted Participatory Rural Appraisal or IPRA in one ward.

¹² It is understood that the NRCS advocated that this approach should be used but partners were generally not in agreement.

¹³ For example, cases where one family was being supported to re-build several homes.

vulnerable people in each community were prioritised and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them.

5.1.4 Omission of an organisational scale-up strategy to accompany the Recovery Plan

While the RCM Recovery Plan has successfully framed a shared vision for the recovery operation, the fact that it omitted to include an all-important scale-up strategy to ensure that the appropriate organisational capacities were in place means that its realism is compromised. It would also appear that much of the detail underpinning the recovery approach as defined in the Recovery Framework (June 2015) seems to have been lost in the 2016 One Plan document. This resulted in the loss of much of the nuance of how the Movement would work together, eg the underlying principles of recovery and partnership, the key step of undertaking a *participatory* needs assessment process to build community engagement, ensure relevance of the programming and avoidance of duplication with others or the importance of incorporating disaster risk reduction at the district level (among other issues).

For any organisation, scaling up its capacity to deliver an operation more than ten times the financial size of previous programmes and spread across 16 districts would be extremely challenging. As 5.9 shows, neither the One Plan nor the Recovery Framework included a process to review the capacity of the systems, processes and procedures of the NRCS/Movement to ensure that they would be fit for purpose for delivering an operation where timeliness and agility would be of the essence; similarly, neither plan nor framework developed a strategy for how NRCS was going to achieve the massive organisational scale-up implied by the creation and staffing up of the ERO, which in the view of the reviewers means that it cannot be seen to be appropriate to the circumstances.

Informants generally suggested that the recovery operation should have been planned to be implemented over a four to five-year timeframe, with the first year focused on organisational planning and preparation, with the concurrent implementation of a relief/early recovery programme including a limited range of direct beneficiary support activities, such as the winterisation project and unconditional cash grant distribution. Such a strategy may have helped manage the expectations of communities and partners. While the recovery framework presents an idealised view of how an integrated recovery programme should be rolled out, this mostly top-down planning approach was not grounded in reality, either at the district level in terms of priority needs and how government and other organisations were responding, or considering the existing capacities and experience of the RCM and the broader humanitarian sector in Nepal¹⁴. The RCM ability to implement the one plan vision was further complicated by continual changes within the external environment (with the creation of the NRA only in December 2015, the slow development of the policies and guidelines underpinning the NRA's work and a number of fundamental changes to those guidelines, such as the amount of money to be allocated per house construction).

5.2 Achievements to Date

5.2.1 Shelter

Following substantial delays in 2016, RCM work in shelter (both software and hardware-related) is now considerably enhancing the capacity of the Government of Nepal to deliver earthquake-resistant housing to families who lost their houses. As of the end of July 2017, the RCM shelter programme is delivering against its targets of directly supporting the construction of 7,000 houses through the GoN's owner-driven housing scheme in seven districts, through the provision of a cash grant of 300,000 rupees (three lakhs), supporting the training of masons following the DUDBC's curriculum and providing close technical supervision through a cadre of engineers and junior engineers, supported by social mobilisers and volunteers. In other districts where RCM is not providing cash grants, the NRA's

¹⁴ Several informants pointed out that the GoN has long been unable to absorb more than 40-50% of development funding received annually (a Google search yielded large numbers of articles reflecting upon this) so that it was unrealistic to expect that it would be different in relation to the recovery programme.

work is being supported through training for masons and carpenters, training in Participatory Approaches for Safer Shelter Awareness (PASSA) and community sessions in some districts and other community awareness-raising activities. With NRA guidelines, policies, procedures and standards reportedly all in place, it appears that agreements with NRA/DUDBC are now being signed off in a timely manner, although it was noted that it took an extended period of time to reach this point. It was also noted that the lack of water in some districts has had a detrimental impact on the plans to advance in shelter construction, requiring households to spend considerable sums in purchasing water in some cases. This issue is taken up below.

Table 2 contrasts the results to date for the NRA (with the responsibility to deliver 700,000 new houses in 14 districts) with that of the RCM. Although the data categorisation is slightly different, it is clear that the RCM approach is yielding better results than that of NRA, which is probably unsurprising given the difficulties that GoN is facing, including having smaller numbers of technical staff per VDC¹⁵, high levels of vacancies for engineers in some districts¹⁶, backlogs in approving payment of tranches, etc. In some districts, eg Ramechhap, the shelter programme is offering modest financial inducements for reaching DPC level (and thus being eligible for the second tranche of funds), which has contributed to significantly boosting the numbers reaching this milestone¹⁷.

	NRA (4 August 2017)		RCM (9 June 2017)	
	HH numbers	%	HH numbers	%
HH beneficiaries	651,606		7,000	
housing under construction	115,597	17.74%		
First tranche received			6,426	92%
second tranche applicants	82,064	12.59%	2,198	33%
approved second tranche applicants	70,821	10.87%	1,641	25%
non-approved for second tranche	6,592	1.01%		
third tranche applicants	9,600	1.47%	1,152	17%
approved third tranche	6,881	1.06%	277	4%
non-approved for third tranche	430	0.07%		

Table 1 Comparison of NRA house construction statistics with those of RCM (will update these figures if can be provided with end July data from NRCS/IFRC)

A widespread view expressed by informants from RCM, line agencies and some beneficiaries was that given that government is providing cash grants for shelter construction and that the RCM's contribution to house construction is small (1% of households), the RCM could have had greater impact if it had focused in shelter entirely on the provision of mason training, site monitoring through engineers etc, in this way bolstering the capacity of the NRA/DUDBC to deliver high-quality owner-driven housing across many more VDCs (many NRA/DUDBC informants are extremely concerned about the stark differences in advances between a RC-supported VDC and its neighbours). Finding ways to offer extended support (eg including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc) should be explored.

The MTR team consistently heard through both FGDs and KIs that three lakhs is generally insufficient in order to construct a new house; there is concern that some people are being forced into debt in order to complete their houses, while other people may not complete their houses quickly or may be forced to deviate from the NRA guidelines (eg inappropriately recycling materials from their old houses) or chose to take only the first instalment and rebuild without following the NRA guidelines (a possibility that is supported by the evidence of the huge difference in the number of households that have received the first and second instalments). RC is finding soft ways to support vulnerable households to overcome this, for example by providing materials for toilet construction (in all districts) or providing cash incentives to advance construction as mentioned previously, but it is suggested that the NRCS could play a useful role to gather data regarding the unfolding experience and advocate for the provision of additional support for highly vulnerable households beyond the 50,000 rupees already

¹⁵For example, in Rampur, Ramechhap the DUDBC representative pointed out that he was supported by the ERO engineers, volunteers and social mobilisers and had massively surpassed his target (of 10% completion in fiscal year 2016-17 – he suggested that Rampur was at approximately 60%), while neighbouring VDCs with only two or three engineers were struggling to meet this target.

¹⁶For example, in Sindhapalchok, DUDBC reported that more than a third of the vacancies are unfilled.

¹⁷285 households reached the DPC level rather than the anticipated 100, meaning that Ramechhap has had to apply for a budget revision to enable it to honour the agreement to pay 25,000 rupees (USD 238).

being supplied. KIIs also suggested that the RCM needs to consider how it will support the retrofitting of houses.

It is noted that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, such as the construction of prefabricated and permanent health post and hospital buildings, school buildings, blood bank buildings, warehouses, district chapter building, etc. It may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward. Some reflection on rebuilding of health posts is included in 5.2.4 below (the review team was not able to gather data related to other building activities).

5.2.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Lack of access to water was identified during FGDs as a major concern for communities visited during the MTR, thus it is unsurprising that the focus on the construction of drinking water systems within the WASH programme is highly valued by affected communities, together with the work it is carrying out to support household toilet construction.

In some districts such as Ramechhap, FGDs suggest that the impact of the operation will be huge, improving the situation pre-earthquake in many instances, while the focus on household toilet construction is strongly contributing to VDCs being able to declare themselves open defecation free (ODF) areas. The RC support of toilet construction has also helped build the NRCS image generally and relationship with district level line agencies. In Kavre, Lalitpur, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchok line agencies including the Chief District Officer (CDO) believed that RC is among the most trusted partner in the district. This was not the case in Rasuwa, where the inability to complete toilet construction in one VDC has unfortunately tarnished the relationship with the concerned line agencies¹⁸.

KIIs revealed a widespread view that work on water schemes should have started much earlier; not having sufficient water available has impacted not only on the wellbeing of people, but also on the ability of shelter activities to progress. In the view of a number of informants, NRCS could have signed an agreement with the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) at the beginning of 2016 (as opposed to July 2016) and moved forward in implementing activities and it is not clear why this did not happen.

Although the water schemes are focusing on ensuring their long-term sustainability through the creation of water user committees and the setting up of Operation and Maintenance (O & M) funds, districts are using different approaches to construction; in Sindhupalchok community labour is paid through Cash for Work (CfW), in Ramechhap the community labour for the Aitabar water scheme is entirely organised through community labour contribution (calculated as a rupee contribution per person per hour of labour, an approach that the community members appreciated highly as it values their contribution and makes them feel true partners in the project), while in Kavre a mixed approach is being taken, involving some household labour contribution topped up with CfW made available to priority beneficiaries identified through VCA (also an approach that community members approved of). The MTR team had some concerns regarding the exclusive use of CfW in this context, given that it could work against the need to encourage community ownership of the water schemes for long term sustainability (see 5.2.3 for more reflection on CfW).

The ERO WASH unit suggests that the 1% guideline on investment in O & M systems is being surpassed, although the team was unable to verify this. However, at the district level it was clearly noted that focus is being maintained on creating water user committees, providing seed funding for a maintenance fund and encouraging community members to make regular contributions to this fund.

¹⁸ It is understood that slowness of toilet construction was due to delays in signing a comprehensive 4+1 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with government, which was finally overcome by NRCS moving ahead to sign a separate MoU with the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation.

5.2.3 Livelihood

Although a new area of intervention for NRCS and less intensive in scope, the livelihood component has gained momentum in yielding some initial impacts and is roundly supported by community members, although its delayed roll out in some locations undermines its impact as a recovery strategy for affected households in some instances (eg the District Livestock Office in one district noted that many households had ceased to raise livestock in the months after the earthquake and had permanently focused their attention to other livelihoods activities as their animals had been killed in the earthquake). Livelihood activities are generally running behind schedule, although it is not clear why this is as they did not need to be delayed by the NRA decisions. As mentioned previously, reviewers felt that livelihood activities could have been brought forward into an early recovery strategy. As a new intervention NRCS did not have a strategy, framework or guidelines related to livelihood programming, so it did take some time to adapt the IFRC approach.

A similarity of approach across the districts visited was noted, often referred to as the “Spanish Red Cross” approach¹⁹, involving livelihoods training, developing a business plan, provision of conditional cash grants, vocational training in a number of areas (generally defined through community consultation), with emphasis in rural settings on to the provision of livestock and construction of livestock sheds (for goats and cows). Some KIIs with NRCS informants were critical of the approach being advanced by the Red Cross Livelihood Centre, suggesting that it was not contextualised sufficiently to the Nepal context.

The MTR noted the differences of amount of conditional cash grants in the amounts provided in different districts; eg Lalitpur provided 20,000 rupees, Kavre distributes two different amounts depending upon how individual HHs are ranked for vulnerability through VCA (40,000 and 30,000 rupees), Sindhupalchok (40,000 rupees). It is not clear how the amounts were arrived at, for example whether the district EROs performed a market survey to inform the decision (in some cases it was suggested that the figure was agreed upon by the PNS delegate). Agreeing a shared approach for determining the allocation of funds across the districts would have given more coherence to the programme.

Livestock camps organised between RC and District Livestock Office (DLO) in some districts were seen to be useful both by FGDs and the DLO; The RCM provides the transport, funds the medication and mobilises the people²⁰. Other DLOs (eg in Ramechhap) suggested that they would also welcome the inclusion of livestock camps in the operation. Feedback from the DLOs interviewed suggests that the programme should also include support for vaccination and parasite control of animals. The inclusion of training on building safe animal shelters and the provision of insurance for animals was strongly approved of by informants.

Cash for Work (CfW) is a strategy adopted in all the districts visited and is seen by informants to be integral to the livelihood programme. District informants believe strongly that this is an appropriate way of helping the most vulnerable people in a community earn additional income, although for the reviewers it was difficult to determine what was the main objective of this part of the programme (getting the work done or providing income). It is notable that different approaches are being taken to implementing this strategy (see 5.2.2 above for several examples related to WASH), in Rasuwa the CfW scheme is used for the construction of foot trails, whereas in Lalitpur, it has been used for debris clearance). Decisions related to CfW have been controversial in some districts; community members in some districts (eg Lalitpur) suggested in FGDs that some people had been excluded due to their poverty status, while in Sindhupalchok community members said that they had been excluded due to

¹⁹ Or perhaps more accurately the approach being advocated by the IFRC Livelihoods Centre which is based in Spanish Red Cross.

²⁰ The mobilisation seems to be particularly effective, with a number of KIIs suggesting that attendance was two or three times the numbers that the DLO was expecting in some instances. This is a great example of using the comparative advantage of the NRCS through its volunteer network to massively increase the impact of an intervention.

their party-political allegiances. The daily rate provided for CfW was also described by informants in some districts (eg Lalitpur and Rasuwa) to be lower than the market rate, which further questions the purpose of this activity. On the plus side, people who had taken up CfW in a number of districts were pleased with the provision of insurance. Some concern was raised that CfW (and cash grants) may negatively influence community cohesiveness and solidarity (“killing volunteerism” as one informant put it, noting that in some districts such as Ramechhap the community was volunteering its labour for the completion of the Aitabar water scheme) and may also not be suitable for marginalised people such as disabled individuals, the very young or the very old, although it was noted that in a number of districts efforts were made to find appropriate CfW roles for disabled people, which is commendable.

5.2.4 Health

Activities focused on health within the Recovery Plan consist of hardware inputs (principally reconstruction of health facilities in some districts) together with the delivery of community-based health interventions such as first aid, disease/epidemic prevention, health promotion and psychosocial support through training. It proved difficult to gather much data from community members regarding the health activities within the community, while Department of Health (DoH) officials tended to focus more on the support provided by RCM in relation to the hardware.

The construction of health posts in a number of districts is generally delayed for a variety of reasons, including issues related to the selected contractor/consultant. However, field observation and interviews with key stakeholders suggest that most of these structures are expected to be completed within the stipulated time or shortly afterwards. Although the district representatives of the DoH generally accept the quality of the construction work when it has finally got underway, they were highly critical of the delays, with some informants expressing their view that the decision to support the construction of pre-fabricated “temporary” structures was the wrong one given the amount of time it has taken to get the constructions finished. However, it was acknowledged that at the time the agreement was signed with DoH, it was the policy of the GoN to quickly get prefabricated structures constructed, so supporting this approach was seen to be appropriate, even if the relevance of these prefabricated buildings is now in doubt.

The software components of the plan are generally well advanced and are reportedly well-coordinated between the ERO and the NRCS health department. Most districts visited expect to have completed the majority of these by the end of 2017. Districts worked through volunteers and social mobilisers to raise awareness in a whole range of primary health care issues; while FGDs with both volunteers and social mobilisers revealed their enthusiasm for their work, it proved difficult to gather views of community members, few of whom seemed to recall these activities unprompted. The exception to this is the winterisation (*nanojholā*) programme, which was very positively rated by FGDs with affected communities and KIs with health personnel. Feedback suggested that the activity made a positive impact on affected people, as well as acting as an important gesture of solidarity at a time with community members often felt that their plight was being ignored.

5.2.5 Institutional Capacity Building (ICB)

Each priority district plan includes an element of capacity building, which generally focuses on rebuilding damaged chapter buildings and training of volunteers. Chapter level ICB activities are generally at an early stage, as districts focus on delivering programming to affected communities, although training opportunities are being provided to NRCS volunteers in a range of subject areas. In some districts, the majority of volunteer positions are filled by people recruited from outside the NRCS rather than existing volunteers, so it will be important in the next phase for the NRCS chapters to consider how it can retain some of these volunteers within their organisation over the longer term. Similarly, the district level ERO structures are predominantly staffed by personnel coming from outside the NRCS and outside the district, meaning that when the operation is closed that capacity will be lost to the organisation. This situation is also mirrored to some extent at NHQ level, meaning that when the ERO is phased out, much of the capacity that has developed may be lost to the organisation,

although the decision to second some staff from the main NRCS structure will hopefully enable some of that experience to be re-absorbed back into the organisation.

There has been insufficient investment in district chapter level administrative capacity, in particular related to financial management²¹. Many of the districts are still operating cumbersome manual systems and it is reported that this is negatively impacting upon their abilities to manage the level of ERO expenditure in some instances.

In the view of the reviewers, the Recovery Plan has not focused sufficiently on encouraging chapters to become active participants in the implementation of the operation. In some cases, chapters have had limited previous experience of largescale humanitarian activities, so the operation provides valuable opportunities in this regard, for example learning through participating in the whole programme management cycle required in implementing a large-scale recovery operation, developing institutional relationships with line agencies, local government structures and communities in their district, etc. These experiences can contribute to building chapter capacity and desire to continue community-focused work in the future.

The current ICB plan is focused primarily on the 14* priority districts and NHQ and thus misses valuable openings to extend learning and capacity building opportunities across the wider organisation, although some limited opportunities have been taken up, for example involving all 75 districts in orientation around Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) initiatives and the dissemination of the child protection policy. A revision of the ICB plan should look to find ways to involve chapters across the country not only in terms of participating in trainings, but also whether there are broader opportunities for staff/volunteer exchange or secondment so that these people can have direct first-hand experience. The ICB component of the Recovery Plan should be reviewed and should aim to build on the core competences of NRCS as expressed in its 7th development plan and the findings of the 2014 OCAC review; community resilience building should be at the centre of these plans. The overall ICB strategy could be designed to cover three levels: the policy and strategic level; institutional and operational level; and the individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

5.2.6 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

The Recovery Framework suggests that DRR, as a core competence of the RCM, should be a cross-cutting activity underpinning the 4+1 programme²², enabling RC to focus not only on the very occasional hazards such as earthquake, but also on the annual events such as landslides, floods and droughts that impact heavily on vulnerable people. To date this has not been central to the plans in a number of the districts visited, which represents a lost opportunity, particularly in terms of not using VCA as the key assessment and community engagement approach²³. While it is understood that in some districts (eg Sindhupalchok) the RC was unable to focus on DRR as this work had been allocated to other organisations, it was noticeable that it was only in Kavre that a link had been forged to the local structures such as CDMCs and LDRMCs, an important sustainability strategy, both for the communities and for the NRCS chapter. It will be important going forward to find ways to engage with these local structures through implementing a DRR strategy moving towards transition and phase out; for those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS to engage as an important national volunteer organisation with a core mandate in DRR.

²¹ It was noted that a common financial management software was identified to be introduced into the chapters and training was provided to finance officers, however to date this has not been rolled out.

²² To quote from the Recovery Framework (p13): *"The recovery programming, as a foundation for building community resilience, will then be gradually transformed into Community Based DRR/resilience programme during the transition phase of the recovery. Based on past experience, community engagement as well as level of knowledge, skill, attitude and practices of local communities before the earthquake and now will be identified through KAP survey as a basis for programming."*

²³ Perhaps the recovery framework should have been known as the 1+4+1 plan.

5.2.7 Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)

The inclusion of a PMER unit within the ERO has been an important support to the ERO operation and to the PMER officers placed in each of the districts. These district level officers have provided valuable support to the sectoral officers working in each district and in a number of cases in the districts visited, it was clear that PMER officers work closely with the technical teams, collecting data in the field, knowing the communities where the operation is working and able to support them in a wide range of ways. The PMER team has encouraged the collection of gender disaggregated data which is also to be commended.

5.3 Effectiveness and Timeliness

At the time of the MTR the operation was in full swing; except in areas where the community is temporarily focused on planting crops due to the onset of the monsoon, the construction of housing, toilets, health posts and water systems was ongoing, large numbers of volunteers and social mobilisers have been recruited, trained and are out in the villages raising awareness of a range of issues, offering training, following up at the household level, etc. But time and again the issue of the timeliness of the activities was critically raised during KIIs and FGDs (although community members seemed generally more pragmatic in being pleased with any progress, however late in the day it may be).

5.3.1 Effectiveness

While it is probably too early to undertake a deep analysis of the effectiveness of the operation (and would be difficult to achieve, due to the wide range of formats, time periods and levels of budgetary information available to the consultants at the time of the review), FGDs and KIIs with beneficiary communities confirm that the operation is now beginning to meet the priority needs of people affected by the earthquake in the VDCs where the RCM is working. The support that RCM is providing to government in meeting the huge numbers of houses that need to be re-constructed through the delivery of mason training and the on-site monitoring of construction works, together with the focus on rehabilitation of water systems and household toilets were consistently highlighted as being particularly effective interventions that will make a substantial difference to the lives of affected people. FGDs indicated that the work on livelihoods is also beginning to have an impact at the household level, helping some vulnerable families re-establish a means of income generation (such as livestock raising) that was destroyed by the earthquake.

Beneficiaries who participated in the FGDs believed that the early recovery contributions of the operation, particularly the winterisation project and the unconditional cash grants were effective support strategies. It is understood that some PNSs had proposed a similar approach during monsoon 2016 to bridge the gap before the operation kicked in, but it is understood that the government was reluctant to allow this as it wished cash grants to exclusively focus on encouraging livelihood re-generation.

Determining the effectiveness and timeliness of the recovery operation depends upon when one considers that the operation actually started. Documentation and KIIs show that needs assessment at the district level was generally carried out between April and July 2016, led by the central ERO. However, in Kavre the decision to use the hiatus in implementation to start with community focused planning through undertaking VCA processes in all communities, which happened before the needs assessment was carried out, was a decision that not only helped this district advance in its programme implementation but has clearly brought dividends in terms of its relationship with the communities where it is working.

A number of informants from EROs across the districts visited were concerned about the rigidity of the operation, citing examples of inflexibility that makes it difficult for the programme to respond to emerging changing needs at the community level as well as the changing policy environment. These

informants believed that regular reviews and adjustment of the programme in line with findings would enable the programme to have increased levels of impact at the community level²⁴.

5.3.2 Timeliness

KIs revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction throughout all parts of the Movement (and echoed by some line agencies) that the operation took more than eighteen months to really get going. While there is recognition that many delays were beyond the control of the RCM, related as they were to the creation of the NRA and other key government decisions regarding how recovery was to be managed, informants were generally critical of the slowness of the internal RCM decision-making that affected many aspects of the operation, from the creation, set-up and staffing of the ERO unit in Kathmandu and the districts, delays in signing project agreements between NRCS and partners, etc. The slowness in taking a number of key strategic decisions following the 2015 partnership meeting, led over time to increasing strains upon the relationship between NRCS and its partners.

The failure to take timely decisions is even now having an impact upon the ability of the operation to deliver in a timely way at the community level in some instances. Many informants interviewed both at the district and NHQ level shared examples of extended delays in decision-making regarding what should be relatively simple issues that have already been approved within budgets and plans, eg approvals for payments at district level, recruitment decisions for key posts or tenders for the delivery of services, as well as delays related to funds transfers from partners. These delays point to the decision-making processes not always being fit for purpose.

It is not clear to reviewers why delays related to the creation of the NRA held back progress in the non-shelter activities of the recovery plan; many informants believed that the RCM could have moved forward in the other sectors (health, WASH and livelihoods) while the complex shelter policies and guidelines were being finalised. This would not only have had a positive impact at the community level, but may also in the case of advances in the provision of water, have had a positive impact on the shelter programme also.

While there is a potential loss of control (and hence slowness of delivery) inherent in taking an owner-driven approach to housing which may contribute to further delays, there was overwhelming agreement that this was the most appropriate way to support the challenge of rebuilding. FGDs and KIs identified the need for the RCM to continue to support the government's objectives in this regard, particularly through the provision of mason training and technical support. The ability of the RCM to deliver on shelter targets in those districts where they are funding shelter grants is being held up by the lack of personnel within the NRA/DUDBC to sign-off for the different tranches of funds. This again points to views that suggest that the RCM shelter funding could have been put to better use supporting/enabling NRA/DUDBC through the provision of training and technical support rather than funding a comparatively limited number of housing grants.

Some of the delays experienced were caused by the lack of adequate planning for how NRCS and the wider Movement were going to bring in the skills and capacity to deliver the operation. Recruiting and training the huge numbers of technically skilled people required for this operation would be challenging for any organisation, but in Nepal post-earthquake context, with a highly competitive market due to large numbers of other organisations also recruiting, this was an even more challenging task. As mentioned previously, had a realistic scale-up plan been developed, built upon an objective assessment of the existing policies, systems, processes and human resources of the NRCS (to determine what adjustments would need to be carried out to ensure that they were fit for the purpose of delivering a multi-million-dollar operation in multiple locations with multiple donors) this may have gone more smoothly. This scale-up plan should also have considered how PNS expertise (in the form of international, regional and locally-recruited staff/delegates and technical experts from PNS

²⁴ An example shared was the inability in some cases to be able to include increased numbers of beneficiaries in livelihood activities despite the fact that they had met the assessment criteria set for the activity.

headquarters) could have been strategically used within the ERO²⁵ to help fill the gap while the upskilling was ongoing and how these personnel could have been used to orientate and train new NRCS staff coming from outside. More strategic planning of this kind could have helped not only the NRCS to become operational quicker, but could have helped plan an early reduction in the numbers of expatriate staff as the national staff were recruited.

5.4 Strengthening Local Capacity

5.4.1 Communities

Considering that many of the activities are still mid-implementation, it is too early to say to what extent the operation is contributing to strengthening local community capacity overall, although it is clear that there is mixed experience across the districts and sectors. Inputs such as the training of masons in safer building techniques, livelihoods and livestock training, awareness-raising related to health issues etc, are all contributions to local capacity strengthening valued by community members participating in FGDs. The trained masons are helping build earthquake-resistant houses and at the same time are being provided with skills that are an asset to the community and therefore potentially a means to earning an income. Similarly, the creation and support of water user committees (with O&M funds to support the ongoing maintenance of the installations), training of female community health volunteers, working through mother's health groups (in Ramechhap) are all examples of supporting existing structures and thus are considered to be strengthening longer-term local capacity. Crucially, the operation is helping in most cases to strengthen the connectedness of communities to line agencies and district level resource organisations which is contributing to overall resilience building. The recruitment of volunteers and social mobilisers from the local communities where the RC is working can also be considered a contribution to strengthening local capacity.

The work in Kavre using the VCA methodology and explicitly working through the CDMC will be contributing to strengthening the capacities of the local communities by working through a permanent structure. In some other districts evidence was shared of some support to other permanent local level structures such as LDMRCs; not doing this across all districts is seen as a lost opportunity, as is the creation of temporary Recovery Action Groups (RAG) in some districts (eg Sindupalchok and Rasuwa) which will be dissolved when the operation is completed. Districts are encouraged to look to whether there are possibilities of integrating RAGs into other permanent community structures.

5.4.2 Institutional Strengthening²⁶

By working closely alongside line agencies such as DWASH, NRA, DUDBC, DoH, etc, the programme has boosted the capacity of these agencies to respond to community priorities at the local level. In some cases, it has also contributed to strengthening capacity, for example training FCHVs who are a permanent part of the DoH health strategy and the work in shelter.

While most government line agencies were complimentary about the role of the RC during the relief phase and, at the district level most were similarly pleased both with the 4+1 programme and the quality of most RC services, a more critical tone was evident when reflecting upon the recovery phase with line agencies at central level. There was criticism of the delays in support from NRCS regarding hospital and health clinic construction, and a concern was aired that the RC livelihoods programme is violating government policy as it constitutes a "back door strategy" for increasing the amounts per house.

5.5 Communication, Access, Participation, Complaints and Feedback

²⁵ Following the original intention of the Recovery Framework that all partner delegates and staff were working inside the ERO, side by side with ERO staff.

²⁶ Strengthening the capacity of the NRCS - a core institution in Nepal - is covered under 5.2.5 above.

5.5.1 Community Engagement and Accountability

The Recovery operation has invested time and resources into community engagement and accountability (CEA) processes. During district level visits evidence was seen of efforts to share information regarding the work the RC at the local level, although it appears that different levels of detail is provided; in Ramechhap the ERO also held a press conference to share information regarding budget expenditure to date related to the Aitabar water scheme and posted this on public noticeboards, although in other districts it was suggested that such budgetary information may not be systematically shared across all districts.

A range of ways that communities can provide feedback or raise concerns or complaints with the RC directly are also being promoted across the districts, including the 1130 national phone hotline, suggestion boxes, kiosks, FaceBook pages, email, etc. Despite this, it was notable that very few FGDs reflected any knowledge or use of these mechanisms²⁷. Although the hotline receives an average of 130 calls a month (with some spikes in calls when cash disbursements happening), KIs suggest that other approaches such as suggestion boxes are not particularly popular²⁸ and the hotline itself tends to be used predominantly by men rather than women.

Feedback from line agencies shows that they are generally happy with the complaints mechanisms put in place by the NRCS, which are streamlined with their own (toll-free numbers, suggestions boxes etc), although they pointed out the importance of holding regular public meetings and one-to-one meetings as the key to ensuring good community engagement, something confirmed through the FGDs, with participants suggesting that at the community level, face-to-face contact is still the preferred route for raising issues, underlying the importance of ensuring that locally recruited social mobilisers and volunteers are trained to receive and follow-up on any complaints or concerns that are raised with them in a consistent and confidential manner.

5.5.2 Access

Following some initial reluctance to follow a targeting rather than blanket approach, the recovery operation is now demonstrating various efforts to ensure that it is targeting the most vulnerable members affected by the earthquake, eg identifying wards predominantly inhabited by lower caste families, targeting criteria that encourages participation of women and marginalised people in community groups such as water user committees or trying to open mason training to women. In each district visit there was strong recognition of the importance of following NRCS's GESI policies and there was clear commitment to gathering gender disaggregated data etc, however in some instances it appears that meeting targets alone is not enough and the organisation needs to consider other strategies it might need to adopt in order that these efforts have an impact²⁹. A hard-headed look at female inclusion targets also needs to be undertaken; while setting a target of 40% female participation in a water user committee may appear to be progressive given that the government target is 30%, in communities where the majority of working aged men are absent, these targets may still be quite low.

NRCS has also worked hard to find ways to open access to its programmes to disabled people, for example looking to include disabled people in appropriate cash for work initiatives and it is understood that it is undertaking a pilot project with Handicap International in Tanahun and Lamjung. As has been previously mentioned, there is concern that the government decision to provide only three lakhs for the reconstruction of a family house may result in highly vulnerable people without access to additional funding being excluded from the shelter reconstruction programme. Undertaking research at the district level to discover whether this is the case will be important, as armed with this evidence

²⁷In one district the FGD participants seemed completely unaware of the different CEA mechanisms available to them, despite the fact that a large banner was in the street immediately opposite the NRCS office.

²⁸FGDs in some districts indicated that some communities had had previous experience of using suggestions boxes provided by other organisations and failing to get adequate response, meaning that they were not inclined to use them again.

²⁹For example, in Sindhupalchok the inclusion of women trainees in the 50-day mason training as a livelihood option for the future needs to be followed up with a strategy to enable the women to find work.

the NRCS has the opportunity to advocate for additional support for these households (beyond the additional 50,000 rupees identified in GoN policies).

5.6 *Integration*

Most informants believe that an integrated multi-sector strategy is an appropriate response, particularly in VDCs/wards where the RC is the main (or only) organisation, although it is proving more difficult to roll out as planned in districts such as Sindhupalchok where other organisations had been allocated responsibilities, suggesting that perhaps in these districts a different approach may have been more appropriate built from the bottom up on the results of the needs assessment processes.

It was notable that integration for some was defined as the RCM delivering all four sectors within the district, however for most informants, integration of activities needs to be achieved at the community/household level and for these informants it was felt that in some instances more could be done to achieve an integrated approach. One strategy for achieving a more joined-up approach is employing social mobilisers who perform a generic role within their wards (the approach taken in Ramechhap and Lalitpur). This encourages integration opportunities, for example bringing together awareness raising activities that crosscut several sectors (eg health and hygiene, livelihoods and shelter). In districts such as Sindhupalchok and Rasuwa SMs have sectoral responsibilities and support staff in only one sector, which may inhibit the opportunity to integrate activities and may be duplicative (as well as giving the impression of very high staffing levels to the community which may be counterproductive). In the view of the MTR team, this approach should be avoided.

A few informants were concerned that the RCM did not necessarily have the expertise to be able to deliver effectively in all four sectors or that an integrated approach was too complicated and there was evidence that some districts (and partners) paid less attention to achieving an integrated approach than others.

5.7 *External Coordination*

Feedback from the districts and at central levels show that NRCS has largely maintained a high level of coordination with government line agencies, participating in a whole range of coordination meetings. At the district level, line agencies (such as DUDBC, DoH, NRA and DLO) frequently identified the NRCS as a valued key partner and commended it for its efforts to support and coordinate. In a number of instances at the district level (it is understood that at central levels, NRCS sends NRA a monthly report), there were requests for the NRCS to provide regular written updates on work in the form of monthly or quarterly progress reports and to participate in more regular meetings, rather than relying on informal contacts. Coordination issues within the RCM are taken up in 5.10.5.

5.8 *Sustainability*

As mentioned previously, many RC interventions are closely linked and coordinated with the work of government line agencies, thus maximising their sustainability potential, while the training being provided at community level (including training of volunteers) will remain once the operation comes to an end. However, some interventions are not sustainable, for example the creation of the Recovery Action Groups. Using VCA as part of the initial needs assessment would have provided a solid community base to the subsequent work of the RC on which recovery activities could have been built, linking into community level organisations such as CDMCs which would have contributed to longer-term resilience. Even within the lifetime of the operation, some unsustainable activities were observed; in Sindhupalchok and Lalitpur recruiting social mobilisers from the ranks of the previously trained volunteers is resulting in reduced numbers of community volunteers being available to the operation.

The operation is funding a number of positions at NHQ in areas such as communications, GESI, CEA etc that are not sustainable beyond the lifetime of the operation. However, efforts are being made to train and support resource people at chapter level who may be able to continue the focus on issues related to access of women, children, disabled people etc.

5.9 Learning

The Recovery Framework presented a compelling vision of how an integrated recovery programme could be implemented in a theoretical context and was enthusiastically endorsed at the June 2015 partnership meeting on the back of what was universally seen to be a successful Movement-wide approach to relief operations. However, it was not built upon sufficient contextual analysis of the wider environment (for example the likely amount of time it would take for the GoN to scale up capacities to be able to deliver against the needs identified in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment [PDNA]), as well as insufficient reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of recent RCM operations, such as Pakistan floods. A number of informants with experience of other recovery operations reflected upon what they saw as the repetition of mistakes seen in previous operations. Having to rely on a series of short-term recovery advisers, rather than being able to bring in a longer-term recovery expert at an early stage in the relief phase with a brief to research and understand that broader context was, in this regard, seen to be detrimental.

Having CEA mechanisms in place is allowing the district EROs to adapt programming approaches to feedback received from community members; for example, comments after the first mason training sessions in one district resulted in the training methodology being changed in response to observations from experienced masons who had participated in the course. However, as has been noted previously, there was some concern articulated by DPCs that there was little space to be able to adapt the operation budget to respond to emerging local issues.

It is probably too early to reflect upon the extent that the recovery operation is systematically documenting experiences and sharing these between districts. However, ERO staff at the district level generally regretted that there were few opportunities to meet (either in person or through online forums) with technical counterparts in others districts to share experiences and ideas. Although there are technical working groups, KIs suggest that some of these have not been particularly active over the last year. These could be one appropriate forum for the sharing of experiences between different districts.

5.10 Efficiency, Management, Governance and Partnership

A key failing of the operation identified by an overwhelming majority of informants interviewed for the review and coming from all parts of the RCM (NRCS staff at district and NHQ, IFRC and PNS) is its inability so far to deliver against one of the visions presented within the Recovery Framework, namely that the recovery operation would be characterised as one demonstrating *“joint responsibility, light coordination (and) swift decision making”*³⁰. The following section of the report will examine these three issues, together with other management-related issues that came out strongly throughout the data collection period.

5.10.1 Management, governance and decision-making

While it was generally seen to be a good decision to create a separate ERO Steering Committee (SC) that focuses on the operation, there appears to have been insufficient definition of its roles, levels of responsibilities, or the required turn-around time for operational decisions to be taken³¹. Informants generally seemed unclear as to what its role was, how often it met and it appears that the minutes from the SC are not shared³². A set of minutes from the first few months after the creation of the SC in 2015 was viewed by a member of the MTR; it was noted that it generally met only once a month, which given that this was a period of key strategic decision-making related to the future operation would appear to be infrequent. The closed nature of the SC, without representation of partners is also seen to be an impediment to inculcating the spirit of partnership and joint responsibility that is at the heart of the Recovery Framework's intentions. This is taken up below. With decision-making centralised in the SC, a number of informants also noted the limited authority and influence of the head of the ERO, although he does attend the SC meetings.

³⁰ NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015, p11

³¹ Although requested, the terms of reference for the SC has not been shared with the MTR.

³² It was interesting that many NRCS informants described the SC as “the management” of the operation, rather than seeing it as the strategic governance body, given its involvement in taking what would generally be viewed as managerial decisions.

For the majority of informants, the slow decision-making at the central level had significantly slowed down the pace at which the district EROs could roll out programming at the community level. Multiple examples were shared with the team of how the slow approvals process has delayed the ERO at the district level to implement, which is having a knock-on effect and slowing down the ability of the operation to make a positive impact on the lives of people who have been seriously affected by the earthquake. Most informants believe that decision-making authority, together with financial authority levels, need to be delegated, both within the ERO at NHQ level but particularly down to the district level. The SC should focus on taking high-level strategic decisions, delegating the managerial decisions to the ERO as close as possible to where the decisions are implemented. The lack of devolution to the district level ERO is contributing to DPCs feeling unable to provide the leadership that is required (they are managing large teams but do not, for example, have the authority to directly recruit a new staff member) and some informants felt that the inability to devolve responsibility was an expression of lack of trust.

The decision to manage the recovery operation using the existing procedures of the NRCS without an examination as to whether they would meet the requirements of a USD100M recovery operation that needs to be swift and agile was generally seen to be a mistake. Most informants believed that the recovery operation should have been supported by a new set of policies and procedures developed to be swift enough to support what should be a relatively fast-moving recovery operation of relatively short duration in comparison to development programmes, for which the NRCS policies were developed. This was a widespread view shared by ERO staff at NHQ and in the districts, PNS and IFRC staff and delegates. This view was also shared by a number of informants from line agencies interviewed at district level who were working alongside the RCM.

Two NRCS processes in particular were identified as requiring extensive revision in order to be fit for the purpose of supporting a recovery operation:

- The current NRCS **procurement process** involves a large number of steps across several different departments as well as the involvement of the NRCS procurement committee, resulting in significant delays. In addition, the absence of a comprehensive procurement plan capturing all procurement needs has resulted in ad hoc, district by district procurement, which has implications on efficiency and cost effectiveness (as the operation may not have benefited from potential economies of scale). Had a scale-up and planning period been put in place following the definition of the recovery plan, then this situation might have been avoided. While informants suggest that the procurement processes are now improving, feedback suggests that the creation of a unified procurement and logistics department would significantly help, together with a review of the authorisation levels for districts, which in the view of many informants is too low at 15,000 rupees, making it significantly lower than the government level (at 50,000 rupees) and not appropriate to the scale of the recovery operation. Informants also believe that a separate recovery procurement committee needs to be formed that can meet very regularly to ensure that delays do not impact upon the ability of the programme to deliver at the field level.
- The NRCS **recruitment process** is similarly seen to be inadequate to the task of recruiting huge numbers for the recovery operation. Although an external recruitment agency was used, relying on a recruitment committee that meets infrequently (thus further slowing down the recruitment process) and having overly centralised recruitment processes that do not empower the senior managers at district level (DPCs) to take decisions regarding junior recruitments were all seen to be critical in this regard. There is also widespread concern raised by informants from both NRCS and partners that in some instances technical departments are not sufficiently involved in recruitment decisions, resulting in recruits not always having the appropriate level of experience and technical expertise. A number of informants were also concerned by instances of staff recruitment decisions appearing to have been influenced by governance (this was reported at both district and central levels). A missed opportunity for NRCS, identified by a number of

informants, was not to have reached out to the large numbers of ex-NRCS staff working outside Nepal (both within and outside the Movement); drawing upon this expertise could have helped in the scaling up of the operation from these known and trusted high calibre personnel.

5.10.2 Governance at the district level

As at the central level, there was some concern regarding the lack of clarity of the role of district chapter steering committees. While in some cases they provide invaluable support to the district ERO, in others they are seen to be too involved in the day-to-day management of the operation rather than providing the strategic leadership and support to the operation and the DPC. It was also notable that although the NRCS guideline specifies that the district SC should consist of five members, this is not followed by the districts (eg Kavre has seven, Ramechhap three). A number of district chapters believed that sub-chapters should be more closely involved in the implementation of the operation.

Some districts are experiencing long delays in decisions being made by the district SC, which is negatively impacting on the ability of the operation to move forward and was identified as being demotivating for both affected communities and staff. At least one district ERO has been experiencing political interference in the operation from the SC, something that was identified unprompted also through KIIs and FGDs with affected people, while another district is currently under investigation for improper use of funds.

5.10.3 The ERO structure

With a few exceptions, the majority of those interviewed believed it was appropriate for the ERO to have been created. Concerns were less about its creation and more about the time it took to create and staff the unit, the fact that it was not supported by policies and procedures appropriate for a recovery operation and that it seems to have become a separate and independent entity³³. The vision for the ERO presented within the Recovery Framework was that it would be the “home” of the Movement, with partners and IFRC inside the structure; not achieving this has resulted in the proliferation of PNS structures and the loss of significant potential capacity building opportunities for the NRCS³⁴.

The failure to integrate personnel from Movement partners into the ERO was attributed by NRCS to there being insufficient physical space to have them all sitting in one building. While probably true that there was not sufficient space in one building, it could have been possible to have teams sitting together in different buildings throughout the NRCS compound and the failure to make that happen has had serious consequences and damaged the strong spirit of partnership that was evident at the time of the 2015 partnership meeting. The inability to “*maximise the value of Movement resources by using them in common wherever possible*”³⁵ represents a considerable lost opportunity; had the Movement put in place a human resource strategy to accompany the recovery plan to consider how it could use the technical capacity of Movement partners in the short and medium term to bolster NRCS capacity while it was in the process of hiring ERO staff, this could have resulted in considerable benefits for all parties.

In some instances, the ERO has also operated separately from the main NRCS sectoral departments. This risks a loss of experience in the longer term if the connections are not forged through the next phase, although there is some evidence that efforts are being made in this regard, for example in the WASH area.

³³As it was often described during KIIs.

³⁴One example of how this decision played out was the fact that today PNS have many more finance-related staff (approximately 20 across the different partners) compared to NRCS (which has seven). Had a more unified approach been developed, NRCS may have been able to undertake a higher level of monitoring and support at the district level, something that the finance department would have liked to do.

³⁵NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015

Reviewing the ERO organogram, the MTR team are struck by the impossible number of direct reports to the head of the ERO (14 DPCs plus six coordinators based in NHQ and three field coordinators), exacerbated by the difficulties of retaining the programme manager position (the deputy head of the ERO effectively). Even with that position, the structure would be difficult for anyone to manage, suggesting that some intermediate level should have been created, for example recruiting three programme managers reporting to the head of the ERO, responsible for sharing the management of the DPCs, for example in three geographical clusters (it was notable that no one at the district level believed that the three field coordinators in the current structure added any value at all). Districts also reported different levels of support from the sector coordinators and the PMER team based in NHQ, recognising that the responsibility placed on them to provide support to 14* districts was excessive for the same reasons.

5.10.4 Different implementation models

The original Recovery Framework contemplated a common model of implementation across all districts, something that has not really materialised, although the concept of a consortia approach with a lead PNS has been applied in all but one of the districts, which is broadly positive (in Sindhupalchok the result of being supported separately by two PNSs is that there are effectively two different ERO structures, two different reporting models, etc, a situation that the Recovery Framework aimed to avoid).

The preferred model of implementation in the view of many NRCS informants was the Kavre model, (with the traditional IFRC model also identified as one that many NRCS informants felt comfortable working within, probably because this was familiar to them). The Kavre approach, involving the light presence of the PNS at the district level supporting in specific technical areas, seems to be closest to the *modus operandi* envisaged in the Recovery Framework³⁶ and looks to be delivering in terms of quality and timeliness while not appearing to smother the NRCS, although it is difficult to say without considerable comparative analysis whether it is delivering in terms of cost-effectiveness. Partners working in consortia with DRC in Kavre were also appreciative of this model, highlighting fluid communications, timely development of project documents and reasonable rates of implementation and observed that DRC's long experience of implementing through a consortium shared partnership approach helped the approach work smoothly.

Given that other consortia leaders may have had little experience of working in consortium with others, time should have been devoted at the beginning of the recovery operation to work across the Movement to consider how best to facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles of leader and participant, appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns in consortia relationships might be handled.

5.10.5 Coordination within the Movement

Efforts to ensure that there was close collaboration and coordination throughout the operation were made, but some of these initiatives failed to achieve their potential. Sectoral technical working groups (which had brought together staff from NRCS and partners quite effectively during the drafting of the Recovery Framework) were reported to have become infrequent and in some cases ceased to meet, which has further weakened the opportunities for promoting collaboration and coordinated approaches, although there have been some successes of reinvigorating some of the groups, such as the working group that brings together PMER, information management (IM), GESI, CEA and communications (the so-called Acronym Working Group). It is also understood that two ad hoc meetings of the SC with the IFRC and partners have also been convened to date.

For most informants, the IFRC is largely seen to have little influencing power within the Movement dynamics in Nepal. There are a number of reasons for this; partly due to having no role (or even observer status) within the Earthquake Operation Steering Committee, the key decision-making body

³⁶ See the diagram on p10 of the NRCS Recovery Framework (ibid)

related to the operation and partly because it is also acting as a donor in three districts, which in the view of some informants, compromises its capacity to be able to act as the neutral arbiter and Movement coordinator.

Movement coordination meetings do not seem to have met the expectations for being the key coordination mechanism among partners, partly it seems because NRCS leadership participation has been low. It would also seem to have been a mistake for the facilitation of the Movement Coordination Meeting not to have been taken back by the IFRC country representative when he arrived in October 2015.

5.10.6 Partnership

Exploring relationships between partners is a complex and sensitive issue. The aim of this section of the report is to lay out the different views and opinions that were shared through the MTR process as a basis for suggesting a way forward.

What is abundantly clear from interviews is that the concept of partnership, joint responsibility and co-management that the Recovery Framework articulates and the Movement-wide approach is predicated upon has not materialised as anticipated, resulting in a deterioration in the levels of mutual trust between NRCS and its partners. Interviews often seemed to reveal a situation of “us versus them” and the level of mutual frustration that was aired by all sides was high.

For some NRCS informants, the Recovery Framework and One Plan approach is viewed as having been primarily developed by partners, with little active involvement from the NS. They believe that partners have defined the recovery strategies, then gone on to select which districts they want to work in, have exercised strong influence over all levels of decision-making in “their” districts through micro-management of planning and budgeting and are not following the correct channels of communication, all of which is at odds with the rhetoric of partnership articulated by the Recovery Framework, the Movement Coordination Agreement (MCA) and by the IFRC country representative. For partners, the considerable enthusiasm that there evidently was at the time of the partnership meeting in 2015 with its strong spirit of partnership, seems to have been translated into an atmosphere of internalisation, regulation and control on the side of NRCS, which seems to have encouraged partners to revert to more traditional bilateral behaviours as they feel increasingly on the outside of decision-making and with what they see as little influence over decisions regarding how the funds that they raised (and are accountable for in their home country) are used.

A general breakdown of trust and lack of openness seems to characterise the relationship between partners today. For NRCS the lack of openness from the partners relates to how they are allocating and spending the more than 220 million CHF that has been publically acknowledged as raised by the RCM, when committed funds to the NRCS earthquake operation currently stands at around CHF 80-85 million for the recovery phase. For partners, the lack of openness relates to management decision-making, which they feel on the outside of. Both NRCS informants on one side and PNS informants on the other feel that the other side is not being open and transparent. Each side feels that its views and opinions are not valued or listened to by the other.

Partnership requires valuing what each side brings to the table and the mutual dependency that exists between the parties. At the risk of stating the obvious, in this operation each side is dependent on the other for success. At its most basic, PNSs would be unable to ensure that their funds are used to implement programmes at the community level without the collaboration of NRCS, while the NRCS would be unable to deliver the level of programming across the most affected districts without the funds of partners. The next phase of the operation needs to find ways of returning to a position where a positive, trusting and respectful partnership can be re-established for the mutual benefit of the operation and its ability to deliver to affected communities.

It would seem that not enough attention was given at the start of the recovery programme to identify how to develop a true partnership approach, for example how to orientate staff (NRCS and partners, both new and existing) related to how partnership translates into norms and behaviours. Informants reflected upon the fact that many staff (in NRCS and within partners, including delegates) reverted to previous ways of working, characterised as the “bilateral project approach”. Breaking out of that way of thinking would have required a clear definition of ways of working, drawn from the Recovery Framework and upheld by the management. Staff turnover, particularly within the partners, has not helped in this regard. The fact that it did not prove possible to roll out an ERO structure where technical personnel from the partners were inside the structure working closely with NS counterparts has meant that a crucial way of exercising partnership has not materialised.

There is an unrealistic level of impatience on the part of some partners, perhaps due to lack of understanding of the context of Nepal. The huge amount of scrutiny that PNS are under by their own HQs and their national media to be seen to be actively and rapidly disbursing funds, together with an over-optimistic expectation fuelled by the rapidity and smooth relief implementation period probably also contributed to this. There was a rush to bring in technical delegates before the country - and by extension NRCS - was ready for this; once in-country there was increased pressure to start delivering due to the high indirect monthly costs – an issue taken up in 5.11 below.

Another area of tension between NRCS and partners has been related to some partners’ wish to collaborate with the assistance of other non-RC organisations. While the MCA signed by all partners is not averse to this, it does clearly request that decisions to work in this way are agreed to by NRCS. Some partners feel that NRCS is unnecessarily reluctant to allow such sorts of collaboration, while NRCS feels that these partners have moved ahead in agreeing such forms of collaborations without the agreement of NRCS. The MTR team considers that collaboration with other organisations can be useful, both to augment RCM capacity (particularly in areas that are outside the NS’s core competency) and provides opportunities for learning and development. However, ensuring that NRCS is directly involved in the process of identifying any external partner and that an impartial process is used to identify the partner, in which the views of each side is taken into account, would help in this regard.

5.11 Resource Management and Cost Effectiveness

The current RCM recovery set up, working across 14* districts with management structures in each, is clearly a structure-heavy - and therefore costly - way of working. It is not clear to what extent the RCM examined the likely cost effectiveness of this approach or whether serious consideration was given to implementing alternative recovery strategies³⁷ that might have prioritised humanitarian need over consideration of internal RCM influences. Even without a deep investigation of the costs associated with this operation³⁸, it is clear that an operation of this size and complexity was always going to be a costly one to deliver, particularly given the extent of the area across which the RCM is working and the challenging and isolated conditions where many of the people affected by the earthquake are living. However, even taking this into account, many concerns were raised during the MTR data collection process regarding the cost effectiveness of this operation, given the district level structures, the large numbers of expatriate delegates and PNS staff, the parallel structures and systems to those of NRCS, the fact that funds raised are being used not only to support these PNS structures but also in some instances contributing to costs regionally and at headquarters.

At the district level, a number of RC informants raised their concerns related to what they saw as inefficient expenditure compared to other organisations³⁹, for example that too much is spent on expensive food during training courses, provision of per diems etc. Several line agencies (such as NRA, CDOs, District

³⁷ It is understood that the GoN did suggest to the NRCS that a different approach be taken, focusing the main recovery activities in only one priority A district. It is not known when this suggestion was made and to what extent this suggestion was seriously considered.

³⁸ And it proved impossible for the consultants to undertake this as the budget information is not presented in a consistent way across all the districts.

³⁹ This assertion could not be tested as the terms of reference for the review did not include comparison with other organisations.

Agricultural Offices and DoH) were critical of what they described as lavish displays of expenditure by one PNS (for example, too many vehicles plying up and down the road, training courses for staff in expensive locations), suggesting that this is tarnishing the reputation of the RC work generally.

FGDs with community members in two different districts were critical of how the operation was being delivered in their district. Participants spoke of too many staff being appointed, too many vehicles, motorcycles, laptops etc being used and in one case questioned whether the programme was being run for the benefit of people affected by the earthquake or the staff⁴⁰. DPCs in several districts expressed their view that staffing levels were too high in their districts and that it was difficult to justify the numbers of staff. These informants felt that it should have been possible to have amalgamated some roles and responsibilities in order to streamline numbers but they did not have the authority to take these decisions.

Staff from the ERO (both in districts and NHQ) and PNSs were extremely concerned by the expenditure ratio between support costs and direct programme costs of the operation. A number of PNS informants believed that perhaps only between 40-60% of the funds raised will go directly to beneficiary activities, due both to the logistical challenges of access to affected people mentioned previously, but also to the fact that support structures were maintained over relatively long periods of time when the operation was delivering little (for the reasons mentioned before). In hindsight, it is clear that some partners scaled up their structures prematurely before there was a clarity of approach between NRCS and GoN and perhaps, had there been more triangulation of the Recovery Framework with the conditions on the ground as previously suggested, this might have been avoided. While the ratio between direct and indirect costs is likely to improve in the coming period due to the fact that implementation is now moving strongly ahead, NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts and thus reduce the duplication that exists.

Attempts have been made by IFRC to gather data from the PNS regarding direct and indirect costs per district, but there is a recognition that this cannot be undertaken without a common understanding of what constitutes a direct and indirect cost and how different partners are categorising these, so the majority of partners have refused to participate in this locally-managed exercise. The MTR team suggests that this would be an extremely useful and important exercise to undertake, but given the global implications of such an exercise, it should be managed at a higher level, for example IFRC Geneva or Kuala Lumpur.

5.12 Transition and Exit Strategy

Some confusion and quite a bit of anxiety was expressed at district level by the messages coming from the ERO centrally that activities need to be transitioned by the end of 2017; the decision of some partners to exit by the end of 2017 has added to this stress. It seems that for some, the concepts of transition and exit planning have been erroneously conflated to mean that they need to rush to finish activities as soon as possible and some district ERO staff are concerned that this may affect the quality and particularly the sustainability of some activities, together with potentially damaging relationships with the community (in Ramechhap the FGDs revealed that communities are also stressed by the high level of concurrent activities that are being implemented, pointing out that while they are strongly in agreement with the participative implementation approach, it is difficult for households to be available to contribute to shelter and water system construction at the same time). Some DPCs feel that they are under enormous pressure to spend; as one informant put it (reflecting the views of a number of people interviewed), "the objective should not be spending the budget only, but making a difference at the community level".

⁴⁰ Author's reflection: I'm sharing this comment as in more than 10 years as a consultant, this is the first time that I have ever heard this type of feedback being articulated during a focus group.

Some informants regret that there is a strong narrative related to phasing out the ERO structure just at the time when it is now working relatively effectively and the operation still has much to achieve. The MTR team suggests that the districts review their plans activity by activity, community by community, ensuring that a sustainability strategy for each activity is put in place and worked through. Having this information in place will allow an appropriate transition plan to be developed at central level, with appropriate dates and modalities for transition being developed that are in harmony with the field-level operational plans. As mentioned previously, DRR should be a key part of the transition strategy, linking to what should be core competence of the NS, building relationship of chapters with CDMCs, LDRMCs and communities etc.

The transition period should provide opportunities for organisational learning, for example documenting processes and outcomes of the operation and ensuring that all trainings relevant to the NRCS development plan happening within the EQ districts are open for a proportion of attendees from other district chapters.

6 Recommendations

6.1 *Recommendations for the Next Phase of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation*

6.1.1 Recovery operation planning

- Districts should carry out activity by activity, community by community reviews to plan the next phase of the recovery operation. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff, both at district and central levels.
- NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan for the coming period, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with district implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts (including to place certain delegates within districts where appropriate) and thus reduce the duplication that exists.
- NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget for each district is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC, the district steering committee and the head of the ERO to oversee progress in each district.
- The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extend support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc.
- NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families are being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.
- Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.
- The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation (ie beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters). The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

6.1.2 ERO structure and processes

- NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.
- Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.
- Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.

6.1.3 Rebuilding relationships

- Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to reflect upon their own behaviours and processes, understand the views and opinions of all parties, confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties for mutual benefit.
- A peer review process could be considered, to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner, in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.

6.1.4 ERO governance

- The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.
- The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.
- It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.
- Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made publically available.
- It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (eg the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required. NRCS partners (line agencies, NGOs and PNS) should input into this review.
- An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. The DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.

6.1.5 Movement-wide reflection

- A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – ie is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

6.2 *Reflections from Nepal recovery operation to the wider RCM*

- The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and fully understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a minimum of six months.
- Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.
- It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.
- As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to *how* this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.
- The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.
- The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.
- Given that partners seem to be increasingly choosing to work through consortia, reflection on past experiences of working through consortia should be undertaken. This should offer reflection on how to best facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles and responsibilities of leader and participant, the appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns in consortia relationships might be handled.



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

1. Summary

1.1. Purpose: The Mid-Term Review (MTR) will assess the earthquake recovery response structure, system, procedure and performance through the lens of thematic sectors and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) chapters, as per the Movement Recovery Plan 'One Plan' to the Nepal earthquake from late April 2015. The focus will be on the application of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance, cooperation and coordination within the Movement components. Key recommendations from this MTR will guide modifications and improvements required to the ongoing recovery interventions.

1.2. Commissioner: The IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), Deputy Director, on behalf of the Movement partners in close collaboration with the NRCS. The findings and products arising from this review will be owned and managed in accordance to NRCS policy and procedures.

1.3. Audience: Findings of this MTR will be used for learning by the Nepal Red Cross, IFRC country office in Nepal, the IFRC regional office in Kuala Lumpur, the IFRC headquarters in Geneva, the National Societies participating in the recovery operation, the Movement managers and the ICRC to plan for future strategies and interventions.

1.4. Review team: An independent review team leader (international consultant) drawn from the IFRC membership, supported by one national (Nepali speaking) consultant, one NRCS staff, and one member from sister National Societies within the Asia Pacific region.

1.5. Duration of consultancy: Up to 40 working days (including approximately 30 days in Nepal).

1.6. Estimated dates of consultancy: The review exercise will take place from 10 May 2017.

1.7. Location of consultancy: Nepal

2. Background

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) comprises 190-member Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and a secretariat in Geneva to support humanitarian activities around the world. The IFRC is committed towards increasing the impact of the Movement in terms of quality assurance, standards and a culture of lesson learning in disaster recovery operations. Those operations that require an international response and meet certain criteria of scale, scope, complexity or risk, as does the Nepal earthquake response, are committed to carrying out this MTR during the recovery phase. The [IFRC Framework for Evaluations](#) requires that a review be undertaken for any programme over 24 months in timeframe.

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara in the

morning of 25 April 2015. The epicenter was 80 kilometers northwest of Kathmandu but its impact was felt in 32 of Nepal's 75 districts. A series of aftershocks have continued to impact, causing further damage and panic. The strongest aftershock, measuring 7.3 magnitude, struck on 12 May at 12:50 local time.

The combined impact of 25 April quake and the 12 May aftershock has caused more than 8,856 people casualties and at least 17,932 injured. In addition to loss of life and human suffering, the two quakes have caused extensive destruction and damage to housing, infrastructure and livelihoods, leading to a drastic reduction in living conditions, income, and access to basic services, such as health and water and sanitation. More than 1.1 million families were affected and 700,000 families displaced. Secondary data analysis and earthquake intensity mapping indicate that up to 600,000 houses were fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged. The infrastructure damaged included schools, health facilities, bridges and roads. More than 30,000 classrooms were destroyed or damaged. According to the government, 14 districts were severely affected 'Category A' and include Gorkha, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Sindhupalchowk, Ramechhap, Dolakha, Nuwakot, Dhading, Rasuwa, Sindhuli, Okhaldhunga, Makwanpur, and Kavre (altogether 14). Additionally, nine districts with medium level damages fall under 'Category B', were also affected.

The Movement Coordination Meeting (MCM) that was established prior to the earthquake, and continued to be in place in order to facilitate coordination and decision making process. The NRCS, IFRC, partner National Societies (PNSs) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are keeping close contact to coordinate the Movement response to date. NRCS is responsible for the coordination and the overall implementation of the recovery plan, with IFRC supporting Movement coordination and partners contributing to the overall plan. Currently, there are 11 PNSs in Nepal supporting the NRCS in the implementation of recovery plan (through bilateral, multi-lateral and in consortium as well) for people affected by the earthquake, in the 14 most affected districts (category A). The in country PNSs include American, Australian, Belgium – Flanders, British, Canadian, Danish, Finnish, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish and Swiss Red Cross.

In early June 2016, a partnership meeting was held between NRCS, IFRC, PNSs and ICRC. Upon completion of the meeting, a Movement Recovery Plan called 'One Plan' was developed that provides a framework of activities for the operation. All partners of the Movement agreed to follow one framework, one plan and one approach, while maintaining NRCS's ownership of the entire programme implementations on the ground. The Movement partners agreed that NRCS will be on the lead to report against priorities identified together through established Earthquake Response Operations (ERO) structure and management at headquarter (HQ) as well as in district chapters. However, different PNS have been contributing in different ways within the One Plan based upon resources available and priorities. Key deliverables listed in the Movement Recovery Plan are being supported by the Movement partners through multilateral mechanism via IFRC appeal or bilateral arrangements with NRCS who is the implementer of activities on behalf of the Movement in Nepal. The Red Cross recovery programme components is based on an integrated FOUR plus ONE approach: four technical sectors that include shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH); livelihoods; and health; plus, National Society capacity building for NRCS.

The sectoral working groups (Shelter, WASH, livelihood and PMER-IM-CEA-Comms-GESI) continued to hold their meetings with the interested Movement partners in order to update each other and discuss sectoral issues encountered during implementation on the ground.

There have been numerous delays in the activation of the Movement's One Plan in Nepal, influenced by changes to government, extended bandhs (general strikes) and blockade of Indian border leading to logistical issues and the need for the Government of Nepal (GoN) to set the policies and guidelines to direct the humanitarian sectors approach to recovery.

The main Red Cross Red Crescent planned actions for recovery are:

- 7000 households to be provided with Shelter grants,
- 316,193 people to be provided with water and sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion
- 137,625 people to be provided with health services and community health activities,
- 124,696 people to be reached with livelihood activities,
- 16 Nepal Red Cross chapters to be supported with capacity building. For the one year progress report of the Movement-Wide Report, please click [here](#).

3. MTR purpose and scope This Nepal earthquake response MTR will be a learning oriented and forward looking review. This will recommend how improvements should be made in earthquake recovery structure, system, procedures and implementation strategies in order to better address the recovery needs on the ground. To do so, the review will be taking into consideration relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the entire operations with reference to One Plan. The review will also assess the application of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance, cooperation and coordination within the Movement components. The findings of MTR will suggest possible operational directions to the Movement partners to further support NRCS recovery programmes based on context, need and capacities of the Movement partners.

The unit of analysis to be assessed – This will cover the partner members of the One Plan including ERO both at headquarters (HQ) and district chapters, IFRC Nepal Country Office and in country PNSs. It will look at measures put in place including structure, system, procedures, implementation/ working models - consortium/bilateral, as well as coordination mechanisms in line with the One Plan.

The time period - the review will cover the period from June 2015 partnership meeting when the present structure of the Nepal Earthquake Operations was endorsed until 25 April 2017 (second year anniversary of the earthquake).

The geographical coverage - This will later be decided in close consultation between the MTR task force and review team. However, focus will be to consider a representative sample size i.e. 4-6, out of 14 operational districts in Nepal.

4. MTR objectives, criteria and key questions Below are the specific objectives, criteria and possible key questions to be addressed in this MTR. These are initial guidance and can be further elaborated in consultation with the consultant and MTR team.

4.1. Objectives:

- 1) To assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNS's structure, system and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively;

- . 2) To review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms in place, and recommend how these can be strengthened;
- . 3) Identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach of the One Plan including cross cutting themes, and provide solutions/recommendations to the NRCS and the Movement partners to address shortfalls.

4.2. Criteria: The MTR will be guided by following criteria:

- . i) the relevance, appropriateness and coverage of the recovery operations.
- . ii) the efficiency and effectiveness, especially to meet the intended results.
- . iii) coordination within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors.
- . iv) the sustainability and connectedness of the recovery operations.

4.3. Questions: The questions below are initial guidance and should be considered in line with the One Plan approach. These questions are expected to be further elaborated in consultation with the review team while working on the inception report. Additional guiding questions can be found as appendices under section 11 on the later part of this TOR.

To what extent has the recovery operations achieved the expected objectives and been relevant and appropriate to the needs and context?

To what extent has the recovery operations ensured optimization of resources and supported implementation of programmes in an effective and efficient manner?

To what extent coordination and integration applied in line with the One Plan?

To what extent, is the intervention taking into consideration long term needs of NRCS, such as linkages between recovery and longer-term development programmes?

To what extent has the programme been effective in reaching the most vulnerable people and groups effected by the earthquake?

5. MTR methodology & process

The methodology will adhere to the IFRC Framework for Evaluations³, with particular attention to the processes upholding the standards of how MTR should be planned, managed, conducted, and utilized.

A MTR task force will manage and oversee the MTR process as well review team. The review will be carried out by a team of experts not directly involved with the implementation of recovery programmes. This review team will consist of up to four people: an international consultant, who will be team leader, one national consultant (Nepali speaking), one staff member of NRCS, and a member of the sister National Society from the Asia Pacific region. The team should be gender balanced.

The review team leader will provide an independent, objective perspective on review, and will be the primary author of the MTR report and recommendations. In line with the IFRC Framework for Evaluations to meet the criteria for an “external review”, s/he will not have been involved or have a vested interest in the recovery operation being reviewed, and will be hired through a transparent recruitment process, based on professional experience, competence, ethics and integrity for this review. The team leader will report on progress or challenges to the MTR task force.

It is expected that the applicant to propose an approach and methodology for the review. The proposed review methodology will be further detailed out in close consultation between the MTR task force and review team. Some of the primary methods can draw upon as follows:

1. **Desktop review** of operation background documents, and background and history of relevant organizations, including guidelines and policy documents of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) of Nepal government.
2. Conduct consultation process/meetings with the partner members of One Plan and other stakeholders as appropriate.
3. **Field visits/observations** to selected sites.
4. **Key informant interviews** (institutional and beneficiaries as appropriate).
5. **Focus group discussions**, (institutional and beneficiaries) as time and capacity allow.

The review team will meet with and interview key Red Cross Red Crescent stakeholders at NRCS HQ and district chapters, PNSs, and the relevant IFRC Secretariat offices. The team will also consult with other partners and organizations such as NRA of GoN, the UN, INGOs / NGOs as appropriate.

6. MTR deliverables (or Outputs)

- **Inception report** with review questions, detailed methodology, initial discussion with the MTR task force and work plan within a week.
- **Debriefings / present initial findings** to MTR task force, NRCS, IFRC and in country Movement partners: The review team leader will present its preliminary/initial findings with recommendations for discussion and feedback.
- **Draft report:** A draft report identifying key findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons for the current and future operation, will be submitted to the MTR task force after three weeks of the consultancy.
- **Final report:** The final report will contain a short executive summary (no more than 1,000 words) and a main body of the report (no more than 10,000 words) covering the background of the intervention reviewed, a description of the review methods and limitations, findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and clear recommendations. Recommendations should be specific and feasible. The report should also contain appropriate appendices, including a copy of the ToR, cited resources, a list of those interviewed and any other relevant materials. The final report will be submitted within two weeks after receiving the consolidated feedback on draft report.

The findings and all products arising from this review will be jointly owned by the Nepal Red Cross Society and IFRC on behalf of the Movement partners. The reviewers will not be allowed, without

prior authorization in writing, to present any of the analytical results as his / her own work or to make use of the review results for private publication purposes.

The preliminary and final reports will be submitted through the MTR task force, who will ensure the quality of the report providing input if necessary. The task force will submit the final report to the Commissioner, Steering Committee of the earthquake operations and IFRC head of country office in Nepal for review, clarifications and management response.

6. Proposed Timeline (or Schedule)

The following table presents some key activities with a timeline:

Timeframe	Activities	Outputs	Responsibility
Pre-work	1. Prepare and distribute review TOR for consultation within in country Movement partners 2. Form review task force, finalize TOR, commission the MTR 3. Recruit/Identify review team including international and national consultant	Final TOR	IFRC Nepal CO IFRC APRO and MTR Task Force
Week 1	4. Brief the review team 5. Review background documents 6. Draft and share inception report (any update to the TOR should be approved by the MTR task force and reflected in the report)	Inception report with review questions, methodology and data collection tools	MTR task force Review team leader
Week 2, 3 & 4	9. Field data collection at designated sites 10. Debriefing/present preliminary findings to key stakeholder groups and task force	Sharing of initial findings	Review team leader
Week 5+	11. Submission of the draft report 12. Management response 13. Review of comments, consolidation and make	Summary draft report with key recommendations Management response Final report	Review team leader ERO Steering Committee, IFRC MTR task force

	revisions for the final report.		and review team leader
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8. MTR quality and ethical standards

The reviewer should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the MTR is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of the people and communities involved and to ensure that the review findings are technically accurate and reliable, is conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and contributes to organizational learning and accountability. Therefore, the review team should adhere to the standards and applicable practices outlined in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation.

The IFRC evaluation standards are:

1. Utility: Evaluations must be useful and used.
2. Feasibility: Evaluations must be realistic, diplomatic, and managed in a sensible, cost effective manner.
3. Ethics & Legality: Evaluations must be conducted in an ethical and legal manner, with particular regard for the welfare of those involved in and affected by the evaluation.
4. Impartiality & Independence; Evaluations should be impartial, providing a comprehensive and unbiased assessment that takes into account the views of all stakeholders.
5. Transparency: Evaluation activities should reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.
6. Accuracy: Evaluations should be technical accurate, providing sufficient information about the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods so that its worth or merit can be determined.
7. Participation: Stakeholders should be consulted and meaningfully involved in the evaluation process when feasible and appropriate.
8. Collaboration: Collaboration between key operating partners in the evaluation process improves the legitimacy and utility of the evaluation.

It is also expected that the review will respect the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: 1) humanity, 2) impartiality, 3) neutrality, 4) independence, 5) voluntary service, 6) unity, and 7) universality. Further information can be obtained about these Principles at: www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp

9. Qualifications

Selection of the international and national consultant will be based on the qualifications outlined below:

1. Demonstrable experience in leading and managing evaluations and review of recovery operations in complex situations where multiple partners and sectors involved related to

major disasters;

2. Knowledge and experience working with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and knowledge of the IFRC's disaster management systems;
3. Experience of working in Nepal and familiarity with culture and political situations would be an advantage.
4. Knowledge of strategic and operational management of humanitarian operations and proven ability to provide strategic recommendations to key stakeholders;
5. Strong team leadership and management skills including negotiation, facilitation and time management.
6. Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations and to prepare well-written reports in a timely manner;
7. Proven track record of conducting qualitative research including the development of interview schedules and qualitative data as well quantitative data analysis, especially in emergency and recovery context;
8. Demonstrated capacity to work both independently and as part of a team;
9. Excellent writing and presentation skills in English (for international consultant) and Nepali languages (for national consultant) required.
10. Immediate availability for the period indicated.
11. Strong preference for the international consultant to have his/her own translator and in country team.

10. Application procedures

Interested applicants should submit their expression of interest to the following email: pmer.apzo@ifrc.org by 10 April 2017. In the subject line, please state the consultancy you are applying for, your company name or last name and first name. **(SUBJECT: Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operations Mid-Term Review - Last Name, First Name).**

Application materials should include:

1. **Curriculum Vitae** (CVs) of international and national consultants.
2. **Cover letter** clearly summarizing your experience as it pertains to this MTR, daily consultancy fees (in Swiss Francs) and three professional references.
3. Applicants will be required to provide a **2-pager approach paper** with review methodology and a sample of previous written report most similar to that described in this TOR.

4. Financial proposal: It is expected from the international consultant to submit the financial bid for themselves and the Nepali speaking consultant only.

Application material are non-returnable, and we thank you in advance for understanding that only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the next step in the application process. Please take note that incomplete application will be rejected.

Mid Term Review of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Programme 2017 Review Inception Plan (*amended 21 June 2017*)

This document lays out proposed focus, approach and methodology to be adopted for the review, together with a tentative itinerary for the field visits

1. Review criteria and key review questions

The review will build on the questions included in the terms of reference (see below) and will be framed within the nine Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), which will help keep the focus of the review on the ability/potential for the recovery programme to deliver services that meet the priority needs of those people most affected by the 2015 earthquakes.

MTR Criteria:

1. The **relevance**, **appropriateness** and **coverage** of the recovery operations.
2. The **efficiency** and **effectiveness**, especially to meet the intended results.
3. **Coordination** within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors.
4. The **sustainability** and **connectedness** of the recovery operations.

MTR key questions:

1. To what extent has the recovery operations achieved the expected objectives and been relevant and appropriate to the needs and context?
2. To what extent has the recovery operations ensured optimization of resources and supported implementation of programmes in an effective and efficient manner?
3. To what extent coordination and integration applied in line with the One Plan?
4. To what extent, is the intervention taking into consideration long term needs of NRCS, such as linkages between recovery and longer-term development programmes?
5. To what extent has the programme been effective in reaching the most vulnerable people and groups effected by the earthquake?

The Core Humanitarian Standard:

Note: given the nature of the review, focus will be deeper in some areas - particularly those related to effectiveness, efficiency and coordination – and lighter in other areas more related to programming, due to this being a mid-term review (these have been italicised below). The links to the MTR criteria and key review questions are noted in square brackets.

1. Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs. [RELEVANCE, APPROPRIATENESS, REACHING MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE]
2. Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time. [TIMELINESS IE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS]
3. *Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action.*
4. *Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.*

5. *Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints.*
6. Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance. [COORDINATION, CONNECTEDNESS]
7. Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection. [LEARNING ORGANISATION, LINKAGES WITH NRCS LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES]
8. Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers. [EFFECTIVENESS, MANAGEMENT ISSUES]
9. Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically. [EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS, OPTIMISATION OF RESOURCES]

2. Review approach

The following steps will be followed during the review:

- Inception visit (undertaken 28 May – 6 June 2017, 9 days) – Interview main actors from NRCS, IFRC and RC partners to understand current context and gather views regarding the focus of the mid-term review, criteria for districts to be visited and suggestions regarding which districts to be visited. See Annex 1 for list of those interviewed
- Development of inception report, to include draft field visit itinerary – *NRCS, IFRC and partners will need to develop key informant lists for Kathmandu and the districts to be visited in order to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is given for the different stages of the review visit*
- Document review
- Development of the main review tools (semi-structured interview scripts for individual informant interviews and focus group discussions)
- At the start of the field visit, team briefing, revision of review tools and methodologies to ensure uniformity of approach between the two teams
- Travel to sites for data collection (the proposed approach would require the first district to be visited by all four team members, in order to pilot and review the tools and ensure a coherent data collection approach. Following this, the review team will split into two, each visiting two districts)
- Interviews in the districts and Kathmandu will include:
 - Community members (through focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews)
 - NRCS leadership, staff and volunteers, HQs and in the chapters
 - IFRC staff
 - PNS staff
 - Government partners, both central and district-level
 - Personnel from other stakeholders (such as NGOs)
- Review team debrief in order to identify key findings and recommendations to be included in the review report before team members return to home base
- Return to home base, interviews (via Skype) with any other key informants who are not based in Nepal (eg Kuala Lumpur, partner HQs, etc)
- Data analysis and preparation of final draft review report

3. Draft itinerary for field visits

**TL = Team Leader, NC = National Consultant*

Activities	Date	# days
Inception visit - Team leader visit to Kathmandu, interviews with 30 key internal RCRC stakeholders in order to identify priority focus for the mid-term review	28 May to 6 June	9 (TL)
Develop draft inception report, including data collection methods and tools, document review	8 – 25 June	4 (TL) 2 (NC)
Travel to Nepal	2 July	1 (TL)
Team meet, briefing meetings, finalise/agree the review approach and data collection tools following feedback from review team	3 – 4 July	2
Full team to KAVRE (district 1) – undertake KIIs, FGDs, field visits etc, reviewing and amending the approach, methodology and data collection tools	5 – 7 July	3
Rest / Team split into two, travel to separate districts: • Anna+Sajjad+translator travel to Sindhupalchowk (district 2) • Shesh+Amar to Lalitpur (district 3)	8 July	1
Field visit as above in districts 2 and 3	9 – 11 July	3
Travel to next districts: • Anna+Sajjad+translator travel from Sindhupalchowk to Ramechhap (district 4) • Shesh+Amar travel from Lalitpur to Rasuwa (district 5)	12 July	1
Field visit as above in districts 4 and 5	13 – 15 July	3
Travel back to Kathmandu from Ramechhap & Rasuwa	16	1
Interviews with key informants in Kathmandu	17 – 19 July	3
Team data share and analysis	20 July	1
Travel to home base	21 July	1
Prepare draft report	25 July – 15 August	10 (TL) 6 (NC)
Revise and finalise report	20-25 August	2 (TL) 1 (NC)

Please note that due to the addition of the inception visit and the complexity of the issues revealed during the inception visit, the number of days of engagement for both the team leader and national consultant have been modestly increased to 45 days for the team leader and 27 days for the national consultant.

4. **Review Matrix**

A review matrix with all the review questions that will be used to guide the field research will be prepared and provided later in June.

5. **District visits**

Following the inception interviews, criteria to guide the identification of districts to be visited were agreed with the MTR task force. These are:

- Accessibility (bearing in mind the monsoon season), both to the district and VDCs where work has been carried out – the ability to consult with affected communities is extremely important and should inform the decisions regarding which districts to visit (and is not something that the consultant can take decisions about);
- Capacity of the chapter to receive and host the visit of the review team (it is understood that some chapters may have been overburdened with visits from external people in the last few months);
- Representative of the ‘global’ experience and thus likely to provide lessons learned that can be relevant to all 14 district chapters;
- Offering a range of different partnership models (no partner presence, single partner presence, several partners working alongside each other, multi-partner consortium) and levels of integration between the different 4+1 sectors;
- Spanning experience in both rural and urban environments;
- Offering a range of experiences, both positive and more challenging, likely to elicit a strong range of emerging good practices and lesson learned.

Following discussions with the MTR task force, the following districts will be visited:

- Lalitpur
- Kavre
- Ramechhap
- Rasuwa
- Sindupalchok

It is recognised that the monsoon season may mean that the ability of the team to visit VDCs that are distant from the district headquarters may be limited, particularly in the case of Ramechhap (discussions with the MTR task force suggested that this might need to be replaced by Sindhuli, although this would be regrettable as it is understood that Ramechhap may offer interesting lessons learned related to integration). However, given the importance of being able to consult with affected communities and service users as part of this review, this aspect must be taken into consideration when determining which districts to visit and all efforts must be made to enable this beneficiary consultation to go ahead. The final choice of the districts remains with the task force; the issues that informed this choice will be documented within the review report, as well as identifying any potential selection bias.

As with district selection, VDC selection should be guided by the following criteria:

- Accessibility;
- Capacity of the VDC to receive and host the visit of the review team;
- Able to provide opportunities to review a number of different programmatic inputs from the 4+1 plan;

- Representative of the 'global' experience and thus likely to provide lessons learned that can be relevant to all 14 district chapters;
- Offering a range of experiences, both positive and more challenging; if two VDCs are visited in a district, these should offer contrasting experiences where possible.

6. **Key informant interview setup**

The need to triangulate perspectives and the learning nature of this review are two main determinants of the sample size. Triangulation requires several levels of staff perspectives as well as those of volunteers and beneficiaries. Including respondents from multiple levels will help to manage selection bias and contribute to internal validity, as will including perspectives of key external partners. The sampling method is purposive and respondents will be selected based on criteria of availability, knowledge and involvement in the programme. It is envisaged to include a fair number of volunteers and beneficiaries in the interview sample. This can be realised by conducting focus group discussions with these groups, along with some individual interviews.

7. **Focus group discussion setup**

Focus groups discussion will take place at a location and time that suits the individuals who are being interviewed. The usual rules for focus groups will be observed:

- The purpose of the discussion is clearly explained to the participants.
- It is also explained to them that their participation is not obligatory.
- Participants are asked their consent to participate.
- The setting is conducive to making people feel at ease as much as possible, in a comfortable space with some refreshments offered if available.
- The groups are not bigger than 10-15 individuals
- The composition of the groups is more or less homogenous in terms of position, age, gender or other characteristics that are relevant for the issues to be discussed during the focus group. This will be guided by cultural norms (to be advised by programme staff)
- Questions are open questions. The discussion leader asks clarification where needed.
- Discussions will be held in the language that the participants feel most at ease in, with an independent interpreter where required.
- Guidance will be sought from programme managers regarding appropriate methodologies for enabling effective focus group discussions, taking into account such issues as educational background and literacy levels.

8. **Review plan**

- Individual key informant interviews and focus group discussions will be recorded, either on paper or on a laptop. A digital recording of the interview may be taken with the consent of the informant to aid accurate data collection, but only with the permission of the informant.
- Notes will be analysed according to pre-defined categories corresponding to review questions; during data analysis, categories may be refined or adapted as necessary.
- Project documents will also be analysed, as much as possible using the same categories in order to triangulate the data, using appropriate software
- Recordings of key informant interviews (if used) will be used to verify quotes but will not be shared.
- Quotes will not be attributed to individuals.

9. Ethics and consent

- Each interview will begin with an explanation of the purpose and independence of the review to interviewees and consent will be sought to proceed on the basis of confidentiality. People will have the opportunity to opt out of the interview without further consequence.
- Individual key informant interviews will be recorded (either using a recording device or through notation directly into a laptop. Recordings of key informant interviews will be used to verify quotes but will not be shared.
- Permission will be requested before any photographs are taken and how photographs may be used will be clearly explained.
- Notes will be analysed according to pre-defined categories corresponding to review questions; during data analysis, categories may be refined or adapted as necessary.
- Project documents will also be analysed, as much as possible using the same categories in order to triangulate the data.
- Data entry will be carried out using regular Office software or using freely accessible software tools for qualitative data analysis.
- Any quotations used in the report will not be attributed to individuals in order to maintain confidentiality.

10. Organisation of the district visits

For organisational ease the first district visit, where the review team will pilot the review tools will be Lalitpur. The teams will then split up, with each team visiting two districts; the MTR task force organisers are requested to organise this taking into consideration logistical ease of access between districts.

The teams will split taking into consideration the need for interpretation; the team leader will travel with the team member from the Pakistan Red Crescent and an independent interpreter (it is important that the interpreter is entirely independent and is not connected to the Nepal Red Cross or its work in the districts), while the national consultant will travel with the NRCS representative (which team will go where will be decided once in Kathmandu).

For each district chapter, an itinerary of interviews and focus group discussions should be organised prior to the arrival of the team, taking into consideration the following:

- The first meeting on arrival in the district should be a briefing from the NRCS District Programme Coordinator (DPC), to introduce the recovery programme in the district and review the programme of interviews and visits to the VDCs. A minimum of two hours should be given for this meeting.
- A list of key informants should be put together by the DPC, together with partners and should include:
 - NRCS district chapter personnel (staff, governance, volunteers);
 - Government of Nepal counterparts (NRA, other authorities);
 - RC partners (delegates, key personnel);
 - Other partners or organisations that work alongside the Red Cross (for example NGO members of coordination committees).
- One hour meetings should be set up for these interviews to take place (with enough time in between to allow for travel); these can be focus group meetings where appropriate, for example with NRCS volunteers (maximum 10-15 people please) – see guidance regarding focus group meetings above.

- One or two VDCs should be identified for each district visited. In each visit, at least one and a half hours should be allocated to each focus group discussion, individual meetings with VDC leadership, key stakeholders etc and for observation (of works carried out for example).

11. Organisation of interviews in Kathmandu

As with the district level interviews, a list of key informants based in Kathmandu should be compiled. These interviews should be scheduled to take place between 17 – 19 July if possible, although if key informants are not available in this period then interviews can be scheduled for 4 July. Interviews can be double booked as they will be led by either the national consultant or the team leader (confirmation of who will carry out each interview will be agreed in July).

Informants should include:

- NRCS staff and governance, including members of the ERO steering committee
- Government of Nepal counterparts (NRA, DUDBC, Ministry of Health and other authorities);
- RC partners (country representatives);
- Other key interlocutors

Each interview should be scheduled to last one hour, with enough time allowed for travel between locations (and half an hour for lunch please!).

Interviews undertaken during inception visit

Nepal Red Cross Society

Chairman - Sanjiv Thapa

Secretary General - Dev Ratna Dhakwha

Head of the ERO - Umesh Dhakal

NRCS Head of Finance - Dharma Datta Bidari

ERO Finance Coordinator - Patrush Rai

OD Unit - Janardhan Pokharel

ERO Consultant - Kamal Niraula

Technical teams

Shelter - Dipak Giri (ERO), Priyanka Thapa (?), Laxman Chhetry (IFRC)

WASH - Birendra Sahi (ERO), Kaustubh Kukde (IFRC)

Health - Mausam Bohara (ERO), Bijay Bharati (IFRC)

Livelihood - Saroj Shrestha (ERO)

PMER - Tara Gurung (ERO), Dibakar Behere (IFRC)

IFRC

Head of Country Office - Max Santner

Programme Coordinator - Mike Higginson

Head of Finance & Management Services - Yadav Prasad Dahal

Logistics Coordinator - Tendai Chabvuta

Partners

Spanish Red Cross - Sergio Garcia (Country Representative)

Danish Red Cross - Anne-Sophie Petri (Programme Coordinator Recovery)

British Red Cross - Jill Clements (Country Representative), Hrushikesh Harichandan (Recovery Coordinator), Lucy Brearley (PMEAL)

Canadian Red Cross - Richard McCabe (Country Representative)

Australian Red Cross - Mukesh Singh (Country Representative)

Swiss Red Cross - Luigi Viscardi (Recovery Programme Coordinator)

Japanese Red Cross - Kazuyu Lgarashi (Acting Country Representative)

American Red Cross - Leela Mulukutla (Country Representative)

Norwegian Red Cross - Karyn Beattie (Country Representative)

Annex 3: Itinerary

2 July 2017	International consultant arrives in Kathmandu
3-4 July	Briefing with IFRC staff Team planning and orientation Briefing meeting with ERO director KII with CEA Officer

Kavre

5 July	Travel from Kathmandu to Banepa Kavre Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter & ERO team and DRC delegates/staff KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee members KII District Livestock Office, Veterinary Officer & Senior Livestock Officer
6 July	KII ERO Livelihood Officer and DRC Livelihood Delegate KII District Health Office KII Representative of Water and Sanitation Division Office Travel to Kharelthok 2 FGD Community Members Kharelthok KII Auxiliary Nurse, Kharelthok Health Post KII with Livelihood beneficiary KII with KIDRAK representative KII with Child Resilience Programme beneficiaries Travel back to Dhulikhel
7 July	KII Teacher involved in Child Resilience Programme KII Chief District Officer KII with NRA head, Kavre Travel to Dolalghat 9 Visit drinking water construction site - on the spot conversations with community members FGD Community members Dolalghat KII with Cash for work beneficiary KII with Bhumlu10 ward chairman KII DRC Programme Coordinator KII ERO DPC KII WASH Officer KII PMER Officer Feedback to ERO team
8 July	Team split - travel to Chautara, Sindhupalchok and Kathmandu

Lalitpur

9 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team Departure to Godawari KII with ward chair and secretary of ward no. 2 (previous ward No. 3 & 4) FGD with mixed program beneficiaries (4 men 13 women) FGD with Livelihood CCG of Ward No. 2 & CFW beneficiaries of Godawari Ward No. 1 (previous 1 & 2) FGD with sub-branch chair and a member Observation of Hygiene promotion session organized for senior citizen and observation of vocational training notice
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10 July	KII with district level line agencies - CDO - District Agriculture Office - District Health Office - District Livestock office FGD with District Chapter Steering Committee including chapter president FGD with volunteers FGD with sector officers
11 July	Departure to Mahalaxmi from DC Meeting with community leaders: Ward Chairman, Sub chapter President and other stakeholders of Ward No. 8 (previous Ward No. 6 & 7) Observation of water scheme project of Gomati Khanepani Yojana & FGD with the WUG, and the potential beneficiaries of the project Interaction with the Livelihood CCG beneficiaries from Lubhu Observation of completed water scheme: Sukunda ma puchha & FGD with WUG of Sukunda ma Pucha KII with NRA head KII with PMER, ERO, district branch KII with DPC, ERO, District branch

Sindhupalchok

9 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee (President, Member) KII Head, DUDBC KII DUDBC KII Staff from District Livestock Office	
10 July	Travel to Nawalpur FGD with people who had participated in Mason Training Workshops Visit/KII with family living in model house build during Mason Training Visit to school toilet block construction, Kunchok FGD with NRCS and female community health volunteers, Kunchok Travel back to Chautara KII with DPC KII with PMER Officer	
11 July	Travel to Sikharpur FGD with Community Members, Sikharpur Visit irrigation canal repair, KIIs with Cash-For-Work recipients Visits/KIIs to 2 households (focused on toilets, training and improved cooking stoves)	KII Admin & Finance Officer KII Deputy DPC KII Logistics Officer KII Senior ICB Assistant KII WASH Officer KII Health Officer
12 July	Feedback meeting to ERO Team Travel from Chautara to Manthali, Ramachhap	

Rasuwa

12 July	Travel from Kathmandu to Dhunche, Rasuwa
13 July	Visit to NRCS ERO office, briefing DPC FGD with ERO staff at the district chapter FGD with president (NRCS Rasuwa chapter president) and 2 other steering committee members. KII with NRA KII with CDO KII with DCC KII with Head, District Agriculture Office KII with UNHABITAT technical advisor

	Field observation- health post construction
14 July	Travel to Thulagaun VDC Field visit, Shelter and foot trail observation FGD with Shelter beneficiary FGD with foot trail beneficiary Individual meeting with VDC Leadership and key stakeholders Travel to Saramthali VDC FGD with water users' committee KII with newly elected ward chairman KII with livelihood beneficiary, goat raising KII with livelihood beneficiary, vegetable farming KII with Field Officer KII with DPC
15 July	Field visit, HHs latrine and water schemes observation FGD with water schemes beneficiary FGD with HHs latrine beneficiary Individual meeting with VDC Leadership and key stakeholders Travel to Kalikasthan for night stay Travel to Kathmandu from Kalikasthan

Ramechhap

12 July	Travel from Chautara, Sindhupalchok to Manthali, Ramechhap
13 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee (President, Treasurer, Secretary) KII Ramechhap CDO KII NRA District Coordinator KII Chief, District Water Supply and Sanitation Office KII Veterinary Officer, District Livestock Office
14 July	Travel to Rampur FGD Community Members, Khanidanda, Rampur 5 FGD ERO Staff and Social Mobilisers, Rampur Travel back to Manthali KII Health Officer KII PMER Officer KII Livelihood Officer KII Finance Officer
15 July	Travel to Rampur FGD Female Community Members, Chharghare, Rampur 2 FGD Male Community Members, Chharghare, Rampur 2 KII Health Post In Charge, Rampur Visits/short interviews with to 2 households, Rampur Travel back to Manthali Feedback session with NRCS SC member and ERO team
16 July	Travel back to Kathmandu

Kathmandu

17 July	KIIs with: NRCS Finance Director, NRCS Head of Humanitarian Values & Communications, NRCS ERO Finance Coordinator, NRCS Head of Finance Management Services Unit, IFRC Head of IFRC Country Office and IFRC Programme Coordinator
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18 July	KIIs with: Deputy Project Director, DUDBC Country Representative American Red Cross Country Representative Canadian Red Cross ERO Shelter Coordinator, NRCS ERO GESI Coordinator, NRCS ERO PMER Coordinator ERO WASH Coordinator, NRCS DM Director, NRCS ERO Logistics Coordinator, NRCS Deputy Director NRA
19 July	Representative Department of Health Country Representative Belgian Red Cross (Flanders) Country Representative Norwegian Red Cross Recovery Coordinator, Swiss Red Cross Heads of Cooperation and Protection, ICRC Director of ERO, NRCS FGD with ERO Steering Committee members, NRCS
20 July	Participation in Movement Coordination meeting Presentation of initial findings Team planning for write up phase
21 July	International Consultant departs KII with: HR coordinator, IFRC, Kathmandu Director, ERO, NRCS, Kathmandu Livelihood Coordinator, NRCS Institutional Capacity Building Coordinator, IFRC Technical Advisor, ERO, NRCS, Kathmandu
24 July	Health Coordinator, ERO, NRCS Country Representative, Spanish Red Cross Country Representative, Australian Red Cross Country Representative, Livelihood delegate, information/advocacy delegate, British Red Cross (through skype)

Annex 4: Informants

Kathmandu

Key Informants	Position	Organisation
Indra Bahadur KC	Secretary, ERO Steering Committee & Acting Executive Director	NRCS
Karyn Beattie	Country Representative	Norwegian Red Cross
Dharma Dutta Bidari	Finance Director	NRCS
Dr Mausam Bohara	Health Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Dr Bhisma Bhusal	Deputy Director	NRA
Lucy Brealey	PMEAL Officer	British Red Cross
Jill Clements	Country Representative	British Red Cross
Yadav Dahal	Head of Finance Management Services Unit	IFRC Nepal
Umesh Dhakal	Director, ERO	NRCS
Dev Ratna Dhakhwa	Secretary General & ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Sarita Dhungana	Community Engagement and Accountability Officer, ERO	NRCS
Dipak Giri	Shelter Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Sergio González	Country Representative	Spanish Red Cross
Tara Gurung	PMER Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Sanjeev Hada	ICB Coordinator	IFRC
Hrusikesh Harichandan	Recovery Coordinator	British Red Cross
Mike Higginson	Programme Coordinator	IFRC
Kazuyo Igarashi	Acting Country Representative	Japanese Red Cross
Parikshit Kadariya	Deputy Project Director	DUDBC
Puja Koirala	GESI Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Richard McCabe	Country Representative	Canadian Red Cross
Leela Mulukutla	Country Representative	American Red Cross
Hari Prasad Neupane	ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Kamal Niraula	Advisor, ERO	NRCS
Dharma Raj Pandey	Disaster Management Director	NRCS
Prem Phaju	Head	DWSS
Dibya Raj Poudel	Head of Humanitarian Values and Communications	NRCS
Pramesh Poudel	Head of Cooperation	ICRC

Patrus Rai	ERO Finance Coordinator	NRCS
Ishwor Regmi	Logistics Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Max Santner	Head of Country Office	IFRC
Els Schapendonk	Country Representative	Belgian Red Cross (Flanders)
Birendra Shahi	WASH Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Abhinav Sharma	Human Resources Officer	IFRC
Ajeet Kumar Sharma	ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Dr Mahendra Shrestha	Director	District Public Health Officer
Saroj Shrestha	Livelihood Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Saurav Shrestha	Head of Protection	ICRCK
Mukesh Singh	Country Representative	Australian Red Cross
Priyanka Thapa	Shelter Officer, ERO	NRCS
Sanjiv Thapa	Chairman (governing board and ERO steering committee)	NRCS
Luigi Viscardi	Recovery Coordinator	Swiss Red Cross

Kavre

Key Informants	Position	Organisaion / Place
Narayan Shrestha	Head	District Livestock Development Office
Lucia Taboara	Livelihood Delegate	Danish Red Cross
Dr. Arjun Sapkota	District Health Officer	District Public Health Office
Prakash Aryal	Program Coordinator	Danish Red Cross, Kavre
Mohan Lal Jaishi	WASH Officer	District WASH Office
Radha Subedi	Program coordinator	KIDRAK
Dhurba Simkhada	Chief District Officer	CDO, Kavre
Ashok Adhikary	Engineer	DUBDC Kavre
Dhruba Gaında	Head	NRA, Kavre
Chitra Bahadur Tamang	Ward Chairman, former users' committee chairman	Dolalghat
Tika Jung Karki	PMER	NRCS, ERO, Kavre
Anita Tamang	Community member	Panchkhal
Anirudra Neupane	DPC	NRCS, REO, Kavre
Raghubir Chou Pradhan	District Chapter President	NRCS district chapter Kavre

Ananta Krishna Shrestha	Secretary	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Udhav Prasad Poudel	Treasurer	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Kumar Karki	Vice President	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Meera Joshi	Midwife	Health Post
Achut Sedhai	Member, CDMC	Kharelthok
Sharmila Sedhai	Member, CDMC	Kharelthok
Ramchandra Bhattarai	Teacher, Child Resilience Programme	School
Binda Panday	Community member	Kharelthok
Afsara Panday	Community member	Kharelthok
Focus Group Discussion		
Kharelthok, ward 2, Panchkhal	7 men, 5 women	Panchkhal
Kharelthok, different ward community members	10 men, 6 women	Panchkhal

Lalitpur

Key Informants	Position	Organisaion / Place
Devendra Basnet	Ward chairman	Mahalaxmi municipality, Godawari
Pradip Dhowj Karki	Ward secretary	Godawari VDC
Gore B.K	Mason training recipient	Godawari
Raj Kumar Shrestha	CDO	Lalitpur
Jhalak Sharma Poudel	DPHO	Lalitpur
Dr. Mogal Prasad Sah	Senior Livestock Development Officer	Lalitpur
Bharat Devkota	DAO	Lalitpur
Hari Dutta Poudel	WASH Officer	Lalitpur
Surya Bahadur Thapa	Friends Services Council (FSC), NGO	Lalitpur
Goma Devi Dhakal	District Coordinator	NRA
Suman Ghimire	Chiarwoman, Drinking Water users' committee	Lalitpur
Ram Sunar	Business man (Iron workshop)	Mahalaxmi
Chanchala Nepali	Business woman	Godawari

Basudev Sharma Goutam	Ward chairman, Mahalaxmi-9	Mahalaxmi
Sushmita KC	Business woman (colourful shoe-making)	Mahalaxmi
Nanda Bahadur Shrestha	Chairman, sub-banch	Godawari sub-branch
Kshitiz Acharya	DPC, Lalitpur	ERO, Lalitpur
Sharmila Karmacharya	PMER coordinator	ERO, Lalitput
Sabita	Social Mobiliser	Godawari
Bekha Man Byanjankar	President & Steering Committee Coordinator	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Baburaja Maharjan	Secretary & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Kalpit Kumar Tripathi	Treasurer & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Dinesh Karki	Member & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Lila Kumari Limbu	Administrative & Finance Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Roshana Byanjankar	Senior Office Assistant	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Rushma Panta	Livelihood Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Poonum Adhikari	Program Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Chhoden Lama	WASH Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Biwash Thapa	Junior Engineer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Godawari women group	Godawari	14 men, 5 women
Godawari sub-branch	Godawari	1 man, 1 woman
Volunteers (district chapter)	Lalitpur	4 women, 8 men

Rasuwa

ERO staff

S. No.	Key Informants	Position	Organisation / Place
1	Madhu Sudan Thapa	District Program Coordinator	NRCS, Rasuwa
2	Rajendra Koli	Finance and Adminstration Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
3	Agni sharma Timilsina	PMER Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
4	Surya Bikram Gole	Field Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
5	Pawan Pandey	Shelter Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
6	Bhola nath silwal	WASH Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
7	Suman Paudel	Livelihood Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
8	Smita Thapa	Program Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa

District chapter: steering committee

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Babu Lal Tamang	President	Dhunche
2	Lama Renjan Ghale	Seceretary	Dhunche
3	Dinesh Tamang	Treasure	Dhunche
4	Balram Ghimere	Member	Dhunche

Line agencies/NRA

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Rajendra Dev Pandey	LDO	DCC
2	Chomendra Neupane	CDO	DAO, Office
3	Rabi Koirala	DE	DWSS, Office
4	Shiv Raj Neupane	Technical advisor	UN Habitat
5	Ramesh Humagain	SADO	DADO
6	Krishna kant Upadhaya	Head	NRA

Social mobiliser and volunteers

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Dev Bahadur BK	Social Mobilizer (Lead)	Thulogaaun
2	Kamala Adhikari	Social Mobilizer	Thulogaaun
3	Hiramaya Gurung	Social Mobilizer	Thulogaaun
4	Bal Kumari Gurung	Social Mobilizer (Shelter)	Thulogaaun
5	Nisha Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 1
6	Kopila Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 3
7	Prabina Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 4
8	Phulmaya Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 5
9	Nabika Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 6
10	Ishwori Neupane	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 7
11	Sarina Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 9

Beneficiary/Local Government Agencies

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Asha Bahadur Guruung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
2	Meen Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary/Ward member	Thulogaaun

Beneficiary

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Bishunu Bahadur Gurung	RAG President ward-9	Thulogaaun
2	Shant Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
3	Goma Gurungseni	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
4	Nir Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
5	Sita Maya Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun

Beneficiary/Users' committee members

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Dhurba Achrya	Chairman, water users committee	Laharepauwa
2	Sita Neuaane	Treasurer	Laharepauwa
3	Ramchandra Gajurel		

4	Dol Kumari Achrya		
5	Raju BK	Member	Laharepauwa
6	Keshar Bdr Bulun	Chairman (Ward)	Laharepauwa
7	Resham Tamang		
8	Thakur Prasad Gajurel		

Livelihood Beneficiary

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Meuka Nagarkoti	Goat Farmer	Laharepauwa
2	Chandra Man lo	Tomato (Veg) Farmer	Laharepauwa

Participants detail: Social Mobiliser

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Ganesh Achrya	Social Mobiliser, Laharepauwa	Laharepauwa
2	Rajendra Prasad Gajurel	Social Mobiliser, Laharepauwa	Laharepauwa

Ramechhap

Key Informants	Position	Organisation / Place
Rishiaj Acharya	District Coordinator	NRA
Sundar Bartaula	Engineer	DUDBC Rampur
Jaya Ram Basnet	DPC	NRCS ERO
Lok Bahadur Chaulagai	Head	District WASH Office
Mahesh Deubajar	Veterinary Officer	District Livestock Office
Samihana Dhakal	Shelter Officer, ERO	NRCS
Bikram Raj Gryawali	Engineer	NRA
Partik Gurung	Health Officer, ERO	NRCS
Dinesh Kumar Karki	Treasurer	NRCS District Chapter
Shiva Kumar Karki	President	NRCS District Chapter
Suriya Bahadur Khatur	Chief District Officer	District Office
Prem Punthoki	Admin & Finance Officer, ERO	NRCS
Arun Rai	PMER Officer, ERO	NRCS
Indra Rana Magar	Administrative Officer	Rampur Ward Office
Sushant Raut	Livelihood Officer, ERO	NRCS
Suprabha Sharma	Junior Engineer	NRCS ERO
Dhana Bahadur Shrestha	Community member	Rampur
Taya Parakash Shrestha	Secretary	NRCS District Chapter
Ujjeli Shrestha	Community member	Rampur
Dan Bahadur Tamang	Community member	Rampur
Kamala Tamang	Community member	Rampur

Krishna Bahadur Tamang	Rampur Health Post In Charge	Department of Health
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Community members	Khanidanda, Rampur 5	4 women, 3 men
ERO Staff and Social Mobilisers	Rampur	5 women, 8 men
Female community members	Kolonjor, Rampur 2	14 women
Male community members	Kolonjor, Rampur 2	16 men

Sindhupalchok

Name	Position	Organisation / Place
Dipesh Acharya	Social Mobiliser	NRCS
Bimala Bhattarai	Community member	Nawalpur
Ram Krishna Bhandari	Steering Committee Member	NRCS District Chapter
Mukunda Bhatti	Logistics Officer, ERO	NRCS
Khem Kumari Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Ram Kumar Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Shyam Kumar Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Bim Prasad Dahal	Executive Officer	Nuwapur Municipality
Arjun Khadka	Veterinary Officer	District Livestock Office
Gavinda Bahadur Kayastha	Community member	Badegaun
Sanjapa Lama	Sanitation Assistant	NRCS
Rudra Bahadur Malla	District Officer in Charge	NRA
Bishnu Maya Nakarni	Community member	Badegaun
Kaziman Nakarni	Community member	Badegaun
Srijana Nepal	Health Officer, ERO	NRCS
Prawesh Neupane	PMER Officer, ERO	NRCS
Youb Raj Paudyal	Division Chief	DUDBC
Thaneshor Pokhrel	Senior ICB Assistant, ERO	NRCS
Sujan Regmi	WASH Officer, ERO	NRCS
Ram Krishna Sapkate	Social Mobiliser	NRCS
Chandika Sapkota	Community member	Sikharpur
Dr Kalyan Kumar Shrestha	Senior Livestock Officer	District Livestock Office
Sanjib Shrestha	Admin & Finance Officer, ERO	NRCS
Hari Prasad Subedi	DPC, ERO	NRCS
Rajendra Man Talchabhadal	President	NRCS District Chapter
Bansha Lal Tamang	Chairperson	Nawapur Municipality

Name	Position	Organisation / Place
Srijana Tamang	Community member	Sikharpur
Subash Timilsina	Deputy District Programme Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Community members	Sikharpur	3 women, 5 men
Participants of mason training	Nawalpur	1 woman, 8 men
NRCS & community volunteers	Kunchok	6 women, 1 man
ERO engineers and social mobilisers	Badegaun	4 female social mobilisers, 3 male engineers

Appendix 1: Kavre

Categories	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• In Kavre, recovery operations have two major interventions: first, integrated recovery and resilience (IRRP) programme supported by consortium partners led by Danish RC and second, reconstruction of health facilities supported by Korean Red Cross. The implementation of IRRP activities and budget delivery is going well. However, reconstruction of health facilities faced serious challenges due to issues with the contractor and the consultant. • Unlike other NRCS recovery operation districts, Kavre has adopted a systematic programme approach including vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA), developed community recovery plans and formed and/or strengthened community disaster management committees (CDMCs). The conducting of VCA at the start of the programme intervention has ensured the support reaching most vulnerable segments of the society and a high level of community engagement as evidenced by the FGDs. • The chapter has good coordination with line agencies including NRA district branch. Most of the line agency heads expressed that NRCS is the trusted partner in the district in times of emergency and recovery operations. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that it will complete all the planned activities by end of December 2018. Programme delivery so far has been around 60% in software and around 45% in hardware. • Overall, highly capable staff, committed governance and good coordination with the partners are contributing to making the recovery operations a success in the district.
Targeting/coverage	• Target groups such as most vulnerable, <i>janajati</i>, <i>dalit</i> and marginalized were well represented in the programme beneficiaries. Adoption of the VCA process at the start of the programme and selection of beneficiaries based on the assessments, formation and strengthening of CDMCs helped target the most vulnerable, marginalized, <i>Janajatis</i> and <i>dalit</i> community members. • RC did not have any plan to address the unmet needs of the communities. Usually the long-term recovery touches on many sectors including emergency management, public health, housing, mental health and the environment. The RC interventions are limited to health, livelihood and WASH, together with some soft components of shelter. • The VCA revealed inaccuracies of the needs assessment baselines process led from NHQ, eg it suggested that few families needed toilets, but the VCA revealed that many did not have functioning toilets and this was confirmed by the PHAST assessment.
Programmes (4+1)	100% stakeholders in the district believed that all the programme interventions are in line with the community needs. The 4+1 interventions were very much useful and accepted by the community members. Community members in FGDs were very much happy with the Red Cross support.

	Shelter - Construction of shelter was not the part of the recovery operations. Soft components such as PASSA trainings and roll out sessions, masons and carpenter trainings, IEC production and distribution were the key activities under this component. Around 42% of the programme target in PASSA was achieved at the time of this assessment. WASH - Construction/rehabilitation of drinking water schemes, planning of PHAST and its roll out, latrine and other sanitary unit construction and behaviour change and hygiene promotion are the key interventions under this component. - Eight drinking water schemes have been completed, reaching around 30% target beneficiaries. - RC has also played a key role in helping government achieve the ODF declaration. - District line agency is happy with the work RC is doing in the WASH sector in both the response and recovery operations. Health - Key health interventions include first aid and CBHFA trainings, services and health awareness sessions. 35 volunteers have received health refresher training, 67 community members have received first aid training, 499 people received training on first aid injury training, and 38 people received first aid services. Apart from this, acute respiratory infection sessions and nutrition awareness sessions were conducted. - Feedback from local health staff suggested that while the training was good and DHO staff were involved, it should have been more interactive and involve more demonstration to make it less theoretical. - The winterisation programme was appreciated and met a palpable need. Health post reconstruction Health post construction is a major activity in 12 VDCs, which is supported by Korean Red Cross. This activity has been seriously delayed and concerned line agency are not happy with the progress. The reason of the delay was negligence of consultant and contractor. The contractor has now been replaced and NRCS is confident that the work will be completed by end of 2018. The progress of the work so far is as follows: - Foundation work on process 4 HP. (Sanobanthali, Walting, Chandenimandan, Banakhu) - Foundation work completed 2 HP. (Jyamdi, Gothpani) - Metal and Truss work ongoing 2 HP. (Kharelthok, Rayale) - Prefab Board Installation ongoing 1 HP. (Rabiopi)
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- Roofing / CGI sheet installation 1 HP. (Mahendrajyoti)

Health office doesn't use email and doesn't ask for reports. It was reported that RC shares documents on a monthly basis with WASH office. WASH office provides template for this information.

Livelihoods

- There are three interventions in the livelihood programme i.e. income generation support through Conditional Cash Grant (CCG) to individuals and groups, technical and vocational trainings and cash for work. 398 community people gained temporary employment through cash for work (303 male and 95 female), total 4611 person days worked for drinking water schemes, irrigation channels and ponds and mitigation schemes. In the conditional cash grant, community members have formulated household business plans and are implementing livelihoods activities, the most common is goat raising. Some families have started to generate some income from the sale of goats. Two levels of CCG depending upon levels of vulnerability, defined through VCA by the community – 40,000 and 30,000 rupees. Some confusion regarding the differences expressed in some FGDs. Feedback suggests that Rs 10, 000 allocated for livestock shelter construction is generally felt to be insufficient.
- RC is part of District Livestock Development Technical Committee and a member of the Livestock Development Working Group.
- District livestock office (DLO) has received support from RC to assist milk cooperatives, livestock insurance, getting loan from bank. RC has also helped communities in income generation. RC has supported DLO to organize trainings for communities. DLO is happy and impressed with the support received from the RC and appreciates the role played by RC during emergency and recovery operations.

Institutional Capacity Building

Capacity building interventions included the three tiers of the local level – RC chapter, community and the CDMCs. *CDMC / Community*

- Trainings, equipment, formation and strengthening of CDMCs are the key activities. The key activities of ICB included the following:
 - Capacity building of community on disaster preparedness and response
 - 79 CDMC board members including 29 female members trained on DRR
 - 27 Community volunteers provided CBDRR Training
 - Office establishment of CDMC
 - Emergency fund collection at CDMCs total of about NPR 500,000 (except NPR 10,000 supported by NRCS)
- Construction of Flood Mitigation Scheme completed at Dolalghat (90 HHs)

	• Plantation (2000 plants) for landslide mitigation (J8-1300, J6700). However, it was not clear why this activity was part of the institutional capacity building. • Level A training to 67 people • Response kit (Pre-positioning 24 wards) • Evacuation material preposition (15 points) • Emergency funds have been established in the communities. • Strengthening of CDMCs has helped resolve local issues and sustain the existing activities in future. In Kharelthok, local issues and some of the community complaint are resolved through the CDMC. • Conducting VCAs at the start of the programme helped not only identify the community needs but set the ground for developing local recovery plans. • CDMCs are committed to use their own fund - 1 lakh in the account for electricity, road construction, maintenance of water scheme. RC was also supported giving extra 10,000 extra money - those that haven't received training will get it in the next phase. Also, previously very happy given the skills training and equipment, so really happy. <i>District Chapter</i> • Capacity building of District Chapter in Disaster Preparedness and response • OD and DDRT training to DC volunteers • The planned office building construction for the district chapter seems ambitious in terms of budget and the timeline. Needs to review plan on time. • It seems that the ICB approach related to the chapter is more of a top down approach focusing on training and building and needs to be more bottom up. Overall, the ICB intervention is seen more focused on the training, equipping the communities and CDMCs. There was less focus on formulation or adaptation of policies, strategies, development of operational framework, tools, guidelines and capacity development of district branch, communities and individuals especially for the skills and knowledge building.
Other issues	• Complaint and feedback handling mechanisms are strong. Complaints and feedback are received through social mobilisers, hotline, suggestion box, monthly and quarterly reviews and personal meetings. The role of volunteers and social mobilisers has been effective and crucial in the collection and handling of many issues. Some issues could be resolved through socialisation of the criteria and decisions at the right time. • Integration of GESI in all activities, PWD focused interventions and child protection-related activities integrated into the Child Resilience Programme being delivered both through schools and with parents – interesting strategy that according to KIIs with participants is leading to some behaviour change related to child rights. Feedback suggests that the IEC materials are needed for the children and the parents. Also one

	KII suggested that it should not be providing what he termed junk food to students during the training sessions, suggested other incentives such as a certificate, first aid materials etc and also suggested that more monitoring of the programme was required. Some of the teachers involved in the CRP have reviewed and contextualised the material, it is understood that this will be published with a view to sharing with other districts. • The level of sectoral integration could be strengthened. Sectoral integration has been understood as having all 4 programme interventions in one location. Synergies among the sectors/interventions have not sufficiently ensured, in terms of joint planning, joint implementation, joint reviews/monitoring and dealing with issues together. True integration should provide a comprehensive package in a holistic manner and should reduce the cost and provide all-sector support to the communities. It was observed during the field visit and interviews that sectors programs were implemented standalone.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS district chapter has strong coordination and relationship with the line agencies and almost all line agencies mentioned that NRCS is the closest and a trusted partner in both the response as well as recovery operations, although one line agency expressed its disappointment with NRCS chapter and ERO office for not handling the health post construction issues seriously (noting that the relationship had declined from the excellent relationship maintained during the emergency). • There was an issue of per diem with one line agency. NRCS provides per diems for government officers for facilitation of trainings following NRCS rules, whereas government per diem rate (Rs 1,200 per day) is higher than NRCS's (Rs 700). This has created some misunderstanding, although NRCS suggested that their payments were sufficient given that the facilitation session was generally only for only one or two hours. • NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. • NRCS has mobilized district level resources especially technical experts from line agencies for facilitation of skill development trainings. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies including the Chief District Officer. • RC has helped line agencies to support EQ affected families through trainings and income generation activities. • Line agencies have the impression that the presence of delegates has helped support communities better (due to monitoring role).
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the programme interventions have increased the resilience capability of communities. • The programmes have helped connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), build skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increase livelihoods options and improve local leadership.

Management issues	• The relationship between Chapter and NHQ has increased after the recovery operations. However, chapter believes that it should be given more authority especially related to issues such as staff recruitment, budget approval ceiling and procurement. • There are gaps in beneficiary communications. Some community members believed that some HHs are excluded from the programme support especially livelihood/cash grant programming. They think that the criteria do not truly reflect their situation. The issue could be resolved through further socialization of the criteria, selection finding and increased beneficiary communication. • Coordination with NGOs working at the community level is normal. There is room for improvement (such as with KIDRAK). One NGO representative based in the RC project community complained about the duplication of the RC activities. S/he also mentioned that the relationship between the NGO and RC was even worse in the past and now it is improving due to frequent coordination meetings at the community level. It was reported that in the livelihood component some beneficiaries did receive the grant but did not use the money for the intended purpose. For instance, some families prepared sheds but did not buy goats and some families even showed the existing goats and did not buy new ones. It was reported that CDMC was instructed to ask the concerned families to return the money and put the amount in the DRR fund at the local level. CDMCs are playing a crucial role in this regard. • It was reported that technical coordinators at ERO should visit to the district more and orientate the field staff time to time. • It was reported that procurement approach is now ok (RED contract) but suppliers make delays for • different reason in health construction work.
Actions to be taken	1. Trainings should be more gender inclusive. In one FGD, women members opined that there is very little interest of women in masons training. There should be some skill development trainings that help raise income generation and employment opportunities for women. 2. Sector integration has not been well practiced. Joint planning, one set of work plans, joint monitoring, synchronization in the technical support and joint review should be carried out. 3. Sectoral guidelines are more long-term development focused. Recovery focused guidelines are necessary. 4. Need to link CDMCs to LDRRMC and local government units for sustainability of local infrastructures. CDMCs have formed O&M funds, however it should be further strengthened and made operational with proper bank account and rules, regulations and procedures. 5. By sharing the progress reports on a regular basis and having frequent consultative meetings, the relationships with line agencies could be further improved.

Appendix 2: Lalitpur

Issue	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• The implementation of the program activities in the district is going well. Committed staff and volunteers, good coordination with the line agencies, appropriate program interventions and effective community mobilization have made the overall recovery program so far a success. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that they will complete all the planned activities by end of December 2018. Program delivery is reportedly around 60% in software and around 45% in hardware. • Program interventions especially livelihood component has shown some initial impacts on the improvement in the local household level economy. Some examples of successful ventures include mobile street shop, iron works, colourful shoe-making, and goat raising. • Some resentment among community members could be observed regarding the exclusion from the beneficiary list of conditional cash grant, cash for work (CfW) and trainings appropriate for women. It was observed that such issues could have been resolved through appropriate assessment tool at the beginning of the project such as VCA and deeper socialization of selection criteria and validation from the community members and groups. Strengthening of the CDMCs and linking them to LDRMC was clearly noticed. • Relation between chapter steering committee and ERO staff could be improved. The root causes of lack of sound relationships lie in the recruitment processes, differences in salary between chapter core staff and ERO staff and roles and responsibilities of the steering committee. More clarity on these issues could help smooth the relationship. • Sector integration, recovery focused guidelines and urban specific tools were felt necessary. The sectoral integration is understood as the activities of various sectors implemented in one locality without sufficient synergies. Joint planning, joint implementation including monitoring and use of integrated tools appears not to have been practiced in the communities. • Overall, community members who have received support from NRCS are happy despite some areas for improvement especially in identification of the most vulnerable households. Line agencies regard NRCS as the most trusted emergency and recovery partner in the district. The recovery operations have also helped build the image of RC.
Targeting/coverage	• Some RCM partners and stakeholders raised concerns regarding initial area selection for both the districts and communities. It was suggested that NRCS should have negotiated with the government to allocate the most affected districts for the RCM partners. A suggestion from district line agencies was that RC should go to more remote areas of the district and should cover more communities.

	• District selection should have been carried out in consultation with the local chapter and their priorities. Community selection should have been based on vulnerability and capacity assessment or other assessments so that the most vulnerable communities could have been identified for the program interventions under RCM. However, the selection of most vulnerable families in the communities appears to have been ensured in the livelihoods program through Focus Group Discussions, wellbeing analysis and data from secondary sources. This has not been the case in all program interventions. • The cash for work (CfW) scheme has been provided to the poorest families. One of the criteria for selection of the most vulnerable families for CfW scheme is those families who have not removed debris of their houses yet. For the cash grant provision under livelihoods program, a set of selection criteria has been developed and applied. • Lack of a standard tool for the categorization of vulnerabilities at the community level such as VCA and the absence of Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs) were two areas that could help target the most vulnerable families, identify the neediest households and resolve local development issues through active participation. • Local elected authorities and line agencies believed that NRCS should have covered more VDCs. Some stakeholders suggested that NRCS should have also targeted the more remote VDCs of the district. • NRCS does not have any plan to address unmet needs of the communities.
Programs (4+1)	100% respondents in the district opined that all the program interventions are in line with the community needs. The 4+1 interventions and general activities were designed by the NHQ whereas specific activities of each component such as livelihoods were designed by the local chapter in consultation with local stakeholders such as Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), political parties and ward secretaries. Livelihoods • Seed and toolkit support, conditional cash grant (CCG) in agriculture, livestock and small businesses, and vocational trainings for youth were some of the key activities implemented under the livelihood component in the district. Among them CCG with a cash grant of Rs 20,000 to each family has shown some visible impacts in the lives and livelihoods of some the poor families. Some successful small businesses include iron workshops, mobile shop, and ladies shoe-making. Although the amount allocated for Kathmandu valley districts is half of the amount given to other districts, which is not clearly justifiable, the study (interviews and field observations) shows that the lesser the amount the higher the chance of the poorest of the poor families to be selected for the scheme. • The selection of beneficiaries for CCG and CfW has sparked controversies and resentment among some community members who were excluded from the benefit. Some families have blamed the social

	mobiliser or community representatives who took part in the selection process for having excluded them intentionally. - Community resentment may have been avoided had a standard tool such as VCA applied and the outcomes socialized at the beginning of the program interventions. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) - Key activities implemented under this component include the training of trainers (ToT), school sanitation program, maintenance of water resources, water quality training, toilet construction and support to the declaration of ODF. - A significance progress has been achieved in this as was shared in a Powerpoint presentation to the MTR team. Some activities such as assessment for rainwater harvesting, school toilet construction, drinking water schemes are ongoing. - The concerned line agency in the district opined that the RC is quite ahead of other NGOs in terms of service delivery and package. However, it was reported that RC chose the closest communities for its interventions. No joint monitoring visits have been held in WASH sector. Health - RC has helped develop health contingency plan. RC is very active in DDRC and DLA in the district. - The concerned line agencies in the district believe that the completion of the immunization was a major challenge. NRCS' support in this regard was highly commendable. - RC also helped District Public Health Office in tackling diarrhoea outbreak last year and this year. RC has also helped in winterization. - Joint monitoring visits together with the concerned line agencies in the districts are also held. Shelter - Construction of shelter was not part of the program in the district. However, software components such as Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) training and community awareness raising, mason and carpenter trainings and community mobilization activities were implemented in the project communities. - Support for the debris clearance through cash for work scheme was also provided. - The community members who have received technical skill development trainings especially masons and carpentry are active in supporting to building earthquake resistant houses. This has helped build resilient houses as well as supported their own livelihoods. Institutional Capacity Building - Increased relationship between district and NHQ
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	• Increased capacity of governance (<i>Shesh, on what basis do you observe this?</i>) • DRR fund is present at the community level. • Coordination meetings are held on a regular basis; BRC also participates • Staff members are recruited by NHQ. • One door policy in the procurement has tied hands of the district. NHQ spends budget on behalf of the district. District chapter believes that the financial and procurement guidelines should be different for recovery operation from the normal development operation. • No exchange visit for learning from other districts had been made.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS district chapter has extremely good relationship with the line agencies and almost all line agencies mentioned that NRCS is the closest, most trusted partner in both the response as well as recovery operations. However, they observed that the support provided by NRCS chapter during the response was higher than that of recovery operations in terms of coverage, timeliness and package. • NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. • NRCS is the District Lead Agency (DLA) in the district. One line agency mentioned that as a DLA in the district NRCS chapter could play more active role in coordination with NGOs than it does now. • NRCS has mobilized district level resources especially technical experts from line agencies for facilitation of skill development trainings. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies. Most of the line agencies did not make monitoring visits to the RC supported communities.
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the program interventions have increased the resilience capabilities of communities. They believe that awareness raising, technical trainings, linking communities to the district level resources, strengthening the household level livelihood options, and improving local leadership have made the communities safer and more resilient. • The programs have helped connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), build skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increase livelihoods options, improve local leadership, and so.
Management issues	• Chapter steering committee has worked as a bridge between communities and line agencies. Almost all line agencies interviewed believed that RC is the trusted partner in times of response and recovery operations in the district. However, some respondents believed that RC chapter management is a bit weak, needs improvement especially in beneficiary selection and cash disbursement system. Programs are more top-down and could be made bottom up through the adopting standard tools such as VCA and other assessment and planning tools and by involving local level stakeholders. So far assessments are done only for certain sector such as livelihoods.

	• There are gaps in the beneficiary communication. Socialisation of beneficiary selection criteria and findings in a participatory manner could help resolve many issues and grievances of community members. • DRR structure and funds exist at local level. RC should take some initiatives to be active part of it. • Volunteer mobilization could be made more inclusive especially in planning and community meetings. They are usually mobilized in the implementation without involving them in the planning and community meetings. They are involved in street drama, livelihoods business planning, data entry, PMER/CEA, PSS in school, PASSA. • Volunteers feel that the visibility of volunteers in the district is lacking. Some sorts of visibility items such as t-shirts, caps with RC logos could be provided. • The relationship between chapter steering committee and the ERO chapter staff members could be improved. Complaints from staff members regarding the attitude of steering committee members towards them were raised. Similarly, steering committee members were not happy about the difference in salary scales between the core staff and ERO staff. Clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the steering committee should be made on time. Also, the grievance handling mechanism for staff members should be in place.
Other issues	• District line agencies are impressed with the complaint handling mechanisms adopted by NRCS in the district. • Sectoral integration at community level, recovery focused guidelines and urban specific tools were felt necessary. Understanding of the sectoral integration needs clarity. The study shows that implementing various sector activities in one location but in silos has been understood as an integration. Joint planning, adoption of joint tools, sectoral coordination at all phases of the operation and joint monitoring and reporting are some of the key elements of an integrated approach. • Majority of the respondents from the community and line agencies suggested that NRCS should expand its program areas to the wider community (vulnerable people).
Actions to be taken	6. Trainings should be more gender inclusive. 7. Clarifications to beneficiaries needed on the daily rate for workers under the Cash for Work scheme. 8. Need to strengthen local level institutions such as LDRRMC/CDMCs for sustainability of local infrastructures. 9. District sub-branch should be in the loop for community level intervention...sub-chapter should be empowered and mobilized. 10. Sector integration needs further clarity and applications (see: description in 'other issues' section above for details).

Appendix 3: Ramechhap

Issue	Key issues, observations and any suggested actions
Overall	• There is a sharp distinction between the work in Rampur and Manthali; work is now in full flow in Rampur but is slower to progress in Manthali, with recognition that working in urban environment has been further complicated by the recent constitutional changes. • An integrated approach is being achieved in Rampur; generic social mobilisers and volunteers are supporting the programme across the sectors. The integrated approach evident through interviews and FGDs – having generic volunteers and SMs who are able to combine different issues when visiting homes makes sense and there is evident cross-team support, for example between the engineers regarding toilet construction, etc. Recognition that working in a neglected VDC where other organisations are not working makes it easier for RC to deliver a more integrated programme. • FGDs reveal community members generally very pleased with the RC interventions which are clearly meeting perceived need and filling gap not being filled by government in many cases. FGDs suggest that the recovery operation will mean that vulnerable people's quality of life will be better in some respects than before the earthquake (particularly related to access to water). • Good and meaningful involvement of community in determining individual eligibility for programme, eg determining who will be priority beneficiaries; missed opportunity not to have used VCA as the basis for community level planning and engagement. • The operation is maintaining a strong relationship with most key line agencies; RC activities are enabling government to far exceed its own targets in Rampur.
Coverage, targeting etc	• While following the government beneficiary lists for shelter, in the other three sectors ERO is focusing on lower caste and marginalised people, in what was characterised by interviewees as a “forgotten place by government”. KIIs and FGDs confirm that communities are actively participating in the definition of priority beneficiary selection criteria and FGDs were strongly in favour of the approach being taken. • RC is taking on an advocacy role when cases of people being mistakenly left off the shelter list are known to them, with reported successes, although FGDs suggest that there are still some vulnerable people (eg elderly women living on their own) who are not on the lists. • A key issue for Ramechhap district authorities is the inequality of response between the different VDCs, given that there are very few partners working in this district compared to some of the other priority districts (CDO reported that there is only one other partner (MedAir) working in 1 VDC, despite there being 49 VDCs in total, with 20 badly affected). Concern was expressed at the large number of RC staff and volunteers working in Rampur compared to neighbouring VDCs with only very limited staffing, meaning that results are much more limited. Informants believed that RC should be trying to support more of the badly affected VDCs through technical training and support, particularly related to shelter construction.
4+1: WASH	• Water activities estimated to be 30% complete, finishing first large drinking water scheme before starting second. Impact of RC water schemes will dramatically improve access to water to marginalised communities – FGDs confirmed the impact of limited access of water particularly on women who currently have to travel long distances during the night to collect water.

	• Water scheme involves community contribution through labour, being calculated as a rupee contribution. The user committee decided on the daily rate equivalent for senior and junior labourer – all HHs are contributing one person on a turn by turn basis, user committee also agreed those who do not need to contribute (elderly, PWD, etc). • General view that work on the water scheme should have started earlier in order to provide water for shelter construction (see below) and to ensure that there is not too much overloading of community contribution of labour. It was suggested that this would have enabled better shelter progress to have been achieved. • Government counterparts pleased with the RC work on water schemes and the close working relationship (ERO is providing monthly progress reports and attends monthly meetings), although suggested that more monitoring of WASH activities generally would be beneficial (eg to pick up some quality issues related to construction, although it was noted that when this was raised with RC, it responded positively). All suggested that RC should try to expand work in water to other VDCs given the dryness of the district. • Toilet construction seen to be effective by community members and government counterparts, with the provision of materials constituting a top-up for most vulnerable households. • FGDs suggest that more communication with women in communities regarding water systems could be useful; it was noticeable that women were unaware of the details of the Aitabar drinking water scheme compared to men. • Good examples of accessible construction (eg school toilets with ramps, water taps for children). Will be encouraging rain water harvesting, building plastic ponds shared between 4-5 houses through cash for work.
4+1: Shelter	• Strong, positive contribution by RC to ramping up the capacity of government to deliver EQ resistant housing to affected VDC; all government informants confirmed how happy they were with progress which is way ahead of target and progress in other VDCs (DUDBC target in Rampur is 10% of houses completed; Rampur is at 60% - 1st instalment completed, over 50% of 2nd instalment disbursed). • Shelter activities slow in Manthali (20-30 houses complete) – engineers believe that they will need another 12-15 months to finish. Given complications related to land ownership, lack of space etc, may have been better for RC to have focused on another isolated VDC instead. • DUDBC/ward/NRA all feel they are part of a team; they plan together and RC provides weekly update reports. All confirmed that the work is well coordinated. • RC is taking a positive advocacy role for people who have been missed off the government lists. • The financial incentive that was offered in April for households that had completed to DPC level by the anniversary of EQ (25,000 rupees) was very successful, but as 285 rather than the 100 HHs reached this target, the payments have not been made and this is resulting in complaints being received, by DUDBC as well as RC. Understood that decision is pending HQ approval (requested the budget in March). • An important RC contribution is tracking the processing of approvals for the payment tranches so that it takes on average 15 days (compared to a reported 2-3 months in other VDCs due to lack of personnel), although it is suggested that limited NRA capacity to sign off on approvals for each tranche of funding is still delaying progress. • Lack of water is also delaying construction rates, with families spending a reported 25-30,000 rupees on buying water per house.

	• Mason training generally seen to be good, although engineers recognise that they would have benefited from more hands-on training as most had not had practical education regarding building with stone. • General view from staff and FGDs that the programme needs to focus on retrofitting for category 2 houses and those that were rebuilt before the building codes were published. Requires retrofitting training to be held for engineers. FGDs revealed confusion around what is going to happen to people whose houses were defined as partially damaged, suggests that more communication around this required. • Informants all suggested that 3 lakhs was insufficient to build a house, with concern raised in some FGDs that some vulnerable people would not be able to raise additional money, even if they took on the labour, suggesting that people need access to loans. It was suggested that the only way that people are managing to build within the 3 lakhs budget is by reusing materials from the old house, which is against the guideline. • Good examples of accessible construction (eg school toilets with ramps, water taps for children, locks on doors and windows of houses suitable for old people and children) • Some views among engineers that it would have been better to have purchased materials for owners rather than giving money as would have resulted in better quality materials; may be useful to research this (may also have achieved better economy of scale?). • A number of informants (both government and RC) believe that the RC funds would have had more impact if they had been channelled into technical training and support, ramping up the NRA/DUDBC capacity to deliver the 3 lakhs and focusing on most vulnerable people for cash top ups (as reportedly done by MedAir, although has not been independently verified).
4+1: Health	• Reportedly on track to finish the health activities by March 2018, at about 75% for health training, 60% of the budget spent to date (had been over-budgeted so additional activities have been implemented it is understood). • In the view of district health personnel, the health awareness activities carried out by NRCS and other local NGOs has resulted in fewer than anticipated cases of people affected by diarrhoea and no outbreaks of epidemics. FGDs also confirmed that illness had decreased. • Baby kits (winterisation) were seen to be a good thing, providing the right clothing and of good quality. The distribution of solar lights to female health volunteers was said to be motivational. • Provision of additional rooms for the health post will enable it to accommodate women to give birth, welcomed by HP and all FGDs who raised this as a need. General view expressed that RC should stay longer to support the health post to reach more marginalised people. • Health activities have been implemented through existing groups and structures (such as mothers' groups, FCHVs, HP etc). • Volunteers/SMs felt they should have had more extensive first aid training in order to have more impact at community level.
4+1: Livelihood	• Of the four sectors, livelihood seems to be the one that has most still to achieve. It was also noticeable that most FGDs seemed confused about the plans for livelihoods. It is understood that there has been about 40-50% progress with goat sheds, 40% of the budget spent. • The focus on agricultural practices was welcomed by the Agriculture Office, which noted that "many people have stopped rearing animals since the EQ as they are focusing on housebuilding". The construction of goat sheds, purchase of animals, skill enhancement through training, provision of animal insurance etc were all supported by the office, although it was noted that the level of coordination was weaker than with other sectors (with some examples of duplications of effort shared). the Agriculture Office requested that

	monthly and quarterly reports be provided and that RC should meet regularly. It also suggested that RC should include vaccination and parasite control as part of the intervention and that social mobilisers could be used to pass on key agricultural messages • The provision of livestock insurance is a good sustainability mechanism. • A number of other interventions are being planned including rehabilitation of irrigation canals and construction of water harvesting ponds, to be carried out through cash for work (not a sustainable recovery strategy, caution must be exercised to ensure that CFW interventions do not undermine the strong community engagement that is underlying the integrated operation).
4+1: ICB	• ICB has not really started yet (10%), strategy needs to be developed • The steering committee believes that this should have been integrated from the start of the operation in order to draw in sub-chapters etc. It recommended that the plan needs to include support for the blood bank (particularly provision of solar panels so can maintain freezers). • Regrettable that more long term chapter volunteers have not been involved to date in the operation. It is suggested that more may be available when activities ramp up in Manthali, but this represents a lost opportunity for the chapter to have more hands-on involvement in delivering a community-focused programme.
DRR / resilience	• The next phase of the operation will be strengthened by integrating DRR across the programme. Should be a key part of the transition/exit strategy. • Missed opportunity not to have used some sort of VCA approach at the start of the operation to build relationship with community and help identify key vulnerabilities and capacities from the community perspective. A focused VCA approach could be useful for identifying the appropriate approach here.
Timing of activities	• Concern raised by line agencies, FGDs and staff/volunteers about the fact that many activities are currently happening at the same time, all drawing on the same community members to participate through provision of labour etc. This risks over-burdening community members (and SMs) and may result in a loss of the goodwill between communities and RC that was very evident in the FGDs. It is strongly recommended that activities need to re-scheduled to give more breathing space. • All sectors believe that more time is needed in order to ensure a good quality finalisation of activities. All feel under too much pressure to finalise all activities by end of 2017. It will be important to plan activities sector by sector and community by community to ensure that adequate time is given for a quality and timely completion of activities, with time dedicated to ensuring sustainability.
Relationships with line agencies	• As mentioned before, RC is seen to be a supportive and active partner by all government partners; a number highlighted additionally how the RC was responsive to issues raised, which they appreciated. All agencies view the relationship with RC as a strong partnership; building local capacity of these institutions. • The integrated approach is well appreciated and feedback was positive for all the interventions. Having all the political parties, agencies and NGOs/INGOs in the DDRC ensures that RC activities are well-coordinated and there was little evidence in FGDs of perceptions of political influences on the operation. • ERO is clearly coordinating its work well through achieved strong working relationships with activities/locations identified through D-WASH-CC and DDRC, involvement of VDC and stakeholders.
Management issues	• Budget expenditure currently estimated to be only 20% so far, although as mentioned before there is good progress on second instalment of funds, so this will begin to show through on the budget.

	• Evidently a strong and supportive team which takes a multi-disciplinary approach with a number of examples shared of how different teams support each other (eg health doing injury awareness sessions for shelter training, shelter engineers supporting on toilet construction). In view of this, may be over-staffed; opportunities to streamline staffing going forward, some staff have the capacity to deliver across several sectors. • The Steering Committee is clearly supportive and enabling, although being only three people, there are times when they are not available which can hamper field activities.
Community Engagement and Accountability	• Line agencies satisfied with the complaints mechanisms in place, which are streamlined with their own (toll-free numbers, suggestion boxes, FaceBook page, etc) but believe that public meetings and one-to-one meetings are the most important. FGDs suggest that women don't know about the toll-free number or the suggestion boxes. However, it is clear that the main conduits of concerns are the local volunteers and SMs in each ward. FGDs also highlighted positive use of SMSs. • FGDs demonstrated that communities are clear about the financial contribution of RC to different activities, for example the Aitabar water scheme. • Used community meetings to share information and plan, using local committee members, volunteers checking to ensure that the information reaches the household level. Also sharing information on budget and expenditure on notice boards, which FGDs value.
Relationship with key RC partner	• Seems that there is a strong relationship between ERO and IFRC. Good support, although ERO believes it should have opportunities to meet and share strategies & solutions with Sindhuli and Okladunga (and the other priority districts). • Logframe for Ramechhap was developed by IFRC, still in draft form, needs to be finalised and better ways of measuring certain outputs developed in the view of PMER. Should have been developed with closer district involvement.
Suggested actions to be taken:	1. RC should consider whether/how it can support neighbouring VDCs in order to achieve a more equitable response for vulnerable communities. This could involve inviting participants for mason training from neighbouring VDCs, offering engineering support and technical site visits, for example. RC should also explore whether RC engineers could be authorised by NRA to approve constructions in order to speed up the processes. 2. Prioritise the payment of incentive funds for reaching DPC level in order not to sour good RC-community relationships. 3. May be useful for RC to carry out another round of communication to pick up any remaining cases of people left off government housing list. 4. Determine RC strategy related to retrofitting, including provision of retrofitting training to engineers. 5. Increase communication efforts regarding operational plans particularly with women at community level. 6. Increase the level of coordination with the Agricultural Office, including providing monthly progress reports. 7. Re-plan integrated community level activities with community involvement to ensure that community members are not over-burdened with too many conflicting priorities for community engagement. 8. Put in place a programme of weekly meetings between ERO and steering committee with a nominee identified who can take decisions in the event that the president is unavailable.

Appendix 4: Rasuwa

Categories	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• The implementation of the program activities in the district has mixed results. Social mobilization, livelihoods, cash for work (CfW), drinking water and WASH activities are going well, whereas construction of shelter and toilets has been seriously delayed. • Construction of private shelter and toilets was implemented only in <i>Thulogaun</i> VDC. The quality of the houses, foot trails and toilets are of high quality. District line agencies including CDO and NRA district head highly appreciated the quality of the construction. Community members who have received the support are extremely happy despite the delay and the higher investment of the construction. • Drinking water scheme in Vorle is going well and the team estimate that it will be finished in one or two months. The water users' committee (WUC) and beneficiary households are extremely happy with the scheme. However, they have a grave concern related to the protection of the source point which is prone to landslides. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that they will complete all the planned activities (related to livelihood, drinking water and WASH), apart from shelter construction, by end of December 2018. Program delivery so far is reported to be around 50% in software and around 40% in hardware. • The relationship between the district chapter and line agencies, especially the Drinking Water Office and District Coordination Committee (former DDC) has not been smooth. • The construction of the district hospital is in the final stage of completion. It was reported that it will be completed by October this year although the target of completion was June 2017. Our observation shows that the quality has been well maintained and supervision by engineers is being carried out. • Program interventions especially livelihood component have yet to show some initial impacts on the improvement in the local household level economy. Some examples of successful ventures include vegetable farming and goat raising. • The need for strengthening of the CDMCs and linking them to LDRMC was clearly noticed. • Relation between chapter steering committee and ERO staff was normal. However, the steering committee wanted to hire the staff locally or through their active involvement. Steering committee has strong disagreement on the centralized procurement system of ERO. They believe that the procurement authority should be delegated to the chapter. This is one of the delays of construction works in the district.

	• The rate for CfW is too low compared to the market rate. It should be discussed prior to the implementation of this modality. It was learned that the market rate is more than Rs 1000/person/day, whereas the RC provides Rs 500 per person per day. • Community members who have received support from NRCS are happy despite identifying some areas for improvement, especially in identification of the most vulnerable households. • Sector integration could have been improved especially through joint need assessment and planning, synergies in program implementation including monitoring.
Targeting/coverage	• The district chapter had implemented the RIMA project in Thulogaun <i>and</i> Vorle VDCs supported by American Red Cross prior to the earthquakes. Emergency operations were carried out in 10 VDCs. For the recovery operations, 7 VDCs were selected situated around the RIMA project area. The district chapter steering committee members were not happy regarding the project selection. They believe that the project team at NHQ insisted in the selection for the ERO activities in the lower part of Rasuwa district. The upper part of the district has been excluded from the benefit. Assessments were done only in the lower part of the district and selected 7 VDCs out of 10 emergency support VDCs. • Chapter steering committee members opined that the selection of communities was based on the prior work experience i.e. nearby VDCs of RIMA project areas, and they seemed not happy with this decision. All of these VDCs lie in the lower part of the district and no VDC from the upper part is included in the recovery operations. However, beneficiaries within the VDC were selected based on pre-VCA⁴¹ through Recovery Action Group (RAG). RAG-facilitated village recovery plans were developed. District selection should have been done in consultation with the local chapter and their priorities. It seems it was imposed from the centre based on the interest of the previous project (RINA) • No CDMC formed or strengthened, but followed RAG approach. It would have been more appropriate and sustainable if the project could have strengthened LDRMC or CDMC instead of RAG, which will be dissolved after the recovery operation is over. • Community selection should have been carried out based on the vulnerability and capacity assessment or based on certain assessments so that the most vulnerable communities in the district could have been identified for the RCM program interventions. • NRCS did not have any plan to address the unmet needs of the communities. Apart from the new schemes beyond 4+1 program areas, additional drinking water schemes, cash grant for business for more families and trainings for women were reported as the unmet needs.

⁴¹ Some participatory tools were used to select the communities such as wellbeing ranking. This is called pre-VCA. However, detailed VCA was not conducted.

	- Newly elected local authority ward chairman who was former WUC member is very happy with the work done in the community with support from the Red Cross. He insisted the need for the expansion and continuation of such support. - Beneficiaries are inclusive, selection criteria have been followed, <i>janajati</i>, <i>dalits</i>, women, PWDs are included.
Programs (4+1)	Program activities generally seen to be realistic, appropriate and relevant. The steering committee members and staff believe that overall program is on track. “<i>Thuloagaun</i> shelter has 40% progress, but in fact it is the progress of 6-7 months. It will be sped up after rainy season”. Shelter - Thuloagaun is the only shelter VDC. Households were selected based on the Red Card recipients from the Government. PASSA was not carried out; however, beneficiary communication was conducted. - The government rate of Rs 300,000 per house is not enough and the total cost has reached from Rs 800,000 to 1.2 million. The ‘<i>arma parma</i>’ method of labor support has slightly delayed the completion of the construction; however, this traditional way of supporting neighbors has strengthened the cohesiveness and unity among community members. - Cash grant support has been provided by RC. In total, 433 HH have received 1st installment, 153 HHs have received second installment and 123 have received the third installment. - The quality of private shelter and toilets is very high. Community members, local elected authorities and line agencies have all appreciated the quality of construction support provided by RC. - District steering committee and the staff members are not fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of the Build Change. - Rs 3 lakh is not enough for building a house. Communities have spent as much as 1.2 million Rs. They have added more than double of the Government allocated fund. RC has followed the government rule, however provided additional support for plantation, construction of trails and toilet construction. - Two shelter social mobilisers (RC) are currently working at the community level. - Informants suggest that it will take a minimum of 1.5 years more to construct the total target of 433 houses. Might go beyond Dec 2018. - RC has provided mason training to 96 community workers; the number is not enough for the construction of houses at the same time. Some of them have gone abroad or are not active. Additional mason trainings are being conducted. - Community participation in the shelter is reported to have excellent. Shelter beneficiaries seemed happy, despite the delay in house construction. They say the delay is due to the <i>arma parma</i> approach and their engagement in paddy cropping at the time of the field visit.

	Livelihoods • Livelihoods- social mobilization, VCA (criteria based format), beneficiary selection, training, first installment Rs 15,000, after initial work 25,000. Total provided 40,000/HH. No impact seen yet. • Livelihood activities have been completed in 2 VDCs, ongoing in one VDC, and in 1 VDC has not been started yet. • More focus has been given to shelter and WASH than livelihoods. • Overall, 50% work has been completed. Institutional latrine, irrigation, foot trails are activities under livelihood component through cash for work. • Generally, beneficiaries appear happy with their involvement in the livelihood activities. However, the schemes were not so impressive, which could have been done with their own. For instance, just to raise 2-3 goats and do vegetable farming of low scale, it seems no external support is needed and it won't have much impact on their livelihood. WASH • Five drinking water schemes in 3 VDC have been completed, rest ongoing, school sanitation and hygiene education (8 target schemes in 2 VDCs). Household latrine in 4 VDCs (Saranthali, Vorle, Yarsa, Thulagaun) are ongoing. Yarsa VDC was already ODF, but after EQ it was damaged. One more month needed to complete toilets in Saranthali. Line agencies are blaming RC saying RC did not support their plan of declaring ODF in the mid 2017 • The overall progress is 55% in terms of budget. • Lengthy procurement process, election time and rainy season caused delay to complete the toilet construction. • <i>Pariwartan Patra</i> works in 3 VDCs- especially in wash sector. RC is a co-lead together with DWSSCC. • Blanket approach in toilet construction could have been avoided – would have been better to have focused only on the poorest families. (Shesh, on what basis do you say this?) Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) • The steering committee and chapter staff believed that the institutional capacity has been improved after the ERO interventions. The capacity of district chapter has increased through the increased financial management, mobilization of human resources, receiving training and orientations, exposure visits to other program districts. • District chapter has formulated its 5 year strategic plan in line with the NRCS NHQ strategic plan. • Institutional memory might be lost as there is not a single core staff member at the chapter at present, and majority of ERO staff are from other districts.
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	• Staff members lack knowledge and skills on disaster risk reduction, recovery operations and facilitation skills and need more training in these areas.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. However, update of the progress at the forums, and playing active role in coordination as a District Lead Agency (DLA) was found lacking. • The concerned line agencies including the Chief District Officer (CDO) mentioned that the target of declaring ODF in the district could not be achieved due to RC's failure to complete toilet construction in one of the communities. They also believed that the blanket approach taken by RC is against the Government policy. Some line agencies believe that as the District Lead Agency (DLA) the Red Cross has not played a sufficiently active role in coordination with NGOs and other development partners in the district. • Coordination between Chapter staff and Line agencies especially District Agriculture Office, Disaster Coordination Office (former DDC) and District Administration Office is not smooth. It was told to the MTR team that the RC did not support their plan of declaring ODF by not completing the toilet construction work in the RC-led VDCs. This must be improved through clarifying the issues and causes of the delay and updating the plans and progress at the district level forums such as DDRC and cluster meetings for effective program delivery in the district. The relationship could be improved through clarifying the issues and updating the plan and progress, etc. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies, although most of the line agencies did not make monitoring visits to the RC supported communities. • The relationship between district chapter and line agencies should be significantly improved in order to effectively implement the program activities in the district. This should be both at Steering committee as well as staff level. Problems were observed at both levels. Three line agencies criticized RC for the delay of the toilet construction in the RC-led VDCs that affected the plan of declaring ODF. They were also not happy with the RC chapter branch in their updating the progress at DDRC meetings. However, NRA was very positive towards the quality of houses that RC is supporting in the communities.
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the program interventions have increased the resilience capabilities of communities by helping connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), building skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increasing livelihoods options and improving local leadership. • Disaster risk reduction component is not well reflected at the community level. More activities on disaster risk reduction, capacity building of communities and linking recovery operations to the long term development should be ensured in the next phase of the operation.
Management issues	• Relationship between district chapter and ERO MHQ needs improvement especially in the issues related to procurement, staff recruitment and budget ceiling of the chapter.

	• DRR structure and funds do not exist at local level. But water users' committees are planning to raise the tariff and establish O&M funds. RC should take some initiatives to be an active part of it. • Visibility of volunteers is lacking - need to provide visibility items such as caps and t-shirts with Red Cross logos and ID cards, etc. • The relationship between chapter steering committee and the ERO chapter staff members could be improved. SC members are not happy with the recruitment process.
Other issues	• NRCS procurement policy and guidelines need to be improved. SC and staff are of the opinion that there is a need for a recovery friendly policy as the current policy is more development-friendly. Chapters should be allowed to be involved in the procurement process for more than Rs 500,000. • Monitoring from NHQ is OK, although no monitoring plan exists at present.
Actions to be taken	• Better coordination with district stakeholders (line agencies, NGOs) should be maintained through regular participation in the meetings, regular update about the progress of recovery operations at the district level mechanism. • Speed up the shelter and toilet construction as planned. • The quality of the shelters constructed under the RC support is extremely high compared to the shelter constructed by other agencies. However, cost effectiveness should also be taken into account. • Need to strengthen local level institutions such as LDRRMC/CDMCs for sustainability of local infrastructures • The rate for CfW is too low compared to the market rate. It should be discussed and agreed with the communities prior to the implementation of this modality. • More activities on disaster risk reduction, capacity building of communities and linking recovery operations to the long-term development should be ensured in the next phase of the operation.

Appendix 5: Sindhupalchok

Issue	Observations and any suggested actions
Overall	• Unlike other districts, the chapter is being supported by two PNSs running separate operations. with very different time frames; as the JRC-supported operation very delayed compared to that supported by NRC, the MTR mainly focused on activities in VDCs supported by NRC and field visits were conducted only in these VDCs. • FGDs with communities showed that the majority of the activities being delivered as part of the operation are meeting priority needs of affected people. FGDs revealed concerning perception of political bias influencing the implementation of the operation. • Concern raised by ERO staff that insufficient time to finish all the activities before end of 2017. Need to do bottom-up planning activity by activity to ensure sufficient time is given to finishing the various activities and ensuring that sustainability actions are in place.
Coverage, targeting etc	• Baseline assessments were carried out from April to June 2016 by the district team, survey through sampling, carried out by social mobilisers and volunteers. • The ERO worked initially through Ward Citizen Forums and created a Recovery Action Groups (RAG) in each ward, which is involved in targeting of activities such as health trainings together with volunteers. • For each activity, a set of criteria for participation was developed within the team, then volunteers collected data through surveys which are then verified with appropriate line agency, for example with the support of FCHVs for the winterisation programme. Not clear to what extent community members themselves were involved in developing and verifying these criteria, although FGDs revealed that they were aware of them and broadly agreed with them, although there were concerns that the application of these criteria may have been politically manipulation in some cases.
4+1: WASH activities	• Estimated to be at about 70% completion/rehabilitation of drinking water schemes, 90% of school latrine construction, 45% completion of HH toilets, carrying out large number of hygiene promotion awareness sessions, including in schools. Planning to include more district water schemes in the coming period. • Community feedback regarding the work on water schemes and canals positive. Using cash for work approach, providing insurance and volunteer with FA skills, both appreciated. • One FGD revealed some confusion regarding toilet construction, with some participants saying that materials had been provided twice to each HH so there were now more toilets than houses and one man whose land is adjacent to a road; the government has requisitioned his land so he won't be able to build back his house on the land but he is moving ahead with constructing the toilet. • Engineers have very high work load; one engineer who participated in FGD said that he was responsible for 2 water schemes and more than 200 toilet constructions. • Although government pleased with the progress achieved by RC, there is concern regarding the overall limited impact of the work - RC is targeting 14 District Water Supply Schemes (DWSS) in the district but there are more than 600 damaged DWSSs and few other organisations that are supporting. • Some issues highlighted with the distribution of toilet materials – some people constructed without having received instructions about how to construct (ie using bands and rods); some people constructed incorrectly – these will need to be corrected. May have been in part because only one engineer responsible for overseeing the construction of 200+ toilets.

4+1: Shelter activities	• Trained volunteers and social mobilisers in PASSA facilitation in all VDCs supported by NRC, following which PASSA sessions held at ward level. • Large number of masons trained, but has experienced a high level of mason attrition which had not been expected. It was suggested that only half of the 800 masons trained are currently active in the district, with 200 working outside the district and 200 not working, so this is negatively impacting progress. (Construction was paused in Sindhupalchok at the time of the MTR visit due to community members focusing on planting crops.) • The ERO has piloted a 50 day on-the-job mason training together with TRACE Nepal for those who have not previously worked as masons, resulted in 2 houses being built for highly vulnerable households. Not clear whether it is the intention to carry on with these trainings but will be important to monitor the 12 participants to see whether they use their skills and the quality of their work. • The on-the-job training included several female participants who are now working on their own houses it is understood, although unclear how realistic it is for women to be employed in house construction (even the women were sceptical that they would be employed by men). • Men who had gone through the 7 day mason training also said that they needed support to get hired as masons, although it is understood from ERO that banners advertising names of those trained have been placed in each VDC. FGDs with people who had gone through the mason training suggested that the training was good and the RC was receptive to their suggestions about how to improve the training. They also suggested that model houses should be built in all wards to encourage more people to construct; it is understood that there are currently only two per VDC. • Reports from the ERO show that engineers are carrying out large numbers of household visits to provide technical advice, with volunteers and social mobilisers passing on IEC materials and messages regarding building back safer. However, there is clearly a high work load for both DUDBC and RC – in Badegaun for example there are a reported 1,362 households and 7 engineers in total (4 RC and 3 from DUDBC) – suggests that more are needed. Feedback suggests that wards such as Nawapur are currently at 10% completion, due to lack of manpower. • There is a good working relationship with DUDBC; it highly rates the NRCS, particularly in comparison with some other organisations, although disappointed that it has not yet supported the creation of a technical resource centre in the VDC. • DUDBC suggests that the RC needs to support the government plan which has another two years to go (first instalment has taken one year to disburse). Needs concerted effort to continue training masons, particularly master masons who can work in a mobile way to support house construction – KII feedback that massive focus on this needed if the level of construction is to be raised. • Not clear how relevant/useful the shelter volunteer training on temporary housing construction will be; the FGD with volunteers suggested that they had received it only in June 2017. • FGD suggests that engineers need training/orientation in the NRA corrections manual (retrofitting?) that has recently come out; referred to the fact that other organisations are organising this for their staff. • View of most informants that 3 lakhs is insufficient for house construction. • The delays in provision of cash grants for housing construction in the JRC-support VDCs is leading to criticism of the RC. • Lack of water has held up the shelter programme in some places.
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4+1: Health activities	• Most health training activities completed – estimated that around 60% of activities completed, with trainings due to be finished by end September 2017, although it is noted that KII suggest that most volunteers and community volunteers have yet to start health activities at the community level. • Community volunteers are to be trained in first aid and first aid boxes to be distributed. Informants believe that these activities could/should have started much earlier. It will be important to closely monitor these sessions and provide feedback to the volunteers in the coming months. • Winterisation (nano jhola) project was seen to be useful and relevant to the community needs.
4+1: Livelihood activities	• Livelihood activities to date have focused mostly on cash for work activities (reconstruction of roads, foot trails and irrigation canals) and support to agricultural activities, including running livestock health camps and two kitchen garden trainings. • Livestock camps highly appreciated by livestock office and FGDs, as is focus on supporting goat shed construction. • Good level of coordination achieved with livestock office. Livestock office suggests that it needs to be in control of the purchase of animals to ensure that good quality and healthy animals are purchased and imported into the district; this needs to be discussed and agreed with the livestock office. Would like the RC programme to include training regarding vaccination and parasite control. • The next phase of the livelihood programme is in process and aims to support community members in activities that they identify, either directly or through directing them to other organisations who can help. FGD participants shared some potentially interesting ideas that could be supported through the livelihood programme, such as coffee processing and lychee farming. • The ERO is concerned that despite the baseline data identifying 467 most vulnerable HHs to be supported by the programme (reportedly within budget), NRC now wants to reduce beneficiary number to 400. The ERO unclear why this decision has been made and how they will go about reducing the numbers in a fair way.
4+1: ICB activities	• A number of RC volunteers have participated in a range of training courses. • The ERO strategy is to require the active involvement of the chapter in leading the activities (as beneficiaries), for example securing land for the new building. However, it appears from KIIs that the chapter governance is not participating as actively as it could be in realising the planned-for activities. The ERO has hired an experienced staff member to support the ICB activities with the chapter but the planned activities are delayed.
DRR / resilience	• A key limitation for the chapter was not being able to work directly with the formation of the LDRMCs in the VDCs where they are working, as this activity had been ‘allocated’ to other organisations. However, this should not prevent the RC supporting these organisations through offering its expertise in core RC competence, for example the provision of first aid training, VCA etc and it is understood that there are reportedly some funds available in the budget for this and some support to CDMCs at the VDC level has been provided.
Other activities	• KIIs with beneficiaries who had received the small one-pot metal cooking stoves (supplied by the district chapter through a collaboration with Alternative Energy Promotion Corporation) suggested that these stoves are not being used; those that were observed were clean and had clearly not been used. It is understood that this was an initiative led by the chapter and the ERO has no information regarding this activity

Integration	- Although the district is implementing activities in the all four sectoral areas defined in the 4+1 plan, it is a limited version of integration and it is not clear how integrated the programme is at the community level. This is partly due to the large number of other organisations working in the VDCs where RC is working. - Sectors are supporting each other where they can, for example including first aid trained volunteers are present in the mason trainings, but this does not constitute integration. - The fact that volunteers and social mobilisers work in only one sector means that the opportunities for integration are diminished and may result in duplication at the community level (as well as giving the impression of large staff numbers to communities).
Relationships with line agencies	- KIIs show that government counterparts are generally pleased with the supportive relationships they maintain with the NRCS. - The RC participates actively in the various district coordination committees, but notes difficulties with some NGOs/INGOs that are not coordinating, resulting in cases of duplication (eg Oxfam distributing materials for toilet construction in the VDCs allocated to RC).
Management issues	- The ERO is largely maintaining two parallel structures for the NRC and JRC-funded target areas; staffing, budgeting, reporting are all separate. Budget information provided was different between the two funders, which makes it difficult to compare. - KIIs with staff reveal a concern that operational plans are rigid, making it difficult to shift the operation in line with changing requirements on the ground. Informants suggest that the rigidity comes both from the PNS and the ERO at NHQ. ERO staff believe that the plan and budget need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is responding to the priority needs of people which can change. - Internal and external delays are having a negative impact on the operation. Internal delays include very slow decision-making both at the district level and NHQ levels. - Concern that recruitment decisions at the district level are not involving the sector coordinators and is resulting in poor decisions being made in some cases, with people not having the appropriate technical skills required. - General view that the district is over-staffed in certain areas and that there is room for a more integrated work force. This should include looking for opportunities to transition social mobilisers and volunteers into more generic roles that can support a range of sectoral activities at the community level. - KIIs also suggest that decision-making should be decentralised, with more authority given to the district level ERO, eg for local level recruitment, procurement etc. A number of examples were shared where small, local level requests from line agencies for support could not be provided as they required a long approval process from NHQ, meaning that RC loses out to other small NGOs that are more agile.
Governance	- Widespread frustration with delays due to unavailability of steering committee for decision-making. SC sees itself responsible for low-level managerial decisions such as staff movement, recruitment, finance etc and concern that personal interests may be seen to influence decision-making in some instances. There is a tense relationship between the chapter steering committee and the ERO; the ERO does not feel supported by the SC. - KIIs revealed a high level of concern that the steering committee is influencing the recovery operation for political purposes. FGD participants spoke openly of the RC operation not being neutral and shared feelings that they were not chosen for particular activities (such as cash for work or particular trainings) because they came from “the wrong political party”. This was heard repeatedly. - FGDs suggested that the RC needed to make programmatic decisions with an increased involvement of the entire ward, not giving responsibility to only one or two people who might manipulate the process. Participants in these FGDs were aware of the selection

	criteria for these trainings/activities and were in agreement with them but believed that in a number of cases they were not being followed.
Community Engagement and Accountability and GESI	• Recovery Action Teams (RAG) were formed in each community for the duration of the operation, although it was noticeable that FGD participants did not talk about these. These structures are not sustainable. • FGDs suggest that RC needs to organise much more regular meetings to which all the community are invited, to ensure that effective monitoring of activities is undertaken and that information is regularly posted around the ward regarding activities. FGD participants felt that the operation was not being implemented transparently, reported that community meetings only invite people from one political party and that staff are always too busy when they come to the field so cannot be interrupted. • Just completing a data collection exercise regarding PWD, using that data to ensure to ensure that toilets are disabled friendly, providing additional support to widows. It should be noted however that feedback from FGD suggested that at least in some cases, a disabled person was registered for cash for work but the work was carried out by another person who benefited from the pay. Measures should be put in place to ensure that this does not happen. • Good use of banners within VDCs to share information regarding complaints mechanisms, cash for work activities (including the allocated budget - although budgets for other activities are not shared it is understood), lists of trained masons etc. FGDs revealed however that participants are not always aware of these banners, suggesting that other forms of communication should complement. • Regarding suggestion boxes and toll free number, community members suggested that they had had poor experiences of these in the past so don't have confidence in them and experience to date suggests that suggestions boxes are not being used frequently. • ERO staff are strongly recommended to ensure that they spend time in the communities when they are available to meet with community members; this could be communicated (perhaps through SMS).
Relationship with key RC partner	• Some frustrations expressed with programmatic interference from PNSs – for example the decision regarding the reduction of livelihoods beneficiaries, overriding what the ERO sees as programmatic needs coming from the community level. Reported confusion in the minds of some staff as to whether responsibility for budget adjustment lies with NHQ or PNSs. • ERO found the involvement of NRC delegates useful at the planning stage of the operation but now believe they are not adding much value and are sometimes a distraction, “making us write documents rather than work in the field”.
Suggested actions to be taken:	1. The ERO requires the intervention and support of the RCM (through the MMC) to resolve this situation regarding allegations of political bias; the fact that FGD and KII participants shared their views that the RC is not acting politically impartially is highly concerning. 2. As part of transition planning, ERO should review staffing plan and look for opportunities to combine responsibilities where possible, particularly related to social mobilisers and volunteers, so that they are able to provide integrated support at community level where possible. Efforts should be made to amalgamate the two parallel structures associated with two different donors. 3. ERO and steering committee to put together a clear ICB plan with clear dates and responsibilities in order to ensure that progress can be made in the ICB plan. 4. ERO should look to see opportunities for integrating RAGs into other permanent community structures such as CDMCs/LDRMCs. NRCS should also aim to build connections with these groups, for example through DRR and first aid activities. 5. Review workload of WASH engineers, particularly related to oversight of toilet construction. Will need to put in place a programme to support retrofitting/correction in cases where toilet block incorrectly constructed.

	6. Develop a strategy to encourage people to hire female trained masons. 7. Develop a retrofitting strategy and provide training to engineers. 8. NRCS and NRC to agree livelihood approach to support those highly vulnerable families who have been identified through the assessment process, if possible to avoid reducing the numbers of people to be targeted. 9. Review livestock livelihoods interventions with the livestock office with a view to incorporating their ideas regarding parasite control, vaccination, etc. 10. NRCS should carry out monitoring visits to families who have received stoves to gather feedback (this should involve viewing the stoves to see if they are being regularly used as well as asking for feedback). This information should be shared with AEPC.
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**Mid Term Review of
Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation
July-September 2017**

*Anna Dobai and Shesh Kanta Kafle
8 October 2017
Nepal EQ MTR FINAL Oct 8 2017.docx*

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1 Acronyms

AEPC	Alternative Energy Promotion Corporation
ARC	American Red Cross
BRC	British Red Cross
CDO	Community Development Office
CDMC	Community Disaster Management Committee
CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
CfW	Cash for Work
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CMM	Cooperation Management Meeting (NRCS, IFRC, ICRC)
DCC	District Coordination Committee (previously DDC – Development Committee)
DDRC	District Disaster Relief Committee
DLA	District Lead Agency
DLO	District Livestock Office
DPC	Damp-Proof Course
DUDBC	Department of Urban Development and Building Construction
D-WASH-CC	District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Coordination Committee
DWSS	Department of Water Supply and Sewerage
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FCHV	Female Community Health Volunteer
GoN	Government of Nepal
HH	Household
HRRP	Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform
ICB	Institutional Capacity Building
IPRA	Integrated Participatory Rural Appraisal
JRC	Japanese Red Cross
KII	Key Informant Interview
LDRMC	Local Disaster Response Management Committee
NHQ	National Headquarters of Nepal Red Cross Society
NRA	National Reconstruction Authority
NRC	Norwegian Red Cross
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
ODF	Open Defecation Free
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PASSA	Participatory Approach to Safer Shelter Awareness
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment produced by GoN
PWD	People with Disabilities
RAG	Recovery Action Groups
SC	Steering Committee
SM	Social Mobiliser
SRC	Spanish Red Cross
ToR	Terms of Reference
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
VDC	Village Development Committee
VWASHCC	Village WASH Coordination Committee
WCF	Ward Citizen Forum
WUC	Water User Committee

2 Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the morning of 25 April 2015 which was felt across 57 of Nepal's 75 districts¹ and a series of aftershocks caused further damage and loss of life. The combined impact caused the death of at least 8,856 people, injured more than 18,000 people and caused extensive destruction and damage to housing and livelihoods affecting more than 1.1 million families, with 700,000 families displaced, 600,000 houses fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged, together with schools, health facilities, bridges and roads.

Following initial emergency relief activities, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC and 10 partner National Societies in-country) is supporting recovery activities in the 14*² government identified priority districts through a Movement Recovery Plan agreed in June 2016 which built on the Recovery Framework endorsed at a partnership meeting in June 2015. This plan aimed to ensure a coherent Movement-wide approach under the leadership of NRCS. The plan promotes an integrated approach bringing together shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), livelihoods and health activities, together with NRCS institutional capacity building (the so-called "4 + 1" approach).

The roll out of the plan has been considerably delayed, due both to external factors related to the creation of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) by the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the development of policies to guide the recovery process, but also internal factors as the NRCS and RCM similarly scaled up its capacity to respond to the challenges of delivering a largescale recovery programme across many districts.

REVIEW PURPOSE, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The mid-term review (MTR) process (see Terms of Reference annex 1) is designed to help the RCM reflect upon progress to date and identify both how to build on past successes but also to recommend improvements in order to better address the recovery needs of affected communities on the ground. The objectives are: 1) to assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNS's structure, system and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively; 2) to review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms; and 3) to identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach and make recommendations as to how identified weaknesses may be addressed.

An independent evaluation team of two consultants (an international team leader and a national team member) was hired through competitive tender. Following an inception visit to Nepal in May 2017 (see inception report annex 2), the main data collection activity started at the beginning of July 2017. Methodology was tested in the first district, following which each consultant visited two districts, undertaking a series of key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). In total, 197 informants were interviewed (47 female, 150 male) and 12 focus groups were held, involving 142 people (58 female, 84 male). Meetings and interviews were held without the presence of ERO/chapter staff or NRCS volunteers, the purpose and confidentiality of the discussion was explained. Detailed interviews were then carried out in Kathmandu with informants from NRCS national headquarters (NHQ), IFRC, ICRC, PNSs and key government line agencies and a set of documents was provided by IFRC. Data collected through KIIs, FGDs and primary and secondary document review was triangulated in order for themes and issues to be identified. On 20 July, the evaluators gave a presentation of the initial findings to a Movement Coordination meeting attended by all the main RCM actors, following which the report was put together.

Limitations of the MTR included the inability to randomly sample districts due to monsoon making access to some districts and communities difficult/impossible, only visiting five of the districts where the operation is being implemented, meaning that findings may not be representative of the operation as a whole. The timing

¹ Taken from NRCS assessment report.

² RCM is working in the 14 priority A districts plus two further districts that were categorised as priority B but were where the NRCS and partners had been working prior to the earthquake. This report will therefore refer to 14* districts (with the asterisk recognising that activities are being undertaken in two further districts).

of the review coincided with much shelter-related activity, resulting in FGDs and interviews tending to concentrate on these activities.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance and Appropriateness

The One Plan is contributing to a common approach being implemented across the districts in the four sectoral areas of shelter, WASH, livelihoods and health, with NRCS policies and frameworks generally used to guide activities. The majority of line agencies and community members interviewed believe that the RCM is providing a comprehensive recovery package that is relevant and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, particularly the construction/re-construction of water systems, support for the construction of houses and toilets and livelihood activities. While the decision was taken by NRCS to be actively involved throughout the recovery phase in identified communities in all the GoN designated priority A districts³, it is unclear whether alternative approaches or the consequences of this decision were seriously explored. It is similarly unclear what approach was followed to determine how the RCM partners would support work in the different districts or to what extent decisions were made guided by beneficiary numbers/need or the availability of funds, presence of other organisations, etc. The review team believes that the RCM should have focused its integrated recovery work in less well-covered districts and perhaps considered a lighter, more targeted 'gap-filling' approach that built directly on Red Cross core competence in districts such as Ghorka and Sindhupalchok where many actors are active.

The RCM aimed to target the most vulnerable people within the communities they served, being guided by the NRA's beneficiary lists at ward level for shelter activities, together a combination of participation in the Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), convening specific community meetings and house-to-house survey samples. Kavre is the only district that decided to follow the guidance of the Recovery Framework and use Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology, with community members themselves identifying the caseload. The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised and that communities better understood these decisions.

The omission of an organisational scale-up strategy to accompany the Recovery Plan, together with the loss of detail underpinning the Recovery Framework (resulting in the omission of much of the nuance of how the Movement would work together) and the short timescale of the plan, with no time dedicated to organisational planning and preparation, meant that in the view of the reviewers, the plan was not appropriate to the circumstances.

Achievements to date

Shelter: Following substantial delays in 2016, RCM work in shelter (both software and hardware-related) is now considerably enhancing the capacity of the Government of Nepal to deliver earthquake-resistant housing to families who lost their houses, both through the direct support to the construction of 7,000 houses in seven districts, together with supporting the training of masons and provision of close technical supervision. A widespread view shared with the reviewers was that the RCM could have had greater impact if it had focused in shelter entirely on the provision of mason training, site monitoring through engineers etc, in this way bolstering the capacity of the NRA/DUDBC. FGDs and KIIs suggested that 300,000 rupees was insufficient for the construction of a new house with knock-on negative consequences. The RCM is finding soft ways to support vulnerable households to overcome this, for example by providing materials for toilet construction.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): The focus on the construction of drinking water systems within this programme is highly valued by affected communities, together with the work it is carrying out to support household toilet construction, with FGDs suggesting that this intervention will have an important impact, improving the situation pre-earthquake in many instances. Notwithstanding this, KIIs revealed a widespread view that work on water schemes should (and could) have started much earlier. There are some good

³ Together with two districts from the B priority list where NRCS and partners had been working immediately prior to the earthquake.

examples of nuanced community labour/cash for work contributions to water scheme development projects. Appropriate consideration of the sustainability of the water schemes was evidenced.

Livelihood: This component has gained momentum in yielding some initial impacts and is roundly supported by community members, although its delayed roll out in some locations undermines its impact as a recovery strategy for affected households in some instances. Some KIIs with NRCS informants were critical of the approach being advanced by the Red Cross Livelihoods Centre, suggesting that it was not adapted sufficiently to the Nepal context. The MTR noted that different amounts of conditional cash grants were provided in different districts (between 20,000 and 40,000 rupees) and was not clear how the amounts were arrived at; agreeing a shared approach across the districts would have given more coherence to the operation nationally. The focus on livestock was broadly welcomed, although there were mixed views regarding cash for work activities.

Health: The software components are generally well advanced and are reportedly well-coordinated between the ERO and the NRCS health department. Most districts visited expect to have completed the majority of these by the end of 2017. While FGDs with both volunteers and social mobilisers revealed their enthusiasm for their work, it proved difficult to gather views of community members, few of whom seemed to recall these activities unprompted, with the exception of the winterisation (*nanojhola*) programme; feedback suggested that this activity had a highly positive impact and was well-timed. The construction of health posts in a number of districts is generally delayed for a variety of reasons. Concerned line agencies and stakeholders were generally happy with the quality of the construction work when it has finally got underway, although critical of the delays and some now disagree with the decision to support the construction of pre-fabricated “temporary” structures given the amount of time it has taken to get the constructions finished.

Institutional Capacity Building (ICB): This sector focuses on capacity building at NHQ and chapter levels, together with rebuilding damaged chapter buildings and training of volunteers, with the reconstruction activities yet to have been implemented in the districts visited, although training opportunities are being provided to NRCS volunteers in a range of subject areas. Retention of capacities will be an issue, within a context where many volunteer positions are filled by people recruited from outside the NRCS and the district level ERO structures are predominantly staffed by personnel coming from outside the NRCS and outside the district, so attention will need to be paid to ensuring that skills are not lost when the operation ends. There has been insufficient investment in district chapter level administrative capacity, in particular related to financial management and the Recovery Plan has not focused sufficiently on encouraging chapters to become active participants in the implementation of the operation or in extending learning and capacity building opportunities across the wider organisation, although some limited opportunities have been provided.

To date **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)** has not been central to the plans in a number of the districts visited, which represents a lost opportunity, particularly in terms of not using VCA as the key assessment and community engagement approach, an approach that is also useful for longer term sustainability reasons. The inclusion of a **Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)** unit within the ERO has been an important support to the ERO operation and to the PMER officers placed in each of the districts. The focus on the collection of gender disaggregated data was particularly noted.

Effectiveness and Timeliness

While too early to undertake a deep analysis of the effectiveness of the operation, FGDs and KIIs with beneficiary communities confirm that the operation is now beginning to meet the priority needs of people affected by the earthquake in the VDCs where the RCM is working; the early recovery contributions of the operation, particularly the winterisation project and the unconditional cash grants were also identified as effective support strategies. However, KIIs revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction throughout all parts of the Movement (and echoed by some line agencies) that the operation took more than eighteen months to get going, due both to external delays related to government but also the slowness of the internal decision-making, which led over time to increasing strains upon the relationship between NRCS and its partners and informants continue to be concerned about extended delays in decision-making.

Sustainability and Strengthening Local Capacity

As many of the activities are still mid-implementation, it is too early to say to what extent the operation is contributing to strengthening local community capacity overall. A number of inputs are supporting existing structures and are strengthening the connectedness of communities to line agencies and district level resource organisations which is contributing to overall resilience building, although there are lost opportunities in linking communities to local level structures such as the CDMC (Community Disaster Management Committee) rather than creating temporary groups (such as Recovery Action Groups) that will be dissolved when the operation is completed. The recruitment of volunteers and social mobilisers from the local communities where the RC is working can also be considered a contribution to strengthening local capacity. By working closely alongside line agencies such as DWASH, NRA, DUDBC, DoH, etc, the programme has boosted the capacity of these agencies to respond to community priorities at the local level, although informants from these bodies were also critical of delays in some instances. The operation is funding a number of positions at NHQ in areas such as communications, GESI, CEA etc that are not sustainable beyond the lifetime of the operation. However, efforts are being made to train and support resource people at chapter level who may be able to continue the focus on these issues.

Communication, Access, Participation, Complaints and Feedback

The operation has invested time and resources into community engagement and accountability (CEA) processes which was evident during the district level visits. Feedback from line agencies shows that they are generally happy with the complaints mechanisms put in place by the NRCS. Following some initial reluctance to follow a targeting rather than blanket approach, the recovery operation is now demonstrating various efforts to ensure that it is targeting the most vulnerable members affected by the earthquake and in each district visited there was strong recognition of the importance of following NRCS's GESI policies and there was clear commitment to gathering gender disaggregated data, although there was evidence that the organisation needs to consider other strategies in order to improve access, particularly for women.

Integration, External Coordination and Learning

An integrated multi-sector strategy is being achieved in VDCs/wards where the RC is the main (or only) organisation, although it is proving more difficult to roll out as planned in districts where other organisations have been allocated responsibilities. Having multidisciplinary social mobilisers is a good strategy for promoting integration at the community level.

Feedback from the districts and at central levels show that NRCS has generally maintained a high level of coordination with government line agencies, although there were requests for the NRCS to provide regular written updates on work in the form of monthly or quarterly progress reports and to participate in more regular meetings, rather than relying on informal contacts.

While the Recovery Framework presented a compelling vision of how an integrated recovery programme could be implemented in a theoretical context, it was not built upon sufficient analysis, of the wider Nepal context and there was insufficient reflection on recent previous RCM operations (such as the floods in Pakistan), resulting in what a number of informants saw as the repetition of mistakes seen in previous operations. Having to rely on a series of short-term recovery advisers, rather than being able to bring in a longer-term recovery expert at an early stage in the relief phase with a brief to research and understand that broader context was seen to be detrimental. CEA mechanisms are allowing the district EROs to adapt programming approaches to feedback received from community members. ERO staff at the district level regret that there were few opportunities to meet (either in person or through online forums) with technical counterparts in other districts to share experiences and ideas.

Efficiency, Management, Governance and Partnership

A key failing of the operation is its inability so far to deliver against one of the visions presented within the Recovery Framework, namely that the recovery operation would be characterised as one demonstrating *“joint responsibility, light coordination (and) swift decision making”*⁴.

⁴ NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015, p11

Management, governance and decision-making: While it was a good decision to create a separate ERO Steering Committee (SC), there appears to have been insufficient definition of its roles and levels of responsibilities, while the closed nature of the SC, without representation of partners, is seen to be an impediment to inculcating the spirit of partnership and joint responsibility that is at the heart of the Recovery Framework's intentions. Slow decision-making at the central level has significantly slowed down the pace at which the district EROs could roll out programming at the community level. Most informants believe that decision-making authority, together with financial authority levels, need to be delegated, both within the ERO at NHQ level but particularly down to the district level, with the SC focusing on taking high-level strategic decisions, delegating the managerial decisions to the ERO as close as possible to where the decisions are implemented. The decision to manage the recovery operation using the existing procedures of the NRCS, without an examination as to whether they would meet the requirements of a USD100M recovery operation that needs to be swift and agile was generally seen to be a mistake; most informants believe that the recovery operation should be supported by a set of agile recovery policies and procedures. This particularly related to the NRCS procurement and human resource recruitment processes.

Governance at the district level: As at the central level, there was some concern regarding the lack of clarity of the role of the district chapter steering committee, with some district EROs experiencing long delays in decisions being made by the district SC. At least one district ERO has been experiencing political interference in the operation from the SC, while another district is currently under investigation for alleged improper use of funds. A number of district chapters believed that sub-chapters should be more closely involved in the implementation of the operation.

The ERO structure is generally believed to be an appropriate structure although there are concerns about the time it took to create and staff the unit, the fact that it was not supported by appropriate policies and procedures and the fact that the ERO did not become the "home" of the Movement as the Recovery Framework described it, which has resulted in the proliferation of PNS structures and the loss of significant potential capacity building opportunities for the NRCS. Had the Movement put in place a human resource strategy to accompany the recovery plan to consider how it could use the technical capacity of Movement partners in the short and medium term to bolster NRCS capacity while it was in the process of hiring ERO staff, this could have resulted in considerable benefits for all parties.

Different implementation models

The original Recovery Framework contemplated a common model of implementation across all districts, something that has not really materialised, although the concept of a consortia approach with a lead PNS has been applied in all but one of the districts. The preferred model of implementation in the view of many NRCS informants was the Kavre model, involving the light presence of the PNS at the district level supporting in specific technical areas; this seems to be closest to the modus operandi envisaged in the Recovery Framework. It is difficult to say without considerable comparative analysis whether it is delivering in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Coordination within the Movement

Efforts to ensure that there is close collaboration and coordination throughout the operation have been made, but some of these initiatives have failed to achieve their potential. Sectoral technical working groups have become infrequent and in some cases ceased to meet, although there has been some recent success in reinvigorating some of the groups. For most informants, the IFRC is seen to have little influencing power within the Movement dynamics in Nepal, partly due to having no role within the SC, and partly because it is also acting as a donor in three districts, which in the view of some informants compromises its capacity to be able to act as the neutral arbiter and Movement coordinator. Movement coordination meetings do not meet the expectations of partners, partly as it seems that NRCS leadership participation has been low.

Partnership

It is clear from interviews is that the concept of partnership, joint responsibility and co-management that the Recovery Framework articulates and the Movement-wide approach is predicated upon has not materialised

as anticipated, resulting in a deterioration in the levels of mutual trust and openness between NRCS and its partners. Each side feels that its views and opinions are not valued or listened to by the other. The next phase of the operation needs to find ways of returning to a position where a positive, trustful and respectful partnership can be re-established for the mutual benefit of the operation and its ability to deliver to affected communities. It would seem that not enough attention was given at the start of the recovery programme to identifying how to develop a true partnership approach, for example how to orientate staff (NRCS and partners, both new and existing) related to how partnership translates into norms and behaviours. Staff turnover, particularly within the partners, has not helped in this regard. That fact that it did not prove possible to roll out an ERO structure where technical personnel from the partners were inside the structure working closely with NS counterparts has meant that a crucial way of exercising partnership has not materialised.

Resource Management and Cost Effectiveness

The current RCM recovery set up, working across 14* districts with management structures in each, is clearly a structure-heavy - and therefore costly - way of working (recognising that the extent of the area across which the RCM is working and the challenging and isolated conditions where many of the people affected by the earthquake are living means that the operation would always be an expensive one to mount). It is not clear to what extent the RCM examined the likely cost effectiveness of the approach or whether serious consideration was given to implementing alternative recovery strategies that might have prioritised humanitarian need over consideration of internal RCM influences. Some districts believe that the staffing structures were too heavy and positions could have been effectively streamlined.

Staff from the ERO (both in districts and NHQ) and PNSs were extremely concerned by the expenditure ratio between support costs and direct programme costs of the operation, with a number of PNS informants believing that perhaps only between 40-60% of the funds raised will go directly to beneficiary activities, due both to the logistical challenges of access to affected people mentioned previously, but also to the fact that support structures were maintained over relatively long periods of time when the operation was delivering little (for the reasons mentioned before). Although attempts have been made by IFRC to gather data from partners regarding direct and indirect costs per district, without a common understanding of what constitutes a direct and indirect cost, this exercise cannot be undertaken. The MTR team suggests that this exercise would be valuable but should be managed at a higher level, for example IFRC Geneva or Kuala Lumpur.

Transition and Exit Strategy

The MTR noted a level of confusion and anxiety at district levels related to messages coming from the ERO centrally regarding transition; it seems that for some, the concepts of transition and exit planning have been erroneously conflated to mean that they need to rush to finish activities before the end of 2017 and feel under enormous pressure to spend. Some informants regret that there is a strong narrative related to phasing out the ERO structure just at the time when it is now working relatively effectively and the operation still has much to achieve. The MTR team suggests that the districts review their plans activity by activity, community by community, ensuring that a sustainability strategy for each activity is put in place and worked through. Having this information in place will allow an appropriate transition plan to be developed at central level

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations focus on different aspects of the next phase of the Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation, with a separate section focusing on recommendations for the wider Red Cross Movement coming out of the Nepal experience to date.

Recommendations for the Next Phase of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation

Recovery operation planning	Planning should start at the district level, activity by activity, community by community. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff (both at district and central levels) and delegates which will feed into a Movement-wide staffing plan, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers and bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts
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	NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget for each district is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC and the steering committee to oversee progress in the district.
	The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extend support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc.
	NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families are being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.
	Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.
	The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation, beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters. The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.
ERO structure and processes	NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.
	Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.
	Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.
Rebuilding relationships	Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to reflect upon their own behaviours and processes, understand the views and opinions of all parties, confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties for mutual benefit.
	A peer review process could be considered to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made in order to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.
ERO governance	The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.
	The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.
	It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.
	Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made available to all RCM actors in Nepal.
	It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (eg the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that

	can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required. NRCS partners (line agencies, NGOs and PNS) should input into this review.
	An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. The DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.
Movement-wide reflection	A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – ie is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

Reflections from Nepal recovery operation to the wider RCM

The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and fully understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a minimum of six months.
Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.
It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.
As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to <i>how</i> this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.
The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.
The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.

3 Background

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the morning of 25 April 2015. The epicentre was 80 kilometres northwest of Kathmandu but its impact was felt across 57 of Nepal's 75 districts⁵ and a series of aftershocks caused further damage and loss of life. The strongest aftershock, measuring 7.3 magnitude, struck on 12 May. The combined impact of the 25 April quake and the 12 May aftershock caused the death of at least 8,856 people, injured more than 18,000 people and caused extensive destruction and damage to housing and livelihoods affecting more than 1.1 million families. 700,000 families were displaced, with around 600,000 houses fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged, together with infrastructure (including schools, health facilities, bridges and roads).

Following initial emergency relief activities, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC and 10 partner National Societies [PNS] in-country) is now

⁵ Taken from NRCS assessment report.

supporting recovery activities in the 14*⁶ government identified priority districts through a Movement Recovery Plan agreed in June 2016 which built on the Recovery Framework endorsed at a partnership meeting in June 2015. This plan aimed to ensure a coherent Movement-wide approach under the leadership of NRCS. The plan promotes an integrated approach bringing together shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), livelihoods and health activities, together with NRCS institutional capacity building (the so-called “4 + 1” approach).

The roll out of the plan has been considerably delayed, due both to external factors related to the creation of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) by the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the development of policies to guide the recovery process, but also internal factors as the NRCS and RCM similarly scaled up its capacity to respond to the challenges of delivering a largescale recovery programme across many districts.

4 Review Purpose, Methodology and Limitations

Two years after the approval of the Recovery Framework, the mid-term review (MTR) process is designed to help the RCM reflect upon progress to date and to identify both how to build on past successes but also to recommend improvements in order to better address the recovery needs of affected communities on the ground. The MTR objectives as specified in the Terms of Reference (annex 1) are: 1) to assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNSs’ structures, systems and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively; 2) to review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms; and 3) to identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach and make recommendations as to how identified weaknesses may be addressed. The guiding criteria for the review follow the OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria and have been defined as:

1. The relevance, appropriateness and coverage of the recovery operations;
2. The efficiency and effectiveness, especially to meet the intended results;
3. Coordination within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors;
4. The sustainability and connectedness of the recovery operations.

An independent evaluation team (comprising an international team leader and a national team member) was hired through competitive tender. The team leader made an initial inception visit to Nepal in May 2017 to carry out a round of interviews with key interlocutors from NRCS, IFRC and PNS partners, following which an inception report (annex 2) was written, criteria were determined for the identification of five representative districts to be visited and a review matrix developed. This matrix brought together the evaluation criteria and key questions from the ToR, together with quality criteria taken from the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), in order to ensure that the MTR would maintain focus on the ability of the Earthquake Response Operation (ERO) to deliver to affected communities while at the same time concentrating on systems, processes and relationships. It is likely that the approach to the identification of the districts to be visited may have resulted in some positive bias.

The main data collection activity started at the beginning of July 2017 with the team (now joined by a staff member from the Karachi branch of the Pakistan Red Crescent and a staff member from NRCS) being fully briefed in Kathmandu, before moving to the first district to pilot, review and refine the methodology and tools, following which they split into two teams to carry out field visits in the other four districts. In each district, an agenda for the field visit was developed by the ERO District Programme Coordinator (DPC) following the guideline provided in the inception report and instructions from the head of the ERO; a minimum of two focus group discussions (FGDs) with between 10 and 15 community members invited were held, plus FGDs with volunteers and social mobilisers. It is likely that focus group participants possessed strong feelings about the programme which will have prompted them to attend, which may have introduced positive/negative bias into the sampling. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were also arranged with interlocutors from the NRCS chapter,

⁶ RCM is working in the 14 priority A districts plus two further districts that were categorised as priority B but were where the NRCS and partners had been working prior to the earthquake. This report will therefore refer to 14* districts (with the asterisk recognising that activities are being undertaken in two further districts).

government line agencies, NGOs working in the district where possible and all ERO officers. In total, 197 informants were interviewed (47 female, 150 male) and 12 focus groups were held involving 142 people (58 female, 84 male) – some of these FGDs were mixed female and male, some were women or men only, advised by the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) in each district.

Meetings and interviews were held without the presence of ERO/chapter staff or NRCS volunteers. At the start of each meeting the purpose (and confidentiality) of the discussion was explained and participants asked if they were comfortable to proceed. Any photographs taken were with participants' permission. FGDs generally took around one hour following a semi-structured format based on relevant questions from the review matrix (with the consultant taking notes throughout) and were, where possible, followed by a walk-about with either residents or staff to get to know the community, talk in a more informal atmosphere and where relevant, to visit sites where infrastructure and/or shelter work was proceeding, again noted and photographed.

On returning to Kathmandu, the evaluation team carried out detailed interviews with a large number of informants coming from NRCS national headquarters (NHQ), IFRC, ICRC, PNSs and key government line agencies. A set of documents was provided by IFRC to support the review process drawn from NRCS, NRA, IFRC and partners, with additional documents collected during the field visits. On 20 July, the evaluators gave a presentation of the initial findings to a Movement Coordination meeting attended by all the main RCM actors, after which further interviews were carried out. Data collected through KIIs, FGDs and primary and secondary document review was triangulated to identify themes and issues. A review report was drafted that brought together the reviewed/triangulated primary and secondary data; unless pointed out in the report, issues are only reported upon where there are multiple sources.

A number of limitations were experienced by the MTR team. This included the timing of the review during the monsoon period, which meant that the opportunity to randomly sample districts was severely constrained by logistical considerations (some districts and many communities were deemed too difficult to get to, due to the road conditions). The fact that the MTR team was only able to visit five of the districts where the operation is being implemented was also a limitation, meaning that findings may not be representative of the operation as a whole; although attempts were made to gather data, views and opinions related to other districts, it is inevitable that the report reflects more upon the operation as witnessed in these five districts. It would also have been useful for the team to have consulted with other chapters of NRCS outside the priority districts, to gather their views on the earthquake operation and how the focus on the priority districts has impacted upon them. It was also noted that the timing of the review coincided with much shelter-related activity in the majority of the districts being visited. This resulted in FGDs and interviewees tending to concentrate more on shelter activities and it proved more difficult to gather detailed data related to health activities (most of which had been completed at the time of the visit) or livelihood activities (which in some districts were only just starting to scale).

The review findings are laid out following the structure of the MTR Review Matrix. Each section starts with an introduction, with sub-sections exploring each issue raised in more depth.

5 Key Findings

5.1 *Relevance and Appropriateness*

The MTR visits to five of the priority districts revealed the extent to which the One Plan is contributing to a common approach being implemented across the districts. Although there is some variation in *how* particular activities are rolling out (which will be touched on later in this report), the fact that in most districts the RCM is aiming to meet priority needs in the four sectoral areas of shelter, WASH, livelihoods and health by implementing a similar range of activities was notable. While NRCS and partners may be more aware of what separates them, from an external perspective this commonality in approach was striking, as was the fact that NRCS programmatic policies and frameworks are generally being used to guide activities. In the view of the majority of line agencies and community members interviewed, in

the communities where it is working, the RCM is providing a comprehensive recovery package made up of a range of activities that are relevant and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, although there are concerns related to the approaches taken to district and community level targeting and needs assessment processes used. This section of the report examines these issues and concerns in more detail.

5.1.1 Relevance of activities for affected communities

FGDs and KIIs with beneficiaries from affected communities at district level all confirm that the main activities of the Recovery Plan are responding to their key concerns, most particularly those related to the construction/re-construction of water systems and support for the construction of houses and toilets, with livelihood activities generally seen as the third priority. The work supporting the rehabilitation of health posts was identified as being relevant and appropriate particularly by those people directly involved in the provision of health services. While focus groups generally did not identify or mention the soft health-related activities without prompting (except the '*nanajhola*' winterisation programme, which FGD informants valued highly), people working as volunteers with either the district health office or NRCS believed that some of the health interventions at community level had contributed to positively changing behaviours, particularly in isolated communities. See 5.2 for more information regarding the sectors.

5.1.2 District and community targeting

While all NRCS district chapters were involved to different degrees in supporting people who had been affected by the disaster during the relief phase, an early decision was taken by NRCS to be actively involved throughout the recovery phase in all the GoN designated priority A districts⁷ and the recovery framework was developed around this decision, with subsequent identification of one or more VDC per district. It is unclear whether alternative approaches were seriously considered at this time⁸, for example whether to focus full-scale integrated recovery support in a larger number of communities in a limited number of districts or to what extent the down sides of this broad approach (such as the costs related to setting up support structures in all the districts) were discussed.

It is similarly unclear what approach was followed to determine how the RCM partners would support the different districts. Some partners (eg American, Danish and British RC) wished to continue to work where they had been working prior to the earthquake, a decision which had logic to it (and as the Recovery Framework pointed out could 'provide an excellent entry point for recovery programming'⁹), but other partners seemed to make choices based on less sound reasons, such as where their Emergency Response Unit had been allocated as part of the relief operation for a few months, a decision that makes little strategic sense. It is not clear to what extent decisions were made guided by beneficiary numbers/need or the availability of funds (this is pertinent as today there are notable differences in the financial size of programming per district (even adjusting for the fact that some districts are providing shelter cash grants)¹⁰).

While the decision to have RCM presence in each of the 14 prioritised districts implementing the 4+1 programme in a small number of Village Development Committees (VDCs) was defended by a number of informants who believed that it was appropriate for NRCS to follow the GoN prioritisation approach, others expressed their view that the RCM should have concentrated full recovery programming in a limited number of locations, focusing on harder-to-reach, more vulnerable communities in districts receiving less national and international attention from NGOs/INGOs and aiming for wider coverage within a smaller geographical area. In the light of experience in Ghorka and Sindhupalchok (where the RCM had little space to develop an integrated approach due to the large number of other actors, these

⁷ Together with two districts from the B priority list where NRCS and partners had been working immediately prior to the earthquake.

⁸ Some IFRC informants suggested that this had been raised as an issue but had not been seriously considered.

⁹ Draft Recovery Framework dated 9 November, 2015, p6

¹⁰ The team would have liked to have further explored this issue but the absence of directly comparable data related to funds meant that this was not possible.

being two of the most-affected districts) and Ramechhap (where few other organisations are working, meaning that the RCM is able to implement an integrated approach at the community level), the review team believes that the RCM should have focused its integrated recovery work in less well-covered districts and perhaps considered a lighter, more targeted 'gap-filling' approach in districts such as Ghorka and Sindhupalchok that built directly on Red Cross core competence.

The other side of this focus on priority A districts is that the institutional capacity building (ICB) activities incorporated into the Recovery Plan (primarily interpreted as rebuilding of damaged chapter buildings and training for volunteers) are also focused on these districts and a valuable opportunity to extent ICB activities to involve staff and volunteers from all districts so that the entire organisation could learn and develop through the experience of recovery programming has yet to be taken advantage of sufficiently. This is taken up in 5.2.

Within each district, decisions regarding which VDC or wards RCM operations would support were taken in close consultation with the District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC) and validated by NRCS NHQ; interviews at district level suggested that chapters and sub-chapters should have been more proactively included and involved in this process. Most line agencies and elected authorities interviewed at the district level believed that RC should have covered more VDCs. This was particularly the case in districts such as Lalitpur and Ramechhap, where fewer NGOs and INGOs are working, resulting in very different levels of support being provided between VDCs, possibly fuelling resentment for people living in VDCs with little external support. In Rasuwa the NRCS district chapter was unhappy that it was not able to prioritise communities in the upper, more vulnerable parts of the district as well as the lower part, reportedly due to the insistence of the PNS to only select communities in the project area it was supporting prior to the earthquake.

5.1.3 Targeting the most vulnerable people within the community

While RCM shelter-related activities follow the NRA's beneficiary lists at ward level, in the majority of districts a combination of participation in the Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), convening specific community meetings and house-to-house surveys through sampling was used to carry out needs assessment and determine beneficiaries for different activities, although it is understood that some districts used more participative approaches than others. Kavre is the only district that decided to follow the guidance of the Recovery Framework and use Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology across all communities so that community members themselves identified beneficiaries for each of the main activities¹¹. In most FGDs (although notably not in Kavre) participants articulated a measure of confusion, disappointment or resentment related to vulnerable people being omitted from beneficiary lists; had these districts followed the participative processes of VCA this may have been avoided, as well as establishing a strong basis for ongoing community engagement throughout the operation and beyond. Given the VCA experience that NRCS has developed (and the fact that it could have been adapted to be completely appropriate to the recovery environment), the review team consider this to have been a lost opportunity¹². It is understood that NRCS was initially reluctant to target the most vulnerable people within a community in some instances, preferring to opt for a blanket approach, but this reportedly changed over time and the targeted approach was approved of by the vast majority of informants.

KIs provided evidence that in some districts NRCS has had some success in advocating for the inclusion of people who have been left off the government beneficiary lists, although it was suggested that it was less successful at raising awareness of people on the lists who were in fact ineligible¹³. The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most

¹¹ Although there were some cases of pilot VCAs that were undertaken, for example in Sindhupalchok, which also piloted Participatory Rural Appraisal or IPRA in one ward.

¹² It is understood that the NRCS advocated that this approach should be used but partners were generally not in agreement.

¹³ For example, cases where one family was being supported to re-build several homes.

vulnerable people in each community were prioritised and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them.

5.1.4 Omission of an organisational scale-up strategy to accompany the Recovery Plan

While the RCM Recovery Plan has successfully framed a shared vision for the recovery operation, the fact that it omitted to include an all-important scale-up strategy to ensure that the appropriate organisational capacities were in place means that its realism is compromised. It would also appear that much of the detail underpinning the recovery approach as defined in the Recovery Framework (June 2015) seems to have been lost in the 2016 One Plan document. This resulted in the loss of much of the nuance of how the Movement would work together, eg the underlying principles of recovery and partnership, the key step of undertaking a *participatory* needs assessment process to build community engagement, ensure relevance of the programming and avoidance of duplication with others or the importance of incorporating disaster risk reduction at the district level (among other issues).

For any organisation, scaling up its capacity to deliver an operation more than ten times the financial size of previous programmes and spread across 16 districts would be extremely challenging. As 5.9 shows, neither the One Plan nor the Recovery Framework included a process to review the capacity of the systems, processes and procedures of the NRCS/Movement to ensure that they would be fit for purpose for delivering an operation where timeliness and agility would be of the essence; similarly, neither plan nor framework developed a strategy for how NRCS was going to achieve the massive organisational scale-up implied by the creation and staffing up of the ERO, which in the view of the reviewers means that it cannot be seen to be appropriate to the circumstances.

Informants generally suggested that the recovery operation should have been planned to be implemented over a four to five-year timeframe, with the first year focused on organisational planning and preparation, with the concurrent implementation of a relief/early recovery programme including a limited range of direct beneficiary support activities, such as the winterisation project and unconditional cash grant distribution. Such a strategy may have helped manage the expectations of communities and partners. While the recovery framework presents an idealised view of how an integrated recovery programme should be rolled out, this mostly top-down planning approach was not grounded in reality, either at the district level in terms of priority needs and how government and other organisations were responding, or considering the existing capacities and experience of the RCM and the broader humanitarian sector in Nepal¹⁴. The RCM ability to implement the one plan vision was further complicated by continual changes within the external environment (with the creation of the NRA only in December 2015, the slow development of the policies and guidelines underpinning the NRA's work and a number of fundamental changes to those guidelines, such as the amount of money to be allocated per house construction).

5.2 Achievements to Date

5.2.1 Shelter

Following substantial delays in 2016, RCM work in shelter (both software and hardware-related) is now considerably enhancing the capacity of the Government of Nepal to deliver earthquake-resistant housing to families who lost their houses. As of the end of July 2017, the RCM shelter programme is delivering against its targets of directly supporting the construction of 7,000 houses through the GoN's owner-driven housing scheme in seven districts, through the provision of a cash grant of 300,000 rupees (three lakhs), supporting the training of masons following the DUDBC's curriculum and providing close technical supervision through a cadre of engineers and junior engineers, supported by social mobilisers and volunteers. In other districts where RCM is not providing cash grants, the NRA's

¹⁴ Several informants pointed out that the GoN has long been unable to absorb more than 40-50% of development funding received annually (a Google search yielded large numbers of articles reflecting upon this) so that it was unrealistic to expect that it would be different in relation to the recovery programme.

work is being supported through training for masons and carpenters, training in Participatory Approaches for Safer Shelter Awareness (PASSA) and community sessions in some districts and other community awareness-raising activities. With NRA guidelines, policies, procedures and standards reportedly all in place, it appears that agreements with NRA/DUDBC are now being signed off in a timely manner, although it was noted that it took an extended period of time to reach this point. It was also noted that the lack of water in some districts has had a detrimental impact on the plans to advance in shelter construction, requiring households to spend considerable sums in purchasing water in some cases. This issue is taken up below.

Table 2 contrasts the results to date for the NRA (with the responsibility to deliver 700,000 new houses in 14 districts) with that of the RCM. Although the data categorisation is slightly different, it is clear that the RCM approach is yielding better results than that of NRA, which is probably unsurprising given the difficulties that GoN is facing, including having smaller numbers of technical staff per VDC¹⁵, high levels of vacancies for engineers in some districts¹⁶, backlogs in approving payment of tranches, etc. In some districts, eg Ramechhap, the shelter programme is offering modest financial inducements for reaching DPC level (and thus being eligible for the second tranche of funds), which has contributed to significantly boosting the numbers reaching this milestone¹⁷.

	NRA (4 August 2017)		RCM (9 June 2017)	
	HH numbers	%	HH numbers	%
HH beneficiaries	651,606		7,000	
housing under construction	115,597	17.74%		
First tranche received			6,426	92%
second tranche applicants	82,064	12.59%	2,198	33%
approved second tranche applicants	70,821	10.87%	1,641	25%
non-approved for second tranche	6,592	1.01%		
third tranche applicants	9,600	1.47%	1,152	17%
approved third tranche	6,881	1.06%	277	4%
non-approved for third tranche	430	0.07%		

Table 1 Comparison of NRA house construction statistics with those of RCM (will update these figures if can be provided with end July data from NRCS/IFRC)

A widespread view expressed by informants from RCM, line agencies and some beneficiaries was that given that government is providing cash grants for shelter construction and that the RCM's contribution to house construction is small (1% of households), the RCM could have had greater impact if it had focused in shelter entirely on the provision of mason training, site monitoring through engineers etc, in this way bolstering the capacity of the NRA/DUDBC to deliver high-quality owner-driven housing across many more VDCs (many NRA/DUDBC informants are extremely concerned about the stark differences in advances between a RC-supported VDC and its neighbours). Finding ways to offer extended support (eg including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc) should be explored.

The MTR team consistently heard through both FGDs and KIs that three lakhs is generally insufficient in order to construct a new house; there is concern that some people are being forced into debt in order to complete their houses, while other people may not complete their houses quickly or may be forced to deviate from the NRA guidelines (eg inappropriately recycling materials from their old houses) or chose to take only the first instalment and rebuild without following the NRA guidelines (a possibility that is supported by the evidence of the huge difference in the number of households that have received the first and second instalments). RC is finding soft ways to support vulnerable households to overcome this, for example by providing materials for toilet construction (in all districts) or providing cash incentives to advance construction as mentioned previously, but it is suggested that the NRCS could play a useful role to gather data regarding the unfolding experience and advocate for the provision of additional support for highly vulnerable households beyond the 50,000 rupees already

¹⁵For example, in Rampur, Ramechhap the DUDBC representative pointed out that he was supported by the ERO engineers, volunteers and social mobilisers and had massively surpassed his target (of 10% completion in fiscal year 2016-17 – he suggested that Rampur was at approximately 60%), while neighbouring VDCs with only two or three engineers were struggling to meet this target.

¹⁶For example, in Sindhapalchok, DUDBC reported that more than a third of the vacancies are unfilled.

¹⁷285 households reached the DPC level rather than the anticipated 100, meaning that Ramechhap has had to apply for a budget revision to enable it to honour the agreement to pay 25,000 rupees (USD 238).

being supplied. KIIs also suggested that the RCM needs to consider how it will support the retrofitting of houses.

It is noted that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, such as the construction of prefabricated and permanent health post and hospital buildings, school buildings, blood bank buildings, warehouses, district chapter building, etc. It may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward. Some reflection on rebuilding of health posts is included in 5.2.4 below (the review team was not able to gather data related to other building activities).

5.2.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Lack of access to water was identified during FGDs as a major concern for communities visited during the MTR, thus it is unsurprising that the focus on the construction of drinking water systems within the WASH programme is highly valued by affected communities, together with the work it is carrying out to support household toilet construction.

In some districts such as Ramechhap, FGDs suggest that the impact of the operation will be huge, improving the situation pre-earthquake in many instances, while the focus on household toilet construction is strongly contributing to VDCs being able to declare themselves open defecation free (ODF) areas. The RC support of toilet construction has also helped build the NRCS image generally and relationship with district level line agencies. In Kavre, Lalitpur, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchok line agencies including the Chief District Officer (CDO) believed that RC is among the most trusted partner in the district. This was not the case in Rasuwa, where the inability to complete toilet construction in one VDC has unfortunately tarnished the relationship with the concerned line agencies¹⁸.

KIIs revealed a widespread view that work on water schemes should have started much earlier; not having sufficient water available has impacted not only on the wellbeing of people, but also on the ability of shelter activities to progress. In the view of a number of informants, NRCS could have signed an agreement with the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) at the beginning of 2016 (as opposed to July 2016) and moved forward in implementing activities and it is not clear why this did not happen.

Although the water schemes are focusing on ensuring their long-term sustainability through the creation of water user committees and the setting up of Operation and Maintenance (O & M) funds, districts are using different approaches to construction; in Sindhupalchok community labour is paid through Cash for Work (CfW), in Ramechhap the community labour for the Aitabar water scheme is entirely organised through community labour contribution (calculated as a rupee contribution per person per hour of labour, an approach that the community members appreciated highly as it values their contribution and makes them feel true partners in the project), while in Kavre a mixed approach is being taken, involving some household labour contribution topped up with CfW made available to priority beneficiaries identified through VCA (also an approach that community members approved of). The MTR team had some concerns regarding the exclusive use of CfW in this context, given that it could work against the need to encourage community ownership of the water schemes for long term sustainability (see 5.2.3 for more reflection on CfW).

The ERO WASH unit suggests that the 1% guideline on investment in O & M systems is being surpassed, although the team was unable to verify this. However, at the district level it was clearly noted that focus is being maintained on creating water user committees, providing seed funding for a maintenance fund and encouraging community members to make regular contributions to this fund.

¹⁸ It is understood that slowness of toilet construction was due to delays in signing a comprehensive 4+1 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with government, which was finally overcome by NRCS moving ahead to sign a separate MoU with the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation.

5.2.3 Livelihood

Although a new area of intervention for NRCS and less intensive in scope, the livelihood component has gained momentum in yielding some initial impacts and is roundly supported by community members, although its delayed roll out in some locations undermines its impact as a recovery strategy for affected households in some instances (eg the District Livestock Office in one district noted that many households had ceased to raise livestock in the months after the earthquake and had permanently focused their attention to other livelihoods activities as their animals had been killed in the earthquake). Livelihood activities are generally running behind schedule, although it is not clear why this is as they did not need to be delayed by the NRA decisions. As mentioned previously, reviewers felt that livelihood activities could have been brought forward into an early recovery strategy. As a new intervention NRCS did not have a strategy, framework or guidelines related to livelihood programming, so it did take some time to adapt the IFRC approach.

A similarity of approach across the districts visited was noted, often referred to as the “Spanish Red Cross” approach¹⁹, involving livelihoods training, developing a business plan, provision of conditional cash grants, vocational training in a number of areas (generally defined through community consultation), with emphasis in rural settings on to the provision of livestock and construction of livestock sheds (for goats and cows). Some KIIs with NRCS informants were critical of the approach being advanced by the Red Cross Livelihood Centre, suggesting that it was not contextualised sufficiently to the Nepal context.

The MTR noted the differences of amount of conditional cash grants in the amounts provided in different districts; eg Lalitpur provided 20,000 rupees, Kavre distributes two different amounts depending upon how individual HHs are ranked for vulnerability through VCA (40,000 and 30,000 rupees), Sindhupalchok (40,000 rupees). It is not clear how the amounts were arrived at, for example whether the district EROs performed a market survey to inform the decision (in some cases it was suggested that the figure was agreed upon by the PNS delegate). Agreeing a shared approach for determining the allocation of funds across the districts would have given more coherence to the programme.

Livestock camps organised between RC and District Livestock Office (DLO) in some districts were seen to be useful both by FGDs and the DLO; The RCM provides the transport, funds the medication and mobilises the people²⁰. Other DLOs (eg in Ramechhap) suggested that they would also welcome the inclusion of livestock camps in the operation. Feedback from the DLOs interviewed suggests that the programme should also include support for vaccination and parasite control of animals. The inclusion of training on building safe animal shelters and the provision of insurance for animals was strongly approved of by informants.

Cash for Work (CfW) is a strategy adopted in all the districts visited and is seen by informants to be integral to the livelihood programme. District informants believe strongly that this is an appropriate way of helping the most vulnerable people in a community earn additional income, although for the reviewers it was difficult to determine what was the main objective of this part of the programme (getting the work done or providing income). It is notable that different approaches are being taken to implementing this strategy (see 5.2.2 above for several examples related to WASH), in Rasuwa the CfW scheme is used for the construction of foot trails, whereas in Lalitpur, it has been used for debris clearance). Decisions related to CfW have been controversial in some districts; community members in some districts (eg Lalitpur) suggested in FGDs that some people had been excluded due to their poverty status, while in Sindhupalchok community members said that they had been excluded due to

¹⁹ Or perhaps more accurately the approach being advocated by the IFRC Livelihoods Centre which is based in Spanish Red Cross.

²⁰ The mobilisation seems to be particularly effective, with a number of KIIs suggesting that attendance was two or three times the numbers that the DLO was expecting in some instances. This is a great example of using the comparative advantage of the NRCS through its volunteer network to massively increase the impact of an intervention.

their party-political allegiances. The daily rate provided for CfW was also described by informants in some districts (eg Lalitpur and Rasuwa) to be lower than the market rate, which further questions the purpose of this activity. On the plus side, people who had taken up CfW in a number of districts were pleased with the provision of insurance. Some concern was raised that CfW (and cash grants) may negatively influence community cohesiveness and solidarity (“killing volunteerism” as one informant put it, noting that in some districts such as Ramechhap the community was volunteering its labour for the completion of the Aitabar water scheme) and may also not be suitable for marginalised people such as disabled individuals, the very young or the very old, although it was noted that in a number of districts efforts were made to find appropriate CfW roles for disabled people, which is commendable.

5.2.4 Health

Activities focused on health within the Recovery Plan consist of hardware inputs (principally reconstruction of health facilities in some districts) together with the delivery of community-based health interventions such as first aid, disease/epidemic prevention, health promotion and psychosocial support through training. It proved difficult to gather much data from community members regarding the health activities within the community, while Department of Health (DoH) officials tended to focus more on the support provided by RCM in relation to the hardware.

The construction of health posts in a number of districts is generally delayed for a variety of reasons, including issues related to the selected contractor/consultant. However, field observation and interviews with key stakeholders suggest that most of these structures are expected to be completed within the stipulated time or shortly afterwards. Although the district representatives of the DoH generally accept the quality of the construction work when it has finally got underway, they were highly critical of the delays, with some informants expressing their view that the decision to support the construction of pre-fabricated “temporary” structures was the wrong one given the amount of time it has taken to get the constructions finished. However, it was acknowledged that at the time the agreement was signed with DoH, it was the policy of the GoN to quickly get prefabricated structures constructed, so supporting this approach was seen to be appropriate, even if the relevance of these prefabricated buildings is now in doubt.

The software components of the plan are generally well advanced and are reportedly well-coordinated between the ERO and the NRCS health department. Most districts visited expect to have completed the majority of these by the end of 2017. Districts worked through volunteers and social mobilisers to raise awareness in a whole range of primary health care issues; while FGDs with both volunteers and social mobilisers revealed their enthusiasm for their work, it proved difficult to gather views of community members, few of whom seemed to recall these activities unprompted. The exception to this is the winterisation (*nanojholā*) programme, which was very positively rated by FGDs with affected communities and KIs with health personnel. Feedback suggested that the activity made a positive impact on affected people, as well as acting as an important gesture of solidarity at a time with community members often felt that their plight was being ignored.

5.2.5 Institutional Capacity Building (ICB)

Each priority district plan includes an element of capacity building, which generally focuses on rebuilding damaged chapter buildings and training of volunteers. Chapter level ICB activities are generally at an early stage, as districts focus on delivering programming to affected communities, although training opportunities are being provided to NRCS volunteers in a range of subject areas. In some districts, the majority of volunteer positions are filled by people recruited from outside the NRCS rather than existing volunteers, so it will be important in the next phase for the NRCS chapters to consider how it can retain some of these volunteers within their organisation over the longer term. Similarly, the district level ERO structures are predominantly staffed by personnel coming from outside the NRCS and outside the district, meaning that when the operation is closed that capacity will be lost to the organisation. This situation is also mirrored to some extent at NHQ level, meaning that when the ERO is phased out, much of the capacity that has developed may be lost to the organisation,

although the decision to second some staff from the main NRCS structure will hopefully enable some of that experience to be re-absorbed back into the organisation.

There has been insufficient investment in district chapter level administrative capacity, in particular related to financial management²¹. Many of the districts are still operating cumbersome manual systems and it is reported that this is negatively impacting upon their abilities to manage the level of ERO expenditure in some instances.

In the view of the reviewers, the Recovery Plan has not focused sufficiently on encouraging chapters to become active participants in the implementation of the operation. In some cases, chapters have had limited previous experience of largescale humanitarian activities, so the operation provides valuable opportunities in this regard, for example learning through participating in the whole programme management cycle required in implementing a large-scale recovery operation, developing institutional relationships with line agencies, local government structures and communities in their district, etc. These experiences can contribute to building chapter capacity and desire to continue community-focused work in the future.

The current ICB plan is focused primarily on the 14* priority districts and NHQ and thus misses valuable openings to extend learning and capacity building opportunities across the wider organisation, although some limited opportunities have been taken up, for example involving all 75 districts in orientation around Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) initiatives and the dissemination of the child protection policy. A revision of the ICB plan should look to find ways to involve chapters across the country not only in terms of participating in trainings, but also whether there are broader opportunities for staff/volunteer exchange or secondment so that these people can have direct first-hand experience. The ICB component of the Recovery Plan should be reviewed and should aim to build on the core competences of NRCS as expressed in its 7th development plan and the findings of the 2014 OCAC review; community resilience building should be at the centre of these plans. The overall ICB strategy could be designed to cover three levels: the policy and strategic level; institutional and operational level; and the individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

5.2.6 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

The Recovery Framework suggests that DRR, as a core competence of the RCM, should be a cross-cutting activity underpinning the 4+1 programme²², enabling RC to focus not only on the very occasional hazards such as earthquake, but also on the annual events such as landslides, floods and droughts that impact heavily on vulnerable people. To date this has not been central to the plans in a number of the districts visited, which represents a lost opportunity, particularly in terms of not using VCA as the key assessment and community engagement approach²³. While it is understood that in some districts (eg Sindhupalchok) the RC was unable to focus on DRR as this work had been allocated to other organisations, it was noticeable that it was only in Kavre that a link had been forged to the local structures such as CDMCs and LDRMCs, an important sustainability strategy, both for the communities and for the NRCS chapter. It will be important going forward to find ways to engage with these local structures through implementing a DRR strategy moving towards transition and phase out; for those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS to engage as an important national volunteer organisation with a core mandate in DRR.

²¹ It was noted that a common financial management software was identified to be introduced into the chapters and training was provided to finance officers, however to date this has not been rolled out.

²² To quote from the Recovery Framework (p13): *"The recovery programming, as a foundation for building community resilience, will then be gradually transformed into Community Based DRR/resilience programme during the transition phase of the recovery. Based on past experience, community engagement as well as level of knowledge, skill, attitude and practices of local communities before the earthquake and now will be identified through KAP survey as a basis for programming."*

²³ Perhaps the recovery framework should have been known as the 1+4+1 plan.

5.2.7 Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)

The inclusion of a PMER unit within the ERO has been an important support to the ERO operation and to the PMER officers placed in each of the districts. These district level officers have provided valuable support to the sectoral officers working in each district and in a number of cases in the districts visited, it was clear that PMER officers work closely with the technical teams, collecting data in the field, knowing the communities where the operation is working and able to support them in a wide range of ways. The PMER team has encouraged the collection of gender disaggregated data which is also to be commended.

5.3 Effectiveness and Timeliness

At the time of the MTR the operation was in full swing; except in areas where the community is temporarily focused on planting crops due to the onset of the monsoon, the construction of housing, toilets, health posts and water systems was ongoing, large numbers of volunteers and social mobilisers have been recruited, trained and are out in the villages raising awareness of a range of issues, offering training, following up at the household level, etc. But time and again the issue of the timeliness of the activities was critically raised during KIIs and FGDs (although community members seemed generally more pragmatic in being pleased with any progress, however late in the day it may be).

5.3.1 Effectiveness

While it is probably too early to undertake a deep analysis of the effectiveness of the operation (and would be difficult to achieve, due to the wide range of formats, time periods and levels of budgetary information available to the consultants at the time of the review), FGDs and KIIs with beneficiary communities confirm that the operation is now beginning to meet the priority needs of people affected by the earthquake in the VDCs where the RCM is working. The support that RCM is providing to government in meeting the huge numbers of houses that need to be re-constructed through the delivery of mason training and the on-site monitoring of construction works, together with the focus on rehabilitation of water systems and household toilets were consistently highlighted as being particularly effective interventions that will make a substantial difference to the lives of affected people. FGDs indicated that the work on livelihoods is also beginning to have an impact at the household level, helping some vulnerable families re-establish a means of income generation (such as livestock raising) that was destroyed by the earthquake.

Beneficiaries who participated in the FGDs believed that the early recovery contributions of the operation, particularly the winterisation project and the unconditional cash grants were effective support strategies. It is understood that some PNSs had proposed a similar approach during monsoon 2016 to bridge the gap before the operation kicked in, but it is understood that the government was reluctant to allow this as it wished cash grants to exclusively focus on encouraging livelihood re-generation.

Determining the effectiveness and timeliness of the recovery operation depends upon when one considers that the operation actually started. Documentation and KIIs show that needs assessment at the district level was generally carried out between April and July 2016, led by the central ERO. However, in Kavre the decision to use the hiatus in implementation to start with community focused planning through undertaking VCA processes in all communities, which happened before the needs assessment was carried out, was a decision that not only helped this district advance in its programme implementation but has clearly brought dividends in terms of its relationship with the communities where it is working.

A number of informants from EROs across the districts visited were concerned about the rigidity of the operation, citing examples of inflexibility that makes it difficult for the programme to respond to emerging changing needs at the community level as well as the changing policy environment. These

informants believed that regular reviews and adjustment of the programme in line with findings would enable the programme to have increased levels of impact at the community level²⁴.

5.3.2 Timeliness

KIs revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction throughout all parts of the Movement (and echoed by some line agencies) that the operation took more than eighteen months to really get going. While there is recognition that many delays were beyond the control of the RCM, related as they were to the creation of the NRA and other key government decisions regarding how recovery was to be managed, informants were generally critical of the slowness of the internal RCM decision-making that affected many aspects of the operation, from the creation, set-up and staffing of the ERO unit in Kathmandu and the districts, delays in signing project agreements between NRCS and partners, etc. The slowness in taking a number of key strategic decisions following the 2015 partnership meeting, led over time to increasing strains upon the relationship between NRCS and its partners.

The failure to take timely decisions is even now having an impact upon the ability of the operation to deliver in a timely way at the community level in some instances. Many informants interviewed both at the district and NHQ level shared examples of extended delays in decision-making regarding what should be relatively simple issues that have already been approved within budgets and plans, eg approvals for payments at district level, recruitment decisions for key posts or tenders for the delivery of services, as well as delays related to funds transfers from partners. These delays point to the decision-making processes not always being fit for purpose.

It is not clear to reviewers why delays related to the creation of the NRA held back progress in the non-shelter activities of the recovery plan; many informants believed that the RCM could have moved forward in the other sectors (health, WASH and livelihoods) while the complex shelter policies and guidelines were being finalised. This would not only have had a positive impact at the community level, but may also in the case of advances in the provision of water, have had a positive impact on the shelter programme also.

While there is a potential loss of control (and hence slowness of delivery) inherent in taking an owner-driven approach to housing which may contribute to further delays, there was overwhelming agreement that this was the most appropriate way to support the challenge of rebuilding. FGDs and KIs identified the need for the RCM to continue to support the government's objectives in this regard, particularly through the provision of mason training and technical support. The ability of the RCM to deliver on shelter targets in those districts where they are funding shelter grants is being held up by the lack of personnel within the NRA/DUDBC to sign-off for the different tranches of funds. This again points to views that suggest that the RCM shelter funding could have been put to better use supporting/enabling NRA/DUDBC through the provision of training and technical support rather than funding a comparatively limited number of housing grants.

Some of the delays experienced were caused by the lack of adequate planning for how NRCS and the wider Movement were going to bring in the skills and capacity to deliver the operation. Recruiting and training the huge numbers of technically skilled people required for this operation would be challenging for any organisation, but in Nepal post-earthquake context, with a highly competitive market due to large numbers of other organisations also recruiting, this was an even more challenging task. As mentioned previously, had a realistic scale-up plan been developed, built upon an objective assessment of the existing policies, systems, processes and human resources of the NRCS (to determine what adjustments would need to be carried out to ensure that they were fit for the purpose of delivering a multi-million-dollar operation in multiple locations with multiple donors) this may have gone more smoothly. This scale-up plan should also have considered how PNS expertise (in the form of international, regional and locally-recruited staff/delegates and technical experts from PNS

²⁴ An example shared was the inability in some cases to be able to include increased numbers of beneficiaries in livelihood activities despite the fact that they had met the assessment criteria set for the activity.

headquarters) could have been strategically used within the ERO²⁵ to help fill the gap while the upskilling was ongoing and how these personnel could have been used to orientate and train new NRCS staff coming from outside. More strategic planning of this kind could have helped not only the NRCS to become operational quicker, but could have helped plan an early reduction in the numbers of expatriate staff as the national staff were recruited.

5.4 Strengthening Local Capacity

5.4.1 Communities

Considering that many of the activities are still mid-implementation, it is too early to say to what extent the operation is contributing to strengthening local community capacity overall, although it is clear that there is mixed experience across the districts and sectors. Inputs such as the training of masons in safer building techniques, livelihoods and livestock training, awareness-raising related to health issues etc, are all contributions to local capacity strengthening valued by community members participating in FGDs. The trained masons are helping build earthquake-resistant houses and at the same time are being provided with skills that are an asset to the community and therefore potentially a means to earning an income. Similarly, the creation and support of water user committees (with O&M funds to support the ongoing maintenance of the installations), training of female community health volunteers, working through mother's health groups (in Ramechhap) are all examples of supporting existing structures and thus are considered to be strengthening longer-term local capacity. Crucially, the operation is helping in most cases to strengthen the connectedness of communities to line agencies and district level resource organisations which is contributing to overall resilience building. The recruitment of volunteers and social mobilisers from the local communities where the RC is working can also be considered a contribution to strengthening local capacity.

The work in Kavre using the VCA methodology and explicitly working through the CDMC will be contributing to strengthening the capacities of the local communities by working through a permanent structure. In some other districts evidence was shared of some support to other permanent local level structures such as LDMRCs; not doing this across all districts is seen as a lost opportunity, as is the creation of temporary Recovery Action Groups (RAG) in some districts (eg Sindupalchok and Rasuwa) which will be dissolved when the operation is completed. Districts are encouraged to look to whether there are possibilities of integrating RAGs into other permanent community structures.

5.4.2 Institutional Strengthening²⁶

By working closely alongside line agencies such as DWASH, NRA, DUDBC, DoH, etc, the programme has boosted the capacity of these agencies to respond to community priorities at the local level. In some cases, it has also contributed to strengthening capacity, for example training FCHVs who are a permanent part of the DoH health strategy and the work in shelter.

While most government line agencies were complimentary about the role of the RC during the relief phase and, at the district level most were similarly pleased both with the 4+1 programme and the quality of most RC services, a more critical tone was evident when reflecting upon the recovery phase with line agencies at central level. There was criticism of the delays in support from NRCS regarding hospital and health clinic construction, and a concern was aired that the RC livelihoods programme is violating government policy as it constitutes a "back door strategy" for increasing the amounts per house.

5.5 Communication, Access, Participation, Complaints and Feedback

²⁵ Following the original intention of the Recovery Framework that all partner delegates and staff were working inside the ERO, side by side with ERO staff.

²⁶ Strengthening the capacity of the NRCS - a core institution in Nepal - is covered under 5.2.5 above.

5.5.1 Community Engagement and Accountability

The Recovery operation has invested time and resources into community engagement and accountability (CEA) processes. During district level visits evidence was seen of efforts to share information regarding the work the RC at the local level, although it appears that different levels of detail is provided; in Ramechhap the ERO also held a press conference to share information regarding budget expenditure to date related to the Aitabar water scheme and posted this on public noticeboards, although in other districts it was suggested that such budgetary information may not be systematically shared across all districts.

A range of ways that communities can provide feedback or raise concerns or complaints with the RC directly are also being promoted across the districts, including the 1130 national phone hotline, suggestion boxes, kiosks, FaceBook pages, email, etc. Despite this, it was notable that very few FGDs reflected any knowledge or use of these mechanisms²⁷. Although the hotline receives an average of 130 calls a month (with some spikes in calls when cash disbursements happening), KIs suggest that other approaches such as suggestion boxes are not particularly popular²⁸ and the hotline itself tends to be used predominantly by men rather than women.

Feedback from line agencies shows that they are generally happy with the complaints mechanisms put in place by the NRCS, which are streamlined with their own (toll-free numbers, suggestions boxes etc), although they pointed out the importance of holding regular public meetings and one-to-one meetings as the key to ensuring good community engagement, something confirmed through the FGDs, with participants suggesting that at the community level, face-to-face contact is still the preferred route for raising issues, underlying the importance of ensuring that locally recruited social mobilisers and volunteers are trained to receive and follow-up on any complaints or concerns that are raised with them in a consistent and confidential manner.

5.5.2 Access

Following some initial reluctance to follow a targeting rather than blanket approach, the recovery operation is now demonstrating various efforts to ensure that it is targeting the most vulnerable members affected by the earthquake, eg identifying wards predominantly inhabited by lower caste families, targeting criteria that encourages participation of women and marginalised people in community groups such as water user committees or trying to open mason training to women. In each district visit there was strong recognition of the importance of following NRCS's GESI policies and there was clear commitment to gathering gender disaggregated data etc, however in some instances it appears that meeting targets alone is not enough and the organisation needs to consider other strategies it might need to adopt in order that these efforts have an impact²⁹. A hard-headed look at female inclusion targets also needs to be undertaken; while setting a target of 40% female participation in a water user committee may appear to be progressive given that the government target is 30%, in communities where the majority of working aged men are absent, these targets may still be quite low.

NRCS has also worked hard to find ways to open access to its programmes to disabled people, for example looking to include disabled people in appropriate cash for work initiatives and it is understood that it is undertaking a pilot project with Handicap International in Tanahun and Lamjung. As has been previously mentioned, there is concern that the government decision to provide only three lakhs for the reconstruction of a family house may result in highly vulnerable people without access to additional funding being excluded from the shelter reconstruction programme. Undertaking research at the district level to discover whether this is the case will be important, as armed with this evidence

²⁷ In one district the FGD participants seemed completely unaware of the different CEA mechanisms available to them, despite the fact that a large banner was in the street immediately opposite the NRCS office.

²⁸ FGDs in some districts indicated that some communities had had previous experience of using suggestions boxes provided by other organisations and failing to get adequate response, meaning that they were not inclined to use them again.

²⁹ For example, in Sindhupalchok the inclusion of women trainees in the 50-day mason training as a livelihood option for the future needs to be followed up with a strategy to enable the women to find work.

the NRCS has the opportunity to advocate for additional support for these households (beyond the additional 50,000 rupees identified in GoN policies).

5.6 *Integration*

Most informants believe that an integrated multi-sector strategy is an appropriate response, particularly in VDCs/wards where the RC is the main (or only) organisation, although it is proving more difficult to roll out as planned in districts such as Sindhupalchok where other organisations had been allocated responsibilities, suggesting that perhaps in these districts a different approach may have been more appropriate built from the bottom up on the results of the needs assessment processes.

It was notable that integration for some was defined as the RCM delivering all four sectors within the district, however for most informants, integration of activities needs to be achieved at the community/household level and for these informants it was felt that in some instances more could be done to achieve an integrated approach. One strategy for achieving a more joined-up approach is employing social mobilisers who perform a generic role within their wards (the approach taken in Ramechhap and Lalitpur). This encourages integration opportunities, for example bringing together awareness raising activities that crosscut several sectors (eg health and hygiene, livelihoods and shelter). In districts such as Sindhupalchok and Rasuwa SMs have sectoral responsibilities and support staff in only one sector, which may inhibit the opportunity to integrate activities and may be duplicative (as well as giving the impression of very high staffing levels to the community which may be counterproductive). In the view of the MTR team, this approach should be avoided.

A few informants were concerned that the RCM did not necessarily have the expertise to be able to deliver effectively in all four sectors or that an integrated approach was too complicated and there was evidence that some districts (and partners) paid less attention to achieving an integrated approach than others.

5.7 *External Coordination*

Feedback from the districts and at central levels show that NRCS has largely maintained a high level of coordination with government line agencies, participating in a whole range of coordination meetings. At the district level, line agencies (such as DUDBC, DoH, NRA and DLO) frequently identified the NRCS as a valued key partner and commended it for its efforts to support and coordinate. In a number of instances at the district level (it is understood that at central levels, NRCS sends NRA a monthly report), there were requests for the NRCS to provide regular written updates on work in the form of monthly or quarterly progress reports and to participate in more regular meetings, rather than relying on informal contacts. Coordination issues within the RCM are taken up in 5.10.5.

5.8 *Sustainability*

As mentioned previously, many RC interventions are closely linked and coordinated with the work of government line agencies, thus maximising their sustainability potential, while the training being provided at community level (including training of volunteers) will remain once the operation comes to an end. However, some interventions are not sustainable, for example the creation of the Recovery Action Groups. Using VCA as part of the initial needs assessment would have provided a solid community base to the subsequent work of the RC on which recovery activities could have been built, linking into community level organisations such as CDMCs which would have contributed to longer-term resilience. Even within the lifetime of the operation, some unsustainable activities were observed; in Sindhupalchok and Lalitpur recruiting social mobilisers from the ranks of the previously trained volunteers is resulting in reduced numbers of community volunteers being available to the operation.

The operation is funding a number of positions at NHQ in areas such as communications, GESI, CEA etc that are not sustainable beyond the lifetime of the operation. However, efforts are being made to train and support resource people at chapter level who may be able to continue the focus on issues related to access of women, children, disabled people etc.

5.9 Learning

The Recovery Framework presented a compelling vision of how an integrated recovery programme could be implemented in a theoretical context and was enthusiastically endorsed at the June 2015 partnership meeting on the back of what was universally seen to be a successful Movement-wide approach to relief operations. However, it was not built upon sufficient contextual analysis of the wider environment (for example the likely amount of time it would take for the GoN to scale up capacities to be able to deliver against the needs identified in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment [PDNA]), as well as insufficient reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of recent RCM operations, such as Pakistan floods. A number of informants with experience of other recovery operations reflected upon what they saw as the repetition of mistakes seen in previous operations. Having to rely on a series of short-term recovery advisers, rather than being able to bring in a longer-term recovery expert at an early stage in the relief phase with a brief to research and understand that broader context was, in this regard, seen to be detrimental.

Having CEA mechanisms in place is allowing the district EROs to adapt programming approaches to feedback received from community members; for example, comments after the first mason training sessions in one district resulted in the training methodology being changed in response to observations from experienced masons who had participated in the course. However, as has been noted previously, there was some concern articulated by DPCs that there was little space to be able to adapt the operation budget to respond to emerging local issues.

It is probably too early to reflect upon the extent that the recovery operation is systematically documenting experiences and sharing these between districts. However, ERO staff at the district level generally regretted that there were few opportunities to meet (either in person or through online forums) with technical counterparts in others districts to share experiences and ideas. Although there are technical working groups, KIs suggest that some of these have not been particularly active over the last year. These could be one appropriate forum for the sharing of experiences between different districts.

5.10 Efficiency, Management, Governance and Partnership

A key failing of the operation identified by an overwhelming majority of informants interviewed for the review and coming from all parts of the RCM (NRCS staff at district and NHQ, IFRC and PNS) is its inability so far to deliver against one of the visions presented within the Recovery Framework, namely that the recovery operation would be characterised as one demonstrating *“joint responsibility, light coordination (and) swift decision making”*³⁰. The following section of the report will examine these three issues, together with other management-related issues that came out strongly throughout the data collection period.

5.10.1 Management, governance and decision-making

While it was generally seen to be a good decision to create a separate ERO Steering Committee (SC) that focuses on the operation, there appears to have been insufficient definition of its roles, levels of responsibilities, or the required turn-around time for operational decisions to be taken³¹. Informants generally seemed unclear as to what its role was, how often it met and it appears that the minutes from the SC are not shared³². A set of minutes from the first few months after the creation of the SC in 2015 was viewed by a member of the MTR; it was noted that it generally met only once a month, which given that this was a period of key strategic decision-making related to the future operation would appear to be infrequent. The closed nature of the SC, without representation of partners is also seen to be an impediment to inculcating the spirit of partnership and joint responsibility that is at the heart of the Recovery Framework's intentions. This is taken up below. With decision-making centralised in the SC, a number of informants also noted the limited authority and influence of the head of the ERO, although he does attend the SC meetings.

³⁰ NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015, p11

³¹ Although requested, the terms of reference for the SC has not been shared with the MTR.

³² It was interesting that many NRCS informants described the SC as “the management” of the operation, rather than seeing it as the strategic governance body, given its involvement in taking what would generally be viewed as managerial decisions.

For the majority of informants, the slow decision-making at the central level had significantly slowed down the pace at which the district EROs could roll out programming at the community level. Multiple examples were shared with the team of how the slow approvals process has delayed the ERO at the district level to implement, which is having a knock-on effect and slowing down the ability of the operation to make a positive impact on the lives of people who have been seriously affected by the earthquake. Most informants believe that decision-making authority, together with financial authority levels, need to be delegated, both within the ERO at NHQ level but particularly down to the district level. The SC should focus on taking high-level strategic decisions, delegating the managerial decisions to the ERO as close as possible to where the decisions are implemented. The lack of devolution to the district level ERO is contributing to DPCs feeling unable to provide the leadership that is required (they are managing large teams but do not, for example, have the authority to directly recruit a new staff member) and some informants felt that the inability to devolve responsibility was an expression of lack of trust.

The decision to manage the recovery operation using the existing procedures of the NRCS without an examination as to whether they would meet the requirements of a USD100M recovery operation that needs to be swift and agile was generally seen to be a mistake. Most informants believed that the recovery operation should have been supported by a new set of policies and procedures developed to be swift enough to support what should be a relatively fast-moving recovery operation of relatively short duration in comparison to development programmes, for which the NRCS policies were developed. This was a widespread view shared by ERO staff at NHQ and in the districts, PNS and IFRC staff and delegates. This view was also shared by a number of informants from line agencies interviewed at district level who were working alongside the RCM.

Two NRCS processes in particular were identified as requiring extensive revision in order to be fit for the purpose of supporting a recovery operation:

- The current NRCS **procurement process** involves a large number of steps across several different departments as well as the involvement of the NRCS procurement committee, resulting in significant delays. In addition, the absence of a comprehensive procurement plan capturing all procurement needs has resulted in ad hoc, district by district procurement, which has implications on efficiency and cost effectiveness (as the operation may not have benefited from potential economies of scale). Had a scale-up and planning period been put in place following the definition of the recovery plan, then this situation might have been avoided. While informants suggest that the procurement processes are now improving, feedback suggests that the creation of a unified procurement and logistics department would significantly help, together with a review of the authorisation levels for districts, which in the view of many informants is too low at 15,000 rupees, making it significantly lower than the government level (at 50,000 rupees) and not appropriate to the scale of the recovery operation. Informants also believe that a separate recovery procurement committee needs to be formed that can meet very regularly to ensure that delays do not impact upon the ability of the programme to deliver at the field level.
- The NRCS **recruitment process** is similarly seen to be inadequate to the task of recruiting huge numbers for the recovery operation. Although an external recruitment agency was used, relying on a recruitment committee that meets infrequently (thus further slowing down the recruitment process) and having overly centralised recruitment processes that do not empower the senior managers at district level (DPCs) to take decisions regarding junior recruitments were all seen to be critical in this regard. There is also widespread concern raised by informants from both NRCS and partners that in some instances technical departments are not sufficiently involved in recruitment decisions, resulting in recruits not always having the appropriate level of experience and technical expertise. A number of informants were also concerned by instances of staff recruitment decisions appearing to have been influenced by governance (this was reported at both district and central levels). A missed opportunity for NRCS, identified by a number of

informants, was not to have reached out to the large numbers of ex-NRCS staff working outside Nepal (both within and outside the Movement); drawing upon this expertise could have helped in the scaling up of the operation from these known and trusted high calibre personnel.

5.10.2 Governance at the district level

As at the central level, there was some concern regarding the lack of clarity of the role of district chapter steering committees. While in some cases they provide invaluable support to the district ERO, in others they are seen to be too involved in the day-to-day management of the operation rather than providing the strategic leadership and support to the operation and the DPC. It was also notable that although the NRCS guideline specifies that the district SC should consist of five members, this is not followed by the districts (eg Kavre has seven, Ramechhap three). A number of district chapters believed that sub-chapters should be more closely involved in the implementation of the operation.

Some districts are experiencing long delays in decisions being made by the district SC, which is negatively impacting on the ability of the operation to move forward and was identified as being demotivating for both affected communities and staff. At least one district ERO has been experiencing political interference in the operation from the SC, something that was identified unprompted also through KIIs and FGDs with affected people, while another district is currently under investigation for improper use of funds.

5.10.3 The ERO structure

With a few exceptions, the majority of those interviewed believed it was appropriate for the ERO to have been created. Concerns were less about its creation and more about the time it took to create and staff the unit, the fact that it was not supported by policies and procedures appropriate for a recovery operation and that it seems to have become a separate and independent entity³³. The vision for the ERO presented within the Recovery Framework was that it would be the “home” of the Movement, with partners and IFRC inside the structure; not achieving this has resulted in the proliferation of PNS structures and the loss of significant potential capacity building opportunities for the NRCS³⁴.

The failure to integrate personnel from Movement partners into the ERO was attributed by NRCS to there being insufficient physical space to have them all sitting in one building. While probably true that there was not sufficient space in one building, it could have been possible to have teams sitting together in different buildings throughout the NRCS compound and the failure to make that happen has had serious consequences and damaged the strong spirit of partnership that was evident at the time of the 2015 partnership meeting. The inability to “*maximise the value of Movement resources by using them in common wherever possible*”³⁵ represents a considerable lost opportunity; had the Movement put in place a human resource strategy to accompany the recovery plan to consider how it could use the technical capacity of Movement partners in the short and medium term to bolster NRCS capacity while it was in the process of hiring ERO staff, this could have resulted in considerable benefits for all parties.

In some instances, the ERO has also operated separately from the main NRCS sectoral departments. This risks a loss of experience in the longer term if the connections are not forged through the next phase, although there is some evidence that efforts are being made in this regard, for example in the WASH area.

³³As it was often described during KIIs.

³⁴One example of how this decision played out was the fact that today PNS have many more finance-related staff (approximately 20 across the different partners) compared to NRCS (which has seven). Had a more unified approach been developed, NRCS may have been able to undertake a higher level of monitoring and support at the district level, something that the finance department would have liked to do.

³⁵NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015

Reviewing the ERO organogram, the MTR team are struck by the impossible number of direct reports to the head of the ERO (14 DPCs plus six coordinators based in NHQ and three field coordinators), exacerbated by the difficulties of retaining the programme manager position (the deputy head of the ERO effectively). Even with that position, the structure would be difficult for anyone to manage, suggesting that some intermediate level should have been created, for example recruiting three programme managers reporting to the head of the ERO, responsible for sharing the management of the DPCs, for example in three geographical clusters (it was notable that no one at the district level believed that the three field coordinators in the current structure added any value at all). Districts also reported different levels of support from the sector coordinators and the PMER team based in NHQ, recognising that the responsibility placed on them to provide support to 14* districts was excessive for the same reasons.

5.10.4 Different implementation models

The original Recovery Framework contemplated a common model of implementation across all districts, something that has not really materialised, although the concept of a consortia approach with a lead PNS has been applied in all but one of the districts, which is broadly positive (in Sindhupalchok the result of being supported separately by two PNSs is that there are effectively two different ERO structures, two different reporting models, etc, a situation that the Recovery Framework aimed to avoid).

The preferred model of implementation in the view of many NRCS informants was the Kavre model, (with the traditional IFRC model also identified as one that many NRCS informants felt comfortable working within, probably because this was familiar to them). The Kavre approach, involving the light presence of the PNS at the district level supporting in specific technical areas, seems to be closest to the *modus operandi* envisaged in the Recovery Framework³⁶ and looks to be delivering in terms of quality and timeliness while not appearing to smother the NRCS, although it is difficult to say without considerable comparative analysis whether it is delivering in terms of cost-effectiveness. Partners working in consortia with DRC in Kavre were also appreciative of this model, highlighting fluid communications, timely development of project documents and reasonable rates of implementation and observed that DRC's long experience of implementing through a consortium shared partnership approach helped the approach work smoothly.

Given that other consortia leaders may have had little experience of working in consortium with others, time should have been devoted at the beginning of the recovery operation to work across the Movement to consider how best to facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles of leader and participant, appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns in consortia relationships might be handled.

5.10.5 Coordination within the Movement

Efforts to ensure that there was close collaboration and coordination throughout the operation were made, but some of these initiatives failed to achieve their potential. Sectoral technical working groups (which had brought together staff from NRCS and partners quite effectively during the drafting of the Recovery Framework) were reported to have become infrequent and in some cases ceased to meet, which has further weakened the opportunities for promoting collaboration and coordinated approaches, although there have been some successes of reinvigorating some of the groups, such as the working group that brings together PMER, information management (IM), GESI, CEA and communications (the so-called Acronym Working Group). It is also understood that two ad hoc meetings of the SC with the IFRC and partners have also been convened to date.

For most informants, the IFRC is largely seen to have little influencing power within the Movement dynamics in Nepal. There are a number of reasons for this; partly due to having no role (or even observer status) within the Earthquake Operation Steering Committee, the key decision-making body

³⁶ See the diagram on p10 of the NRCS Recovery Framework (ibid)

related to the operation and partly because it is also acting as a donor in three districts, which in the view of some informants, compromises its capacity to be able to act as the neutral arbiter and Movement coordinator.

Movement coordination meetings do not seem to have met the expectations for being the key coordination mechanism among partners, partly it seems because NRCS leadership participation has been low. It would also seem to have been a mistake for the facilitation of the Movement Coordination Meeting not to have been taken back by the IFRC country representative when he arrived in October 2015.

5.10.6 Partnership

Exploring relationships between partners is a complex and sensitive issue. The aim of this section of the report is to lay out the different views and opinions that were shared through the MTR process as a basis for suggesting a way forward.

What is abundantly clear from interviews is that the concept of partnership, joint responsibility and co-management that the Recovery Framework articulates and the Movement-wide approach is predicated upon has not materialised as anticipated, resulting in a deterioration in the levels of mutual trust between NRCS and its partners. Interviews often seemed to reveal a situation of “us versus them” and the level of mutual frustration that was aired by all sides was high.

For some NRCS informants, the Recovery Framework and One Plan approach is viewed as having been primarily developed by partners, with little active involvement from the NS. They believe that partners have defined the recovery strategies, then gone on to select which districts they want to work in, have exercised strong influence over all levels of decision-making in “their” districts through micro-management of planning and budgeting and are not following the correct channels of communication, all of which is at odds with the rhetoric of partnership articulated by the Recovery Framework, the Movement Coordination Agreement (MCA) and by the IFRC country representative. For partners, the considerable enthusiasm that there evidently was at the time of the partnership meeting in 2015 with its strong spirit of partnership, seems to have been translated into an atmosphere of internalisation, regulation and control on the side of NRCS, which seems to have encouraged partners to revert to more traditional bilateral behaviours as they feel increasingly on the outside of decision-making and with what they see as little influence over decisions regarding how the funds that they raised (and are accountable for in their home country) are used.

A general breakdown of trust and lack of openness seems to characterise the relationship between partners today. For NRCS the lack of openness from the partners relates to how they are allocating and spending the more than 220 million CHF that has been publically acknowledged as raised by the RCM, when committed funds to the NRCS earthquake operation currently stands at around CHF 80-85 million for the recovery phase. For partners, the lack of openness relates to management decision-making, which they feel on the outside of. Both NRCS informants on one side and PNS informants on the other feel that the other side is not being open and transparent. Each side feels that its views and opinions are not valued or listened to by the other.

Partnership requires valuing what each side brings to the table and the mutual dependency that exists between the parties. At the risk of stating the obvious, in this operation each side is dependent on the other for success. At its most basic, PNSs would be unable to ensure that their funds are used to implement programmes at the community level without the collaboration of NRCS, while the NRCS would be unable to deliver the level of programming across the most affected districts without the funds of partners. The next phase of the operation needs to find ways of returning to a position where a positive, trusting and respectful partnership can be re-established for the mutual benefit of the operation and its ability to deliver to affected communities.

It would seem that not enough attention was given at the start of the recovery programme to identify how to develop a true partnership approach, for example how to orientate staff (NRCS and partners, both new and existing) related to how partnership translates into norms and behaviours. Informants reflected upon the fact that many staff (in NRCS and within partners, including delegates) reverted to previous ways of working, characterised as the “bilateral project approach”. Breaking out of that way of thinking would have required a clear definition of ways of working, drawn from the Recovery Framework and upheld by the management. Staff turnover, particularly within the partners, has not helped in this regard. The fact that it did not prove possible to roll out an ERO structure where technical personnel from the partners were inside the structure working closely with NS counterparts has meant that a crucial way of exercising partnership has not materialised.

There is an unrealistic level of impatience on the part of some partners, perhaps due to lack of understanding of the context of Nepal. The huge amount of scrutiny that PNS are under by their own HQs and their national media to be seen to be actively and rapidly disbursing funds, together with an over-optimistic expectation fuelled by the rapidity and smooth relief implementation period probably also contributed to this. There was a rush to bring in technical delegates before the country - and by extension NRCS - was ready for this; once in-country there was increased pressure to start delivering due to the high indirect monthly costs – an issue taken up in 5.11 below.

Another area of tension between NRCS and partners has been related to some partners’ wish to collaborate with the assistance of other non-RC organisations. While the MCA signed by all partners is not averse to this, it does clearly request that decisions to work in this way are agreed to by NRCS. Some partners feel that NRCS is unnecessarily reluctant to allow such sorts of collaboration, while NRCS feels that these partners have moved ahead in agreeing such forms of collaborations without the agreement of NRCS. The MTR team considers that collaboration with other organisations can be useful, both to augment RCM capacity (particularly in areas that are outside the NS’s core competency) and provides opportunities for learning and development. However, ensuring that NRCS is directly involved in the process of identifying any external partner and that an impartial process is used to identify the partner, in which the views of each side is taken into account, would help in this regard.

5.11 Resource Management and Cost Effectiveness

The current RCM recovery set up, working across 14* districts with management structures in each, is clearly a structure-heavy - and therefore costly - way of working. It is not clear to what extent the RCM examined the likely cost effectiveness of this approach or whether serious consideration was given to implementing alternative recovery strategies³⁷ that might have prioritised humanitarian need over consideration of internal RCM influences. Even without a deep investigation of the costs associated with this operation³⁸, it is clear that an operation of this size and complexity was always going to be a costly one to deliver, particularly given the extent of the area across which the RCM is working and the challenging and isolated conditions where many of the people affected by the earthquake are living. However, even taking this into account, many concerns were raised during the MTR data collection process regarding the cost effectiveness of this operation, given the district level structures, the large numbers of expatriate delegates and PNS staff, the parallel structures and systems to those of NRCS, the fact that funds raised are being used not only to support these PNS structures but also in some instances contributing to costs regionally and at headquarters.

At the district level, a number of RC informants raised their concerns related to what they saw as inefficient expenditure compared to other organisations³⁹, for example that too much is spent on expensive food during training courses, provision of per diems etc. Several line agencies (such as NRA, CDOs, District

³⁷ It is understood that the GoN did suggest to the NRCS that a different approach be taken, focusing the main recovery activities in only one priority A district. It is not known when this suggestion was made and to what extent this suggestion was seriously considered.

³⁸ And it proved impossible for the consultants to undertake this as the budget information is not presented in a consistent way across all the districts.

³⁹ This assertion could not be tested as the terms of reference for the review did not include comparison with other organisations.

Agricultural Offices and DoH) were critical of what they described as lavish displays of expenditure by one PNS (for example, too many vehicles plying up and down the road, training courses for staff in expensive locations), suggesting that this is tarnishing the reputation of the RC work generally.

FGDs with community members in two different districts were critical of how the operation was being delivered in their district. Participants spoke of too many staff being appointed, too many vehicles, motorcycles, laptops etc being used and in one case questioned whether the programme was being run for the benefit of people affected by the earthquake or the staff⁴⁰. DPCs in several districts expressed their view that staffing levels were too high in their districts and that it was difficult to justify the numbers of staff. These informants felt that it should have been possible to have amalgamated some roles and responsibilities in order to streamline numbers but they did not have the authority to take these decisions.

Staff from the ERO (both in districts and NHQ) and PNSs were extremely concerned by the expenditure ratio between support costs and direct programme costs of the operation. A number of PNS informants believed that perhaps only between 40-60% of the funds raised will go directly to beneficiary activities, due both to the logistical challenges of access to affected people mentioned previously, but also to the fact that support structures were maintained over relatively long periods of time when the operation was delivering little (for the reasons mentioned before). In hindsight, it is clear that some partners scaled up their structures prematurely before there was a clarity of approach between NRCS and GoN and perhaps, had there been more triangulation of the Recovery Framework with the conditions on the ground as previously suggested, this might have been avoided. While the ratio between direct and indirect costs is likely to improve in the coming period due to the fact that implementation is now moving strongly ahead, NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts and thus reduce the duplication that exists.

Attempts have been made by IFRC to gather data from the PNS regarding direct and indirect costs per district, but there is a recognition that this cannot be undertaken without a common understanding of what constitutes a direct and indirect cost and how different partners are categorising these, so the majority of partners have refused to participate in this locally-managed exercise. The MTR team suggests that this would be an extremely useful and important exercise to undertake, but given the global implications of such an exercise, it should be managed at a higher level, for example IFRC Geneva or Kuala Lumpur.

5.12 Transition and Exit Strategy

Some confusion and quite a bit of anxiety was expressed at district level by the messages coming from the ERO centrally that activities need to be transitioned by the end of 2017; the decision of some partners to exit by the end of 2017 has added to this stress. It seems that for some, the concepts of transition and exit planning have been erroneously conflated to mean that they need to rush to finish activities as soon as possible and some district ERO staff are concerned that this may affect the quality and particularly the sustainability of some activities, together with potentially damaging relationships with the community (in Ramechhap the FGDs revealed that communities are also stressed by the high level of concurrent activities that are being implemented, pointing out that while they are strongly in agreement with the participative implementation approach, it is difficult for households to be available to contribute to shelter and water system construction at the same time). Some DPCs feel that they are under enormous pressure to spend; as one informant put it (reflecting the views of a number of people interviewed), "the objective should not be spending the budget only, but making a difference at the community level".

⁴⁰ Author's reflection: I'm sharing this comment as in more than 10 years as a consultant, this is the first time that I have ever heard this type of feedback being articulated during a focus group.

Some informants regret that there is a strong narrative related to phasing out the ERO structure just at the time when it is now working relatively effectively and the operation still has much to achieve. The MTR team suggests that the districts review their plans activity by activity, community by community, ensuring that a sustainability strategy for each activity is put in place and worked through. Having this information in place will allow an appropriate transition plan to be developed at central level, with appropriate dates and modalities for transition being developed that are in harmony with the field-level operational plans. As mentioned previously, DRR should be a key part of the transition strategy, linking to what should be core competence of the NS, building relationship of chapters with CDMCs, LDRMCs and communities etc.

The transition period should provide opportunities for organisational learning, for example documenting processes and outcomes of the operation and ensuring that all trainings relevant to the NRCS development plan happening within the EQ districts are open for a proportion of attendees from other district chapters.

6 Recommendations

6.1 *Recommendations for the Next Phase of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation*

6.1.1 Recovery operation planning

- Districts should carry out activity by activity, community by community reviews to plan the next phase of the recovery operation. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff, both at district and central levels.
- NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan for the coming period, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with district implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts (including to place certain delegates within districts where appropriate) and thus reduce the duplication that exists.
- NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget for each district is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC, the district steering committee and the head of the ERO to oversee progress in each district.
- The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extend support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc.
- NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families are being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.
- Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.
- The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation (ie beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters). The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

6.1.2 ERO structure and processes

- NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.
- Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.
- Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.

6.1.3 Rebuilding relationships

- Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to reflect upon their own behaviours and processes, understand the views and opinions of all parties, confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties for mutual benefit.
- A peer review process could be considered, to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner, in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.

6.1.4 ERO governance

- The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.
- The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.
- It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.
- Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made publically available.
- It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (eg the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required. NRCS partners (line agencies, NGOs and PNS) should input into this review.
- An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. The DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.

6.1.5 Movement-wide reflection

- A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – ie is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

6.2 *Reflections from Nepal recovery operation to the wider RCM*

- The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and fully understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a minimum of six months.
- Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.
- It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.
- As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to *how* this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.
- The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.
- The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.
- Given that partners seem to be increasingly choosing to work through consortia, reflection on past experiences of working through consortia should be undertaken. This should offer reflection on how to best facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles and responsibilities of leader and participant, the appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns in consortia relationships might be handled.



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

1. Summary

1.1. Purpose: The Mid-Term Review (MTR) will assess the earthquake recovery response structure, system, procedure and performance through the lens of thematic sectors and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) chapters, as per the Movement Recovery Plan 'One Plan' to the Nepal earthquake from late April 2015. The focus will be on the application of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance, cooperation and coordination within the Movement components. Key recommendations from this MTR will guide modifications and improvements required to the ongoing recovery interventions.

1.2. Commissioner: The IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), Deputy Director, on behalf of the Movement partners in close collaboration with the NRCS. The findings and products arising from this review will be owned and managed in accordance to NRCS policy and procedures.

1.3. Audience: Findings of this MTR will be used for learning by the Nepal Red Cross, IFRC country office in Nepal, the IFRC regional office in Kuala Lumpur, the IFRC headquarters in Geneva, the National Societies participating in the recovery operation, the Movement managers and the ICRC to plan for future strategies and interventions.

1.4. Review team: An independent review team leader (international consultant) drawn from the IFRC membership, supported by one national (Nepali speaking) consultant, one NRCS staff, and one member from sister National Societies within the Asia Pacific region.

1.5. Duration of consultancy: Up to 40 working days (including approximately 30 days in Nepal).

1.6. Estimated dates of consultancy: The review exercise will take place from 10 May 2017.

1.7. Location of consultancy: Nepal

2. Background

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) comprises 190-member Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and a secretariat in Geneva to support humanitarian activities around the world. The IFRC is committed towards increasing the impact of the Movement in terms of quality assurance, standards and a culture of lesson learning in disaster recovery operations. Those operations that require an international response and meet certain criteria of scale, scope, complexity or risk, as does the Nepal earthquake response, are committed to carrying out this MTR during the recovery phase. The [IFRC Framework for Evaluations](#) requires that a review be undertaken for any programme over 24 months in timeframe.

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara in the

morning of 25 April 2015. The epicenter was 80 kilometers northwest of Kathmandu but its impact was felt in 32 of Nepal's 75 districts. A series of aftershocks have continued to impact, causing further damage and panic. The strongest aftershock, measuring 7.3 magnitude, struck on 12 May at 12:50 local time.

The combined impact of 25 April quake and the 12 May aftershock has caused more than 8,856 people casualties and at least 17,932 injured. In addition to loss of life and human suffering, the two quakes have caused extensive destruction and damage to housing, infrastructure and livelihoods, leading to a drastic reduction in living conditions, income, and access to basic services, such as health and water and sanitation. More than 1.1 million families were affected and 700,000 families displaced. Secondary data analysis and earthquake intensity mapping indicate that up to 600,000 houses were fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged. The infrastructure damaged included schools, health facilities, bridges and roads. More than 30,000 classrooms were destroyed or damaged. According to the government, 14 districts were severely affected 'Category A' and include Gorkha, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Sindhupalchowk, Ramechhap, Dolakha, Nuwakot, Dhading, Rasuwa, Sindhuli, Okhaldhunga, Makwanpur, and Kavre (altogether 14). Additionally, nine districts with medium level damages fall under 'Category B', were also affected.

The Movement Coordination Meeting (MCM) that was established prior to the earthquake, and continued to be in place in order to facilitate coordination and decision making process. The NRCS, IFRC, partner National Societies (PNSs) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are keeping close contact to coordinate the Movement response to date. NRCS is responsible for the coordination and the overall implementation of the recovery plan, with IFRC supporting Movement coordination and partners contributing to the overall plan. Currently, there are 11 PNSs in Nepal supporting the NRCS in the implementation of recovery plan (through bilateral, multi-lateral and in consortium as well) for people affected by the earthquake, in the 14 most affected districts (category A). The in country PNSs include American, Australian, Belgium – Flanders, British, Canadian, Danish, Finnish, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish and Swiss Red Cross.

In early June 2016, a partnership meeting was held between NRCS, IFRC, PNSs and ICRC. Upon completion of the meeting, a Movement Recovery Plan called 'One Plan' was developed that provides a framework of activities for the operation. All partners of the Movement agreed to follow one framework, one plan and one approach, while maintaining NRCS's ownership of the entire programme implementations on the ground. The Movement partners agreed that NRCS will be on the lead to report against priorities identified together through established Earthquake Response Operations (ERO) structure and management at headquarter (HQ) as well as in district chapters. However, different PNS have been contributing in different ways within the One Plan based upon resources available and priorities. Key deliverables listed in the Movement Recovery Plan are being supported by the Movement partners through multilateral mechanism via IFRC appeal or bilateral arrangements with NRCS who is the implementer of activities on behalf of the Movement in Nepal. The Red Cross recovery programme components is based on an integrated FOUR plus ONE approach: four technical sectors that include shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH); livelihoods; and health; plus, National Society capacity building for NRCS.

The sectoral working groups (Shelter, WASH, livelihood and PMER-IM-CEA-Comms-GESI) continued to hold their meetings with the interested Movement partners in order to update each other and discuss sectoral issues encountered during implementation on the ground.

There have been numerous delays in the activation of the Movement's One Plan in Nepal, influenced by changes to government, extended bandhs (general strikes) and blockade of Indian border leading to logistical issues and the need for the Government of Nepal (GoN) to set the policies and guidelines to direct the humanitarian sectors approach to recovery.

The main Red Cross Red Crescent planned actions for recovery are:

- 7000 households to be provided with Shelter grants,
- 316,193 people to be provided with water and sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion
- 137,625 people to be provided with health services and community health activities,
- 124,696 people to be reached with livelihood activities,
- 16 Nepal Red Cross chapters to be supported with capacity building. For the one year progress report of the Movement-Wide Report, please click [here](#).

3. MTR purpose and scope This Nepal earthquake response MTR will be a learning oriented and forward looking review. This will recommend how improvements should be made in earthquake recovery structure, system, procedures and implementation strategies in order to better address the recovery needs on the ground. To do so, the review will be taking into consideration relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the entire operations with reference to One Plan. The review will also assess the application of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance, cooperation and coordination within the Movement components. The findings of MTR will suggest possible operational directions to the Movement partners to further support NRCS recovery programmes based on context, need and capacities of the Movement partners.

The unit of analysis to be assessed – This will cover the partner members of the One Plan including ERO both at headquarters (HQ) and district chapters, IFRC Nepal Country Office and in country PNSs. It will look at measures put in place including structure, system, procedures, implementation/ working models - consortium/bilateral, as well as coordination mechanisms in line with the One Plan.

The time period - the review will cover the period from June 2015 partnership meeting when the present structure of the Nepal Earthquake Operations was endorsed until 25 April 2017 (second year anniversary of the earthquake).

The geographical coverage - This will later be decided in close consultation between the MTR task force and review team. However, focus will be to consider a representative sample size i.e. 4-6, out of 14 operational districts in Nepal.

4. MTR objectives, criteria and key questions Below are the specific objectives, criteria and possible key questions to be addressed in this MTR. These are initial guidance and can be further elaborated in consultation with the consultant and MTR team.

4.1. Objectives:

- 1) To assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNS's structure, system and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively;

- . 2) To review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms in place, and recommend how these can be strengthened;
- . 3) Identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach of the One Plan including cross cutting themes, and provide solutions/recommendations to the NRCS and the Movement partners to address shortfalls.

4.2. Criteria: The MTR will be guided by following criteria:

- . i) the relevance, appropriateness and coverage of the recovery operations.
- . ii) the efficiency and effectiveness, especially to meet the intended results.
- . iii) coordination within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors.
- . iv) the sustainability and connectedness of the recovery operations.

4.3. Questions: The questions below are initial guidance and should be considered in line with the One Plan approach. These questions are expected to be further elaborated in consultation with the review team while working on the inception report. Additional guiding questions can be found as appendices under section 11 on the later part of this TOR.

To what extent has the recovery operations achieved the expected objectives and been relevant and appropriate to the needs and context?

To what extent has the recovery operations ensured optimization of resources and supported implementation of programmes in an effective and efficient manner?

To what extent coordination and integration applied in line with the One Plan?

To what extent, is the intervention taking into consideration long term needs of NRCS, such as linkages between recovery and longer-term development programmes?

To what extent has the programme been effective in reaching the most vulnerable people and groups effected by the earthquake?

5. MTR methodology & process

The methodology will adhere to the IFRC Framework for Evaluations³, with particular attention to the processes upholding the standards of how MTR should be planned, managed, conducted, and utilized.

A MTR task force will manage and oversee the MTR process as well review team. The review will be carried out by a team of experts not directly involved with the implementation of recovery programmes. This review team will consist of up to four people: an international consultant, who will be team leader, one national consultant (Nepali speaking), one staff member of NRCS, and a member of the sister National Society from the Asia Pacific region. The team should be gender balanced.

The review team leader will provide an independent, objective perspective on review, and will be the primary author of the MTR report and recommendations. In line with the IFRC Framework for Evaluations to meet the criteria for an “external review”, s/he will not have been involved or have a vested interest in the recovery operation being reviewed, and will be hired through a transparent recruitment process, based on professional experience, competence, ethics and integrity for this review. The team leader will report on progress or challenges to the MTR task force.

It is expected that the applicant to propose an approach and methodology for the review. The proposed review methodology will be further detailed out in close consultation between the MTR task force and review team. Some of the primary methods can draw upon as follows:

1. **Desktop review** of operation background documents, and background and history of relevant organizations, including guidelines and policy documents of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) of Nepal government.
2. Conduct consultation process/meetings with the partner members of One Plan and other stakeholders as appropriate.
3. **Field visits/observations** to selected sites.
4. **Key informant interviews** (institutional and beneficiaries as appropriate).
5. **Focus group discussions**, (institutional and beneficiaries) as time and capacity allow.

The review team will meet with and interview key Red Cross Red Crescent stakeholders at NRCS HQ and district chapters, PNSs, and the relevant IFRC Secretariat offices. The team will also consult with other partners and organizations such as NRA of GoN, the UN, INGOs / NGOs as appropriate.

6. MTR deliverables (or Outputs)

- **Inception report** with review questions, detailed methodology, initial discussion with the MTR task force and work plan within a week.
- **Debriefings / present initial findings** to MTR task force, NRCS, IFRC and in country Movement partners: The review team leader will present its preliminary/initial findings with recommendations for discussion and feedback.
- **Draft report:** A draft report identifying key findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons for the current and future operation, will be submitted to the MTR task force after three weeks of the consultancy.
- **Final report:** The final report will contain a short executive summary (no more than 1,000 words) and a main body of the report (no more than 10,000 words) covering the background of the intervention reviewed, a description of the review methods and limitations, findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and clear recommendations. Recommendations should be specific and feasible. The report should also contain appropriate appendices, including a copy of the ToR, cited resources, a list of those interviewed and any other relevant materials. The final report will be submitted within two weeks after receiving the consolidated feedback on draft report.

The findings and all products arising from this review will be jointly owned by the Nepal Red Cross Society and IFRC on behalf of the Movement partners. The reviewers will not be allowed, without

prior authorization in writing, to present any of the analytical results as his / her own work or to make use of the review results for private publication purposes.

The preliminary and final reports will be submitted through the MTR task force, who will ensure the quality of the report providing input if necessary. The task force will submit the final report to the Commissioner, Steering Committee of the earthquake operations and IFRC head of country office in Nepal for review, clarifications and management response.

6. Proposed Timeline (or Schedule)

The following table presents some key activities with a timeline:

Timeframe	Activities	Outputs	Responsibility
Pre-work	1. Prepare and distribute review TOR for consultation within in country Movement partners 2. Form review task force, finalize TOR, commission the MTR 3. Recruit/Identify review team including international and national consultant	Final TOR	IFRC Nepal CO IFRC APRO and MTR Task Force
Week 1	4. Brief the review team 5. Review background documents 6. Draft and share inception report (any update to the TOR should be approved by the MTR task force and reflected in the report)	Inception report with review questions, methodology and data collection tools	MTR task force Review team leader
Week 2, 3 & 4	9. Field data collection at designated sites 10. Debriefing/present preliminary findings to key stakeholder groups and task force	Sharing of initial findings	Review team leader
Week 5+	11. Submission of the draft report 12. Management response 13. Review of comments, consolidation and make	Summary draft report with key recommendations Management response Final report	Review team leader ERO Steering Committee, IFRC MTR task force

	revisions for the final report.		and review team leader
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8. MTR quality and ethical standards

The reviewer should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the MTR is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of the people and communities involved and to ensure that the review findings are technically accurate and reliable, is conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and contributes to organizational learning and accountability. Therefore, the review team should adhere to the standards and applicable practices outlined in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation.

The IFRC evaluation standards are:

1. Utility: Evaluations must be useful and used.
2. Feasibility: Evaluations must be realistic, diplomatic, and managed in a sensible, cost effective manner.
3. Ethics & Legality: Evaluations must be conducted in an ethical and legal manner, with particular regard for the welfare of those involved in and affected by the evaluation.
4. Impartiality & Independence; Evaluations should be impartial, providing a comprehensive and unbiased assessment that takes into account the views of all stakeholders.
5. Transparency: Evaluation activities should reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.
6. Accuracy: Evaluations should be technical accurate, providing sufficient information about the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods so that its worth or merit can be determined.
7. Participation: Stakeholders should be consulted and meaningfully involved in the evaluation process when feasible and appropriate.
8. Collaboration: Collaboration between key operating partners in the evaluation process improves the legitimacy and utility of the evaluation.

It is also expected that the review will respect the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: 1) humanity, 2) impartiality, 3) neutrality, 4) independence, 5) voluntary service, 6) unity, and 7) universality. Further information can be obtained about these Principles at: www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp

9. Qualifications

Selection of the international and national consultant will be based on the qualifications outlined below:

1. Demonstrable experience in leading and managing evaluations and review of recovery operations in complex situations where multiple partners and sectors involved related to

major disasters;

2. Knowledge and experience working with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and knowledge of the IFRC's disaster management systems;
3. Experience of working in Nepal and familiarity with culture and political situations would be an advantage.
4. Knowledge of strategic and operational management of humanitarian operations and proven ability to provide strategic recommendations to key stakeholders;
5. Strong team leadership and management skills including negotiation, facilitation and time management.
6. Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations and to prepare well-written reports in a timely manner;
7. Proven track record of conducting qualitative research including the development of interview schedules and qualitative data as well quantitative data analysis, especially in emergency and recovery context;
8. Demonstrated capacity to work both independently and as part of a team;
9. Excellent writing and presentation skills in English (for international consultant) and Nepali languages (for national consultant) required.
10. Immediate availability for the period indicated.
11. Strong preference for the international consultant to have his/her own translator and in country team.

10. Application procedures

Interested applicants should submit their expression of interest to the following email: pmer.apzo@ifrc.org by 10 April 2017. In the subject line, please state the consultancy you are applying for, your company name or last name and first name. **(SUBJECT: Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operations Mid-Term Review - Last Name, First Name).**

Application materials should include:

1. **Curriculum Vitae** (CVs) of international and national consultants.
2. **Cover letter** clearly summarizing your experience as it pertains to this MTR, daily consultancy fees (in Swiss Francs) and three professional references.
3. Applicants will be required to provide a **2-pager approach paper** with review methodology and a sample of previous written report most similar to that described in this TOR.

4. **Financial proposal:** It is expected from the international consultant to submit the financial bid for themselves and the Nepali speaking consultant only.

Application material are non-returnable, and we thank you in advance for understanding that only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the next step in the application process. Please take note that incomplete application will be rejected.

Mid Term Review of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Programme 2017 Review Inception Plan (*amended 21 June 2017*)

This document lays out proposed focus, approach and methodology to be adopted for the review, together with a tentative itinerary for the field visits

1. Review criteria and key review questions

The review will build on the questions included in the terms of reference (see below) and will be framed within the nine Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), which will help keep the focus of the review on the ability/potential for the recovery programme to deliver services that meet the priority needs of those people most affected by the 2015 earthquakes.

MTR Criteria:

1. The **relevance**, **appropriateness** and **coverage** of the recovery operations.
2. The **efficiency** and **effectiveness**, especially to meet the intended results.
3. **Coordination** within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors.
4. The **sustainability** and **connectedness** of the recovery operations.

MTR key questions:

1. To what extent has the recovery operations achieved the expected objectives and been relevant and appropriate to the needs and context?
2. To what extent has the recovery operations ensured optimization of resources and supported implementation of programmes in an effective and efficient manner?
3. To what extent coordination and integration applied in line with the One Plan?
4. To what extent, is the intervention taking into consideration long term needs of NRCS, such as linkages between recovery and longer-term development programmes?
5. To what extent has the programme been effective in reaching the most vulnerable people and groups effected by the earthquake?

The Core Humanitarian Standard:

Note: given the nature of the review, focus will be deeper in some areas - particularly those related to effectiveness, efficiency and coordination – and lighter in other areas more related to programming, due to this being a mid-term review (these have been italicised below). The links to the MTR criteria and key review questions are noted in square brackets.

1. Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs. [RELEVANCE, APPROPRIATENESS, REACHING MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE]
2. Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time. [TIMELINESS IE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS]
3. *Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action.*
4. *Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.*

5. *Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints.*
6. Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance. [COORDINATION, CONNECTEDNESS]
7. Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection. [LEARNING ORGANISATION, LINKAGES WITH NRCS LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES]
8. Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers. [EFFECTIVENESS, MANAGEMENT ISSUES]
9. Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically. [EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS, OPTIMISATION OF RESOURCES]

2. Review approach

The following steps will be followed during the review:

- Inception visit (undertaken 28 May – 6 June 2017, 9 days) – Interview main actors from NRCS, IFRC and RC partners to understand current context and gather views regarding the focus of the mid-term review, criteria for districts to be visited and suggestions regarding which districts to be visited. See Annex 1 for list of those interviewed
- Development of inception report, to include draft field visit itinerary – *NRCS, IFRC and partners will need to develop key informant lists for Kathmandu and the districts to be visited in order to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is given for the different stages of the review visit*
- Document review
- Development of the main review tools (semi-structured interview scripts for individual informant interviews and focus group discussions)
- At the start of the field visit, team briefing, revision of review tools and methodologies to ensure uniformity of approach between the two teams
- Travel to sites for data collection (the proposed approach would require the first district to be visited by all four team members, in order to pilot and review the tools and ensure a coherent data collection approach. Following this, the review team will split into two, each visiting two districts)
- Interviews in the districts and Kathmandu will include:
 - Community members (through focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews)
 - NRCS leadership, staff and volunteers, HQs and in the chapters
 - IFRC staff
 - PNS staff
 - Government partners, both central and district-level
 - Personnel from other stakeholders (such as NGOs)
- Review team debrief in order to identify key findings and recommendations to be included in the review report before team members return to home base
- Return to home base, interviews (via Skype) with any other key informants who are not based in Nepal (eg Kuala Lumpur, partner HQs, etc)
- Data analysis and preparation of final draft review report

3. Draft itinerary for field visits

**TL = Team Leader, NC = National Consultant*

Activities	Date	# days
Inception visit - Team leader visit to Kathmandu, interviews with 30 key internal RCRC stakeholders in order to identify priority focus for the mid-term review	28 May to 6 June	9 (TL)
Develop draft inception report, including data collection methods and tools, document review	8 – 25 June	4 (TL) 2 (NC)
Travel to Nepal	2 July	1 (TL)
Team meet, briefing meetings, finalise/agree the review approach and data collection tools following feedback from review team	3 – 4 July	2
Full team to KAVRE (district 1) – undertake KIIs, FGDs, field visits etc, reviewing and amending the approach, methodology and data collection tools	5 – 7 July	3
Rest / Team split into two, travel to separate districts: • Anna+Sajjad+translator travel to Sindhupalchowk (district 2) • Shesh+Amar to Lalitpur (district 3)	8 July	1
Field visit as above in districts 2 and 3	9 – 11 July	3
Travel to next districts: • Anna+Sajjad+translator travel from Sindhupalchowk to Ramechhap (district 4) • Shesh+Amar travel from Lalitpur to Rasuwa (district 5)	12 July	1
Field visit as above in districts 4 and 5	13 – 15 July	3
Travel back to Kathmandu from Ramechhap & Rasuwa	16	1
Interviews with key informants in Kathmandu	17 – 19 July	3
Team data share and analysis	20 July	1
Travel to home base	21 July	1
Prepare draft report	25 July – 15 August	10 (TL) 6 (NC)
Revise and finalise report	20-25 August	2 (TL) 1 (NC)

Please note that due to the addition of the inception visit and the complexity of the issues revealed during the inception visit, the number of days of engagement for both the team leader and national consultant have been modestly increased to 45 days for the team leader and 27 days for the national consultant.

4. **Review Matrix**

A review matrix with all the review questions that will be used to guide the field research will be prepared and provided later in June.

5. **District visits**

Following the inception interviews, criteria to guide the identification of districts to be visited were agreed with the MTR task force. These are:

- Accessibility (bearing in mind the monsoon season), both to the district and VDCs where work has been carried out – the ability to consult with affected communities is extremely important and should inform the decisions regarding which districts to visit (and is not something that the consultant can take decisions about);
- Capacity of the chapter to receive and host the visit of the review team (it is understood that some chapters may have been overburdened with visits from external people in the last few months);
- Representative of the ‘global’ experience and thus likely to provide lessons learned that can be relevant to all 14 district chapters;
- Offering a range of different partnership models (no partner presence, single partner presence, several partners working alongside each other, multi-partner consortium) and levels of integration between the different 4+1 sectors;
- Spanning experience in both rural and urban environments;
- Offering a range of experiences, both positive and more challenging, likely to elicit a strong range of emerging good practices and lesson learned.

Following discussions with the MTR task force, the following districts will be visited:

- Lalitpur
- Kavre
- Ramechhap
- Rasuwa
- Sindupalchok

It is recognised that the monsoon season may mean that the ability of the team to visit VDCs that are distant from the district headquarters may be limited, particularly in the case of Ramechhap (discussions with the MTR task force suggested that this might need to be replaced by Sindhuli, although this would be regrettable as it is understood that Ramechhap may offer interesting lessons learned related to integration). However, given the importance of being able to consult with affected communities and service users as part of this review, this aspect must be taken into consideration when determining which districts to visit and all efforts must be made to enable this beneficiary consultation to go ahead. The final choice of the districts remains with the task force; the issues that informed this choice will be documented within the review report, as well as identifying any potential selection bias.

As with district selection, VDC selection should be guided by the following criteria:

- Accessibility;
- Capacity of the VDC to receive and host the visit of the review team;
- Able to provide opportunities to review a number of different programmatic inputs from the 4+1 plan;

- Representative of the 'global' experience and thus likely to provide lessons learned that can be relevant to all 14 district chapters;
- Offering a range of experiences, both positive and more challenging; if two VDCs are visited in a district, these should offer contrasting experiences where possible.

6. **Key informant interview setup**

The need to triangulate perspectives and the learning nature of this review are two main determinants of the sample size. Triangulation requires several levels of staff perspectives as well as those of volunteers and beneficiaries. Including respondents from multiple levels will help to manage selection bias and contribute to internal validity, as will including perspectives of key external partners. The sampling method is purposive and respondents will be selected based on criteria of availability, knowledge and involvement in the programme. It is envisaged to include a fair number of volunteers and beneficiaries in the interview sample. This can be realised by conducting focus group discussions with these groups, along with some individual interviews.

7. **Focus group discussion setup**

Focus groups discussion will take place at a location and time that suits the individuals who are being interviewed. The usual rules for focus groups will be observed:

- The purpose of the discussion is clearly explained to the participants.
- It is also explained to them that their participation is not obligatory.
- Participants are asked their consent to participate.
- The setting is conducive to making people feel at ease as much as possible, in a comfortable space with some refreshments offered if available.
- The groups are not bigger than 10-15 individuals
- The composition of the groups is more or less homogenous in terms of position, age, gender or other characteristics that are relevant for the issues to be discussed during the focus group. This will be guided by cultural norms (to be advised by programme staff)
- Questions are open questions. The discussion leader asks clarification where needed.
- Discussions will be held in the language that the participants feel most at ease in, with an independent interpreter where required.
- Guidance will be sought from programme managers regarding appropriate methodologies for enabling effective focus group discussions, taking into account such issues as educational background and literacy levels.

8. **Review plan**

- Individual key informant interviews and focus group discussions will be recorded, either on paper or on a laptop. A digital recording of the interview may be taken with the consent of the informant to aid accurate data collection, but only with the permission of the informant.
- Notes will be analysed according to pre-defined categories corresponding to review questions; during data analysis, categories may be refined or adapted as necessary.
- Project documents will also be analysed, as much as possible using the same categories in order to triangulate the data, using appropriate software
- Recordings of key informant interviews (if used) will be used to verify quotes but will not be shared.
- Quotes will not be attributed to individuals.

9. Ethics and consent

- Each interview will begin with an explanation of the purpose and independence of the review to interviewees and consent will be sought to proceed on the basis of confidentiality. People will have the opportunity to opt out of the interview without further consequence.
- Individual key informant interviews will be recorded (either using a recording device or through notation directly into a laptop. Recordings of key informant interviews will be used to verify quotes but will not be shared.
- Permission will be requested before any photographs are taken and how photographs may be used will be clearly explained.
- Notes will be analysed according to pre-defined categories corresponding to review questions; during data analysis, categories may be refined or adapted as necessary.
- Project documents will also be analysed, as much as possible using the same categories in order to triangulate the data.
- Data entry will be carried out using regular Office software or using freely accessible software tools for qualitative data analysis.
- Any quotations used in the report will not be attributed to individuals in order to maintain confidentiality.

10. Organisation of the district visits

For organisational ease the first district visit, where the review team will pilot the review tools will be Lalitpur. The teams will then split up, with each team visiting two districts; the MTR task force organisers are requested to organise this taking into consideration logistical ease of access between districts.

The teams will split taking into consideration the need for interpretation; the team leader will travel with the team member from the Pakistan Red Crescent and an independent interpreter (it is important that the interpreter is entirely independent and is not connected to the Nepal Red Cross or its work in the districts), while the national consultant will travel with the NRCS representative (which team will go where will be decided once in Kathmandu).

For each district chapter, an itinerary of interviews and focus group discussions should be organised prior to the arrival of the team, taking into consideration the following:

- The first meeting on arrival in the district should be a briefing from the NRCS District Programme Coordinator (DPC), to introduce the recovery programme in the district and review the programme of interviews and visits to the VDCs. A minimum of two hours should be given for this meeting.
- A list of key informants should be put together by the DPC, together with partners and should include:
 - NRCS district chapter personnel (staff, governance, volunteers);
 - Government of Nepal counterparts (NRA, other authorities);
 - RC partners (delegates, key personnel);
 - Other partners or organisations that work alongside the Red Cross (for example NGO members of coordination committees).
- One hour meetings should be set up for these interviews to take place (with enough time in between to allow for travel); these can be focus group meetings where appropriate, for example with NRCS volunteers (maximum 10-15 people please) – see guidance regarding focus group meetings above.

- One or two VDCs should be identified for each district visited. In each visit, at least one and a half hours should be allocated to each focus group discussion, individual meetings with VDC leadership, key stakeholders etc and for observation (of works carried out for example).

11. Organisation of interviews in Kathmandu

As with the district level interviews, a list of key informants based in Kathmandu should be compiled. These interviews should be scheduled to take place between 17 – 19 July if possible, although if key informants are not available in this period then interviews can be scheduled for 4 July. Interviews can be double booked as they will be led by either the national consultant or the team leader (confirmation of who will carry out each interview will be agreed in July).

Informants should include:

- NRCS staff and governance, including members of the ERO steering committee
- Government of Nepal counterparts (NRA, DUDBC, Ministry of Health and other authorities);
- RC partners (country representatives);
- Other key interlocutors

Each interview should be scheduled to last one hour, with enough time allowed for travel between locations (and half an hour for lunch please!).

Interviews undertaken during inception visit

Nepal Red Cross Society

Chairman - Sanjiv Thapa

Secretary General - Dev Ratna Dhakwha

Head of the ERO - Umesh Dhakal

NRCS Head of Finance - Dharma Datta Bidari

ERO Finance Coordinator - Patrush Rai

OD Unit - Janardhan Pokharel

ERO Consultant - Kamal Niraula

Technical teams

Shelter - Dipak Giri (ERO), Priyanka Thapa (?), Laxman Chhetry (IFRC)

WASH - Birendra Sahi (ERO), Kaustubh Kukde (IFRC)

Health - Mausam Bohara (ERO), Bijay Bharati (IFRC)

Livelihood - Saroj Shrestha (ERO)

PMER - Tara Gurung (ERO), Dibakar Behere (IFRC)

IFRC

Head of Country Office - Max Santner

Programme Coordinator - Mike Higginson

Head of Finance & Management Services - Yadav Prasad Dahal

Logistics Coordinator - Tendai Chabvuta

Partners

Spanish Red Cross - Sergio Garcia (Country Representative)

Danish Red Cross - Anne-Sophie Petri (Programme Coordinator Recovery)

British Red Cross - Jill Clements (Country Representative), Hrushikesh Harichandan (Recovery Coordinator), Lucy Brearley (PMEAL)

Canadian Red Cross - Richard McCabe (Country Representative)

Australian Red Cross - Mukesh Singh (Country Representative)

Swiss Red Cross - Luigi Viscardi (Recovery Programme Coordinator)

Japanese Red Cross - Kazuyu Lgarashi (Acting Country Representative)

American Red Cross - Leela Mulukutla (Country Representative)

Norwegian Red Cross - Karyn Beattie (Country Representative)

Annex 3: Itinerary

2 July 2017	International consultant arrives in Kathmandu
3-4 July	Briefing with IFRC staff Team planning and orientation Briefing meeting with ERO director KII with CEA Officer

Kavre

5 July	Travel from Kathmandu to Banepa Kavre Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter & ERO team and DRC delegates/staff KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee members KII District Livestock Office, Veterinary Officer & Senior Livestock Officer
6 July	KII ERO Livelihood Officer and DRC Livelihood Delegate KII District Health Office KII Representative of Water and Sanitation Division Office Travel to Kharelthok 2 FGD Community Members Kharelthok KII Auxiliary Nurse, Kharelthok Health Post KII with Livelihood beneficiary KII with KIDRAK representative KII with Child Resilience Programme beneficiaries Travel back to Dhulikhel
7 July	KII Teacher involved in Child Resilience Programme KII Chief District Officer KII with NRA head, Kavre Travel to Dolalghat 9 Visit drinking water construction site - on the spot conversations with community members FGD Community members Dolalghat KII with Cash for work beneficiary KII with Bhumlu10 ward chairman KII DRC Programme Coordinator KII ERO DPC KII WASH Officer KII PMER Officer Feedback to ERO team
8 July	Team split - travel to Chautara, Sindhupalchok and Kathmandu

Lalitpur

9 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team Departure to Godawari KII with ward chair and secretary of ward no. 2 (previous ward No. 3 & 4) FGD with mixed program beneficiaries (4 men 13 women) FGD with Livelihood CCG of Ward No. 2 & CFW beneficiaries of Godawari Ward No. 1 (previous 1 & 2) FGD with sub-branch chair and a member Observation of Hygiene promotion session organized for senior citizen and observation of vocational training notice
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10 July	KII with district level line agencies - CDO - District Agriculture Office - District Health Office - District Livestock office FGD with District Chapter Steering Committee including chapter president FGD with volunteers FGD with sector officers
11 July	Departure to Mahalaxmi from DC Meeting with community leaders: Ward Chairman, Sub chapter President and other stakeholders of Ward No. 8 (previous Ward No. 6 & 7) Observation of water scheme project of Gomati Khanepani Yojana & FGD with the WUG, and the potential beneficiaries of the project Interaction with the Livelihood CCG beneficiaries from Lubhu Observation of completed water scheme: Sukunda ma puchha & FGD with WUG of Sukunda ma Pucha KII with NRA head KII with PMER, ERO, district branch KII with DPC, ERO, District branch

Sindhupalchok

9 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee (President, Member) KII Head, DUDBC KII DUDBC KII Staff from District Livestock Office	
10 July	Travel to Nawalpur FGD with people who had participated in Mason Training Workshops Visit/KII with family living in model house build during Mason Training Visit to school toilet block construction, Kunchok FGD with NRCS and female community health volunteers, Kunchok Travel back to Chautara KII with DPC KII with PMER Officer	
11 July	Travel to Sikharpur FGD with Community Members, Sikharpur Visit irrigation canal repair, KIIs with Cash-For-Work recipients Visits/KIIs to 2 households (focused on toilets, training and improved cooking stoves)	KII Admin & Finance Officer KII Deputy DPC KII Logistics Officer KII Senior ICB Assistant KII WASH Officer KII Health Officer
12 July	Feedback meeting to ERO Team Travel from Chautara to Manthali, Ramachhap	

Rasuwa

12 July	Travel from Kathmandu to Dhunche, Rasuwa
13 July	Visit to NRCS ERO office, briefing DPC FGD with ERO staff at the district chapter FGD with president (NRCS Rasuwa chapter president) and 2 other steering committee members. KII with NRA KII with CDO KII with DCC KII with Head, District Agriculture Office KII with UNHABITAT technical advisor

	Field observation- health post construction
14 July	Travel to Thulagaun VDC Field visit, Shelter and foot trail observation FGD with Shelter beneficiary FGD with foot trail beneficiary Individual meeting with VDC Leadership and key stakeholders Travel to Saramthali VDC FGD with water users' committee KII with newly elected ward chairman KII with livelihood beneficiary, goat raising KII with livelihood beneficiary, vegetable farming KII with Field Officer KII with DPC
15 July	Field visit, HHs latrine and water schemes observation FGD with water schemes beneficiary FGD with HHs latrine beneficiary Individual meeting with VDC Leadership and key stakeholders Travel to Kalikasthan for night stay Travel to Kathmandu from Kalikasthan

Ramechhap

12 July	Travel from Chautara, Sindhupalchok to Manthali, Ramechhap	
13 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee (President, Treasurer, Secretary) KII Ramechhap CDO KII NRA District Coordinator KII Chief, District Water Supply and Sanitation Office KII Veterinary Officer, District Livestock Office	
14 July	Travel to Rampur FGD Community Members, Khanidanda, Rampur 5 FGD ERO Staff and Social Mobilisers, Rampur Travel back to Manthali	KII Health Officer KII PMER Officer KII Livelihood Officer KII Finance Officer
15 July	Travel to Rampur FGD Female Community Members, Chharghare, Rampur 2 FGD Male Community Members, Chharghare, Rampur 2 KII Health Post In Charge, Rampur Visits/short interviews with to 2 households, Rampur Travel back to Manthali Feedback session with NRCS SC member and ERO team	
16 July	Travel back to Kathmandu	

Kathmandu

17 July	KIIs with: NRCS Finance Director, NRCS Head of Humanitarian Values & Communications, NRCS ERO Finance Coordinator, NRCS Head of Finance Management Services Unit, IFRC Head of IFRC Country Office and IFRC Programme Coordinator
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18 July	KIIs with: Deputy Project Director, DUDBC Country Representative American Red Cross Country Representative Canadian Red Cross ERO Shelter Coordinator, NRCS ERO GESI Coordinator, NRCS ERO PMER Coordinator ERO WASH Coordinator, NRCS DM Director, NRCS ERO Logistics Coordinator, NRCS Deputy Director NRA
19 July	Representative Department of Health Country Representative Belgian Red Cross (Flanders) Country Representative Norwegian Red Cross Recovery Coordinator, Swiss Red Cross Heads of Cooperation and Protection, ICRC Director of ERO, NRCS FGD with ERO Steering Committee members, NRCS
20 July	Participation in Movement Coordination meeting Presentation of initial findings Team planning for write up phase
21 July	International Consultant departs KII with: HR coordinator, IFRC, Kathmandu Director, ERO, NRCS, Kathmandu Livelihood Coordinator, NRCS Institutional Capacity Building Coordinator, IFRC Technical Advisor, ERO, NRCS, Kathmandu
24 July	Health Coordinator, ERO, NRCS Country Representative, Spanish Red Cross Country Representative, Australian Red Cross Country Representative, Livelihood delegate, information/advocacy delegate, British Red Cross (through skype)

Annex 4: Informants

Kathmandu

Key Informants	Position	Organisation
Indra Bahadur KC	Secretary, ERO Steering Committee & Acting Executive Director	NRCS
Karyn Beattie	Country Representative	Norwegian Red Cross
Dharma Dutta Bidari	Finance Director	NRCS
Dr Mausam Bohara	Health Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Dr Bhisma Bhusal	Deputy Director	NRA
Lucy Brealey	PMEAL Officer	British Red Cross
Jill Clements	Country Representative	British Red Cross
Yadav Dahal	Head of Finance Management Services Unit	IFRC Nepal
Umesh Dhakal	Director, ERO	NRCS
Dev Ratna Dhakhwa	Secretary General & ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Sarita Dhungana	Community Engagement and Accountability Officer, ERO	NRCS
Dipak Giri	Shelter Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Sergio González	Country Representative	Spanish Red Cross
Tara Gurung	PMER Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Sanjeev Hada	ICB Coordinator	IFRC
Hrusikesh Harichandan	Recovery Coordinator	British Red Cross
Mike Higginson	Programme Coordinator	IFRC
Kazuyo Igarashi	Acting Country Representative	Japanese Red Cross
Parikshit Kadariya	Deputy Project Director	DUDBC
Puja Koirala	GESI Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Richard McCabe	Country Representative	Canadian Red Cross
Leela Mulukutla	Country Representative	American Red Cross
Hari Prasad Neupane	ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Kamal Niraula	Advisor, ERO	NRCS
Dharma Raj Pandey	Disaster Management Director	NRCS
Prem Phaju	Head	DWSS
Dibya Raj Poudel	Head of Humanitarian Values and Communications	NRCS
Pramesh Poudel	Head of Cooperation	ICRC

Patrus Rai	ERO Finance Coordinator	NRCS
Ishwor Regmi	Logistics Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Max Santner	Head of Country Office	IFRC
Els Schapendonk	Country Representative	Belgian Red Cross (Flanders)
Birendra Shahi	WASH Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Abhinav Sharma	Human Resources Officer	IFRC
Ajeet Kumar Sharma	ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Dr Mahendra Shrestha	Director	District Public Health Officer
Saroj Shrestha	Livelihood Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Saurav Shrestha	Head of Protection	ICRCK
Mukesh Singh	Country Representative	Australian Red Cross
Priyanka Thapa	Shelter Officer, ERO	NRCS
Sanjiv Thapa	Chairman (governing board and ERO steering committee)	NRCS
Luigi Viscardi	Recovery Coordinator	Swiss Red Cross

Kavre

Key Informants	Position	Organisaion / Place
Narayan Shrestha	Head	District Livestock Development Office
Lucia Taboara	Livelihood Delegate	Danish Red Cross
Dr. Arjun Sapkota	District Health Officer	District Public Health Office
Prakash Aryal	Program Coordinator	Danish Red Cross, Kavre
Mohan Lal Jaishi	WASH Officer	District WASH Office
Radha Subedi	Program coordinator	KIDRAK
Dhurba Simkhada	Chief District Officer	CDO, Kavre
Ashok Adhikary	Engineer	DUBDC Kavre
Dhruba Gaında	Head	NRA, Kavre
Chitra Bahadur Tamang	Ward Chairman, former users' committee chairman	Dolalghat
Tika Jung Karki	PMER	NRCS, ERO, Kavre
Anita Tamang	Community member	Panchkhal
Anirudra Neupane	DPC	NRCS, REO, Kavre
Raghubir Chou Pradhan	District Chapter President	NRCS district chapter Kavre

Ananta Krishna Shrestha	Secretary	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Udhav Prasad Poudel	Treasurer	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Kumar Karki	Vice President	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Meera Joshi	Midwife	Health Post
Achut Sedhai	Member, CDMC	Kharelthok
Sharmila Sedhai	Member, CDMC	Kharelthok
Ramchandra Bhattarai	Teacher, Child Resilience Programme	School
Binda Panday	Community member	Kharelthok
Afsara Panday	Community member	Kharelthok
Focus Group Discussion		
Kharelthok, ward 2, Panchkhal	7 men, 5 women	Panchkhal
Kharelthok, different ward community members	10 men, 6 women	Panchkhal

Lalitpur

Key Informants	Position	Organisaion / Place
Devendra Basnet	Ward chairman	Mahalaxmi municipality, Godawari
Pradip Dhowj Karki	Ward secretary	Godawari VDC
Gore B.K	Mason training recipient	Godawari
Raj Kumar Shrestha	CDO	Lalitpur
Jhalak Sharma Poudel	DPHO	Lalitpur
Dr. Mogal Prasad Sah	Senior Livestock Development Officer	Lalitpur
Bharat Devkota	DAO	Lalitpur
Hari Dutta Poudel	WASH Officer	Lalitpur
Surya Bahadur Thapa	Friends Services Council (FSC), NGO	Lalitpur
Goma Devi Dhakal	District Coordinator	NRA
Suman Ghimire	Chiarwoman, Drinking Water users' committee	Lalitpur
Ram Sunar	Business man (Iron workshop)	Mahalaxmi
Chanchala Nepali	Business woman	Godawari

Basudev Sharma Goutam	Ward chairman, Mahalaxmi-9	Mahalaxmi
Sushmita KC	Business woman (colourful shoe-making)	Mahalaxmi
Nanda Bahadur Shrestha	Chairman, sub-banch	Godawari sub-branch
Kshitiz Acharya	DPC, Lalitpur	ERO, Lalitpur
Sharmila Karmacharya	PMER coordinator	ERO, Lalitput
Sabita	Social Mobiliser	Godawari
Bekha Man Byanjankar	President & Steering Committee Coordinator	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Baburaja Maharjan	Secretary & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Kalpit Kumar Tripathi	Treasurer & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Dinesh Karki	Member & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Lila Kumari Limbu	Administrative & Finance Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Roshana Byanjankar	Senior Office Assistant	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Rushma Panta	Livelihood Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Poonum Adhikari	Program Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Chhoden Lama	WASH Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Biwash Thapa	Junior Engineer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Godawari women group	Godawari	14 men, 5 women
Godawari sub-branch	Godawari	1 man, 1 woman
Volunteers (district chapter)	Lalitpur	4 women, 8 men

Rasuwa

ERO staff

S. No.	Key Informants	Position	Organisation / Place
1	Madhu Sudan Thapa	District Program Coordinator	NRCS, Rasuwa
2	Rajendra Koli	Finance and Adminstration Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
3	Agni sharma Timilsina	PMER Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
4	Surya Bikram Gole	Field Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
5	Pawan Pandey	Shelter Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
6	Bhola nath silwal	WASH Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
7	Suman Paudel	Livelihood Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
8	Smita Thapa	Program Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa

District chapter: steering committee

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Babu Lal Tamang	President	Dhunche
2	Lama Renjan Ghale	Seceretary	Dhunche
3	Dinesh Tamang	Treasure	Dhunche
4	Balram Ghimere	Member	Dhunche

Line agencies/NRA

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Rajendra Dev Pandey	LDO	DCC
2	Chomendra Neupane	CDO	DAO, Office
3	Rabi Koirala	DE	DWSS, Office
4	Shiv Raj Neupane	Technical advisor	UN Habitat
5	Ramesh Humagain	SADO	DADO
6	Krishna kant Upadhaya	Head	NRA

Social mobiliser and volunteers

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Dev Bahadur BK	Social Mobilizer (Lead)	Thulogaaun
2	Kamala Adhikari	Social Mobilizer	Thulogaaun
3	Hiramaya Gurung	Social Mobilizer	Thulogaaun
4	Bal Kumari Gurung	Social Mobilizer (Shelter)	Thulogaaun
5	Nisha Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 1
6	Kopila Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 3
7	Prabina Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 4
8	Phulmaya Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 5
9	Nabika Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 6
10	Ishwori Neupane	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 7
11	Sarina Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 9

Beneficiary/Local Government Agencies

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Asha Bahadur Guruung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
2	Meen Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary/Ward member	Thulogaaun

Beneficiary

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Bishunu Bahadur Gurung	RAG President ward-9	Thulogaaun
2	Shant Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
3	Goma Gurungseni	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
4	Nir Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
5	Sita Maya Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun

Beneficiary/Users' committee members

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Dhurba Achrya	Chairman, water users committee	Laharepauwa
2	Sita Neuaane	Treasurer	Laharepauwa
3	Ramchandra Gajurel		

4	Dol Kumari Achrya		
5	Raju BK	Member	Laharepauwa
6	Keshar Bdr Bulun	Chairman (Ward)	Laharepauwa
7	Resham Tamang		
8	Thakur Prasad Gajurel		

Livelihood Beneficiary

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Meuka Nagarkoti	Goat Farmer	Laharepauwa
2	Chandra Man lo	Tomato (Veg) Farmer	Laharepauwa

Participants detail: Social Mobiliser

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Ganesh Achrya	Social Mobiliser, Laharepauwa	Laharepauwa
2	Rajendra Prasad Gajurel	Social Mobiliser, Laharepauwa	Laharepauwa

Ramechhap

Key Informants	Position	Organisation / Place
Rishiaj Acharya	District Coordinator	NRA
Sundar Bartaula	Engineer	DUDBC Rampur
Jaya Ram Basnet	DPC	NRCS ERO
Lok Bahadur Chaulagai	Head	District WASH Office
Mahesh Deubajar	Veterinary Officer	District Livestock Office
Samihana Dhakal	Shelter Officer, ERO	NRCS
Bikram Raj Gryawali	Engineer	NRA
Partik Gurung	Health Officer, ERO	NRCS
Dinesh Kumar Karki	Treasurer	NRCS District Chapter
Shiva Kumar Karki	President	NRCS District Chapter
Suriya Bahadur Khatur	Chief District Officer	District Office
Prem Punthoki	Admin & Finance Officer, ERO	NRCS
Arun Rai	PMER Officer, ERO	NRCS
Indra Rana Magar	Administrative Officer	Rampur Ward Office
Sushant Raut	Livelihood Officer, ERO	NRCS
Suprabha Sharma	Junior Engineer	NRCS ERO
Dhana Bahadur Shrestha	Community member	Rampur
Taya Parakash Shrestha	Secretary	NRCS District Chapter
Ujjeli Shrestha	Community member	Rampur
Dan Bahadur Tamang	Community member	Rampur
Kamala Tamang	Community member	Rampur

Krishna Bahadur Tamang	Rampur Health Post In Charge	Department of Health
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Community members	Khanidanda, Rampur 5	4 women, 3 men
ERO Staff and Social Mobilisers	Rampur	5 women, 8 men
Female community members	Kolonjor, Rampur 2	14 women
Male community members	Kolonjor, Rampur 2	16 men

Sindhupalchok

Name	Position	Organisation / Place
Dipesh Acharya	Social Mobiliser	NRCS
Bimala Bhattarai	Community member	Nawalpur
Ram Krishna Bhandari	Steering Committee Member	NRCS District Chapter
Mukunda Bhatti	Logistics Officer, ERO	NRCS
Khem Kumari Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Ram Kumar Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Shyam Kumar Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Bim Prasad Dahal	Executive Officer	Nuwapur Municipality
Arjun Khadka	Veterinary Officer	District Livestock Office
Gavinda Bahadur Kayastha	Community member	Badegaun
Sanjapa Lama	Sanitation Assistant	NRCS
Rudra Bahadur Malla	District Officer in Charge	NRA
Bishnu Maya Nakarni	Community member	Badegaun
Kaziman Nakarni	Community member	Badegaun
Srijana Nepal	Health Officer, ERO	NRCS
Prawesh Neupane	PMER Officer, ERO	NRCS
Youb Raj Paudyal	Division Chief	DUDBC
Thaneshor Pokhrel	Senior ICB Assistant, ERO	NRCS
Sujan Regmi	WASH Officer, ERO	NRCS
Ram Krishna Sapkate	Social Mobiliser	NRCS
Chandika Sapkota	Community member	Sikharpur
Dr Kalyan Kumar Shrestha	Senior Livestock Officer	District Livestock Office
Sanjib Shrestha	Admin & Finance Officer, ERO	NRCS
Hari Prasad Subedi	DPC, ERO	NRCS
Rajendra Man Talchabhadal	President	NRCS District Chapter
Bansha Lal Tamang	Chairperson	Nawapur Municipality

Name	Position	Organisation / Place
Srijana Tamang	Community member	Sikharpur
Subash Timilsina	Deputy District Programme Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Community members	Sikharpur	3 women, 5 men
Participants of mason training	Nawalpur	1 woman, 8 men
NRCS & community volunteers	Kunchok	6 women, 1 man
ERO engineers and social mobilisers	Badegaun	4 female social mobilisers, 3 male engineers

Appendix 1: Kavre

Categories	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• In Kavre, recovery operations have two major interventions: first, integrated recovery and resilience (IRRP) programme supported by consortium partners led by Danish RC and second, reconstruction of health facilities supported by Korean Red Cross. The implementation of IRRP activities and budget delivery is going well. However, reconstruction of health facilities faced serious challenges due to issues with the contractor and the consultant. • Unlike other NRCS recovery operation districts, Kavre has adopted a systematic programme approach including vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA), developed community recovery plans and formed and/or strengthened community disaster management committees (CDMCs). The conducting of VCA at the start of the programme intervention has ensured the support reaching most vulnerable segments of the society and a high level of community engagement as evidenced by the FGDs. • The chapter has good coordination with line agencies including NRA district branch. Most of the line agency heads expressed that NRCS is the trusted partner in the district in times of emergency and recovery operations. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that it will complete all the planned activities by end of December 2018. Programme delivery so far has been around 60% in software and around 45% in hardware. • Overall, highly capable staff, committed governance and good coordination with the partners are contributing to making the recovery operations a success in the district.
Targeting/coverage	• Target groups such as most vulnerable, <i>janajati</i>, <i>dalit</i> and marginalized were well represented in the programme beneficiaries. Adoption of the VCA process at the start of the programme and selection of beneficiaries based on the assessments, formation and strengthening of CDMCs helped target the most vulnerable, marginalized, <i>Janajatis</i> and <i>dalit</i> community members. • RC did not have any plan to address the unmet needs of the communities. Usually the long-term recovery touches on many sectors including emergency management, public health, housing, mental health and the environment. The RC interventions are limited to health, livelihood and WASH, together with some soft components of shelter. • The VCA revealed inaccuracies of the needs assessment baselines process led from NHQ, eg it suggested that few families needed toilets, but the VCA revealed that many did not have functioning toilets and this was confirmed by the PHAST assessment.
Programmes (4+1)	100% stakeholders in the district believed that all the programme interventions are in line with the community needs. The 4+1 interventions were very much useful and accepted by the community members. Community members in FGDs were very much happy with the Red Cross support.

	Shelter - Construction of shelter was not the part of the recovery operations. Soft components such as PASSA trainings and roll out sessions, masons and carpenter trainings, IEC production and distribution were the key activities under this component. Around 42% of the programme target in PASSA was achieved at the time of this assessment. WASH - Construction/rehabilitation of drinking water schemes, planning of PHAST and its roll out, latrine and other sanitary unit construction and behaviour change and hygiene promotion are the key interventions under this component. - Eight drinking water schemes have been completed, reaching around 30% target beneficiaries. - RC has also played a key role in helping government achieve the ODF declaration. - District line agency is happy with the work RC is doing in the WASH sector in both the response and recovery operations. Health - Key health interventions include first aid and CBHFA trainings, services and health awareness sessions. 35 volunteers have received health refresher training, 67 community members have received first aid training, 499 people received training on first aid injury training, and 38 people received first aid services. Apart from this, acute respiratory infection sessions and nutrition awareness sessions were conducted. - Feedback from local health staff suggested that while the training was good and DHO staff were involved, it should have been more interactive and involve more demonstration to make it less theoretical. - The winterisation programme was appreciated and met a palpable need. Health post reconstruction Health post construction is a major activity in 12 VDCs, which is supported by Korean Red Cross. This activity has been seriously delayed and concerned line agency are not happy with the progress. The reason of the delay was negligence of consultant and contractor. The contractor has now been replaced and NRCS is confident that the work will be completed by end of 2018. The progress of the work so far is as follows: - Foundation work on process 4 HP. (Sanobanthali, Walting, Chandenimandan, Banakhu) - Foundation work completed 2 HP. (Jyamdi, Gothpani) - Metal and Truss work ongoing 2 HP. (Kharelthok, Rayale) - Prefab Board Installation ongoing 1 HP. (Rabiopi)
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- Roofing / CGI sheet installation 1 HP. (Mahendrajyoti)

Health office doesn't use email and doesn't ask for reports. It was reported that RC shares documents on a monthly basis with WASH office. WASH office provides template for this information.

Livelihoods

- There are three interventions in the livelihood programme i.e. income generation support through Conditional Cash Grant (CCG) to individuals and groups, technical and vocational trainings and cash for work. 398 community people gained temporary employment through cash for work (303 male and 95 female), total 4611 person days worked for drinking water schemes, irrigation channels and ponds and mitigation schemes. In the conditional cash grant, community members have formulated household business plans and are implementing livelihoods activities, the most common is goat raising. Some families have started to generate some income from the sale of goats. Two levels of CCG depending upon levels of vulnerability, defined through VCA by the community – 40,000 and 30,000 rupees. Some confusion regarding the differences expressed in some FGDs. Feedback suggests that Rs 10, 000 allocated for livestock shelter construction is generally felt to be insufficient.
- RC is part of District Livestock Development Technical Committee and a member of the Livestock Development Working Group.
- District livestock office (DLO) has received support from RC to assist milk cooperatives, livestock insurance, getting loan from bank. RC has also helped communities in income generation. RC has supported DLO to organize trainings for communities. DLO is happy and impressed with the support received from the RC and appreciates the role played by RC during emergency and recovery operations.

Institutional Capacity Building

Capacity building interventions included the three tiers of the local level – RC chapter, community and the CDMCs. *CDMC / Community*

- Trainings, equipment, formation and strengthening of CDMCs are the key activities. The key activities of ICB included the following:
 - Capacity building of community on disaster preparedness and response
 - 79 CDMC board members including 29 female members trained on DRR
 - 27 Community volunteers provided CBDRR Training
 - Office establishment of CDMC
 - Emergency fund collection at CDMCs total of about NPR 500,000 (except NPR 10,000 supported by NRCS)
- Construction of Flood Mitigation Scheme completed at Dolalghat (90 HHs)

	• Plantation (2000 plants) for landslide mitigation (J8-1300, J6700). However, it was not clear why this activity was part of the institutional capacity building. • Level A training to 67 people • Response kit (Pre-positioning 24 wards) • Evacuation material preposition (15 points) • Emergency funds have been established in the communities. • Strengthening of CDMCs has helped resolve local issues and sustain the existing activities in future. In Kharelthok, local issues and some of the community complaint are resolved through the CDMC. • Conducting VCAs at the start of the programme helped not only identify the community needs but set the ground for developing local recovery plans. • CDMCs are committed to use their own fund - 1 lakh in the account for electricity, road construction, maintenance of water scheme. RC was also supported giving extra 10,000 extra money - those that haven't received training will get it in the next phase. Also, previously very happy given the skills training and equipment, so really happy. <i>District Chapter</i> • Capacity building of District Chapter in Disaster Preparedness and response • OD and DDRT training to DC volunteers • The planned office building construction for the district chapter seems ambitious in terms of budget and the timeline. Needs to review plan on time. • It seems that the ICB approach related to the chapter is more of a top down approach focusing on training and building and needs to be more bottom up. Overall, the ICB intervention is seen more focused on the training, equipping the communities and CDMCs. There was less focus on formulation or adaptation of policies, strategies, development of operational framework, tools, guidelines and capacity development of district branch, communities and individuals especially for the skills and knowledge building.
Other issues	• Complaint and feedback handling mechanisms are strong. Complaints and feedback are received through social mobilisers, hotline, suggestion box, monthly and quarterly reviews and personal meetings. The role of volunteers and social mobilisers has been effective and crucial in the collection and handling of many issues. Some issues could be resolved through socialisation of the criteria and decisions at the right time. • Integration of GESI in all activities, PWD focused interventions and child protection-related activities integrated into the Child Resilience Programme being delivered both through schools and with parents – interesting strategy that according to KIIs with participants is leading to some behaviour change related to child rights. Feedback suggests that the IEC materials are needed for the children and the parents. Also one

	KII suggested that it should not be providing what he termed junk food to students during the training sessions, suggested other incentives such as a certificate, first aid materials etc and also suggested that more monitoring of the programme was required. Some of the teachers involved in the CRP have reviewed and contextualised the material, it is understood that this will be published with a view to sharing with other districts. • The level of sectoral integration could be strengthened. Sectoral integration has been understood as having all 4 programme interventions in one location. Synergies among the sectors/interventions have not sufficiently ensured, in terms of joint planning, joint implementation, joint reviews/monitoring and dealing with issues together. True integration should provide a comprehensive package in a holistic manner and should reduce the cost and provide all-sector support to the communities. It was observed during the field visit and interviews that sectors programs were implemented standalone.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS district chapter has strong coordination and relationship with the line agencies and almost all line agencies mentioned that NRCS is the closest and a trusted partner in both the response as well as recovery operations, although one line agency expressed its disappointment with NRCS chapter and ERO office for not handling the health post construction issues seriously (noting that the relationship had declined from the excellent relationship maintained during the emergency). • There was an issue of per diem with one line agency. NRCS provides per diems for government officers for facilitation of trainings following NRCS rules, whereas government per diem rate (Rs 1,200 per day) is higher than NRCS's (Rs 700). This has created some misunderstanding, although NRCS suggested that their payments were sufficient given that the facilitation session was generally only for only one or two hours. • NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. • NRCS has mobilized district level resources especially technical experts from line agencies for facilitation of skill development trainings. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies including the Chief District Officer. • RC has helped line agencies to support EQ affected families through trainings and income generation activities. • Line agencies have the impression that the presence of delegates has helped support communities better (due to monitoring role).
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the programme interventions have increased the resilience capability of communities. • The programmes have helped connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), build skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increase livelihoods options and improve local leadership.

Management issues	• The relationship between Chapter and NHQ has increased after the recovery operations. However, chapter believes that it should be given more authority especially related to issues such as staff recruitment, budget approval ceiling and procurement. • There are gaps in beneficiary communications. Some community members believed that some HHs are excluded from the programme support especially livelihood/cash grant programming. They think that the criteria do not truly reflect their situation. The issue could be resolved through further socialization of the criteria, selection finding and increased beneficiary communication. • Coordination with NGOs working at the community level is normal. There is room for improvement (such as with KIDRAK). One NGO representative based in the RC project community complained about the duplication of the RC activities. S/he also mentioned that the relationship between the NGO and RC was even worse in the past and now it is improving due to frequent coordination meetings at the community level. It was reported that in the livelihood component some beneficiaries did receive the grant but did not use the money for the intended purpose. For instance, some families prepared sheds but did not buy goats and some families even showed the existing goats and did not buy new ones. It was reported that CDMC was instructed to ask the concerned families to return the money and put the amount in the DRR fund at the local level. CDMCs are playing a crucial role in this regard. • It was reported that technical coordinators at ERO should visit to the district more and orientate the field staff time to time. • It was reported that procurement approach is now ok (RED contract) but suppliers make delays for • different reason in health construction work.
Actions to be taken	1. Trainings should be more gender inclusive. In one FGD, women members opined that there is very little interest of women in masons training. There should be some skill development trainings that help raise income generation and employment opportunities for women. 2. Sector integration has not been well practiced. Joint planning, one set of work plans, joint monitoring, synchronization in the technical support and joint review should be carried out. 3. Sectoral guidelines are more long-term development focused. Recovery focused guidelines are necessary. 4. Need to link CDMCs to LDRRMC and local government units for sustainability of local infrastructures. CDMCs have formed O&M funds, however it should be further strengthened and made operational with proper bank account and rules, regulations and procedures. 5. By sharing the progress reports on a regular basis and having frequent consultative meetings, the relationships with line agencies could be further improved.

Appendix 2: Lalitpur

Issue	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• The implementation of the program activities in the district is going well. Committed staff and volunteers, good coordination with the line agencies, appropriate program interventions and effective community mobilization have made the overall recovery program so far a success. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that they will complete all the planned activities by end of December 2018. Program delivery is reportedly around 60% in software and around 45% in hardware. • Program interventions especially livelihood component has shown some initial impacts on the improvement in the local household level economy. Some examples of successful ventures include mobile street shop, iron works, colourful shoe-making, and goat raising. • Some resentment among community members could be observed regarding the exclusion from the beneficiary list of conditional cash grant, cash for work (CfW) and trainings appropriate for women. It was observed that such issues could have been resolved through appropriate assessment tool at the beginning of the project such as VCA and deeper socialization of selection criteria and validation from the community members and groups. Strengthening of the CDMCs and linking them to LDRMC was clearly noticed. • Relation between chapter steering committee and ERO staff could be improved. The root causes of lack of sound relationships lie in the recruitment processes, differences in salary between chapter core staff and ERO staff and roles and responsibilities of the steering committee. More clarity on these issues could help smooth the relationship. • Sector integration, recovery focused guidelines and urban specific tools were felt necessary. The sectoral integration is understood as the activities of various sectors implemented in one locality without sufficient synergies. Joint planning, joint implementation including monitoring and use of integrated tools appears not to have been practiced in the communities. • Overall, community members who have received support from NRCS are happy despite some areas for improvement especially in identification of the most vulnerable households. Line agencies regard NRCS as the most trusted emergency and recovery partner in the district. The recovery operations have also helped build the image of RC.
Targeting/coverage	• Some RCM partners and stakeholders raised concerns regarding initial area selection for both the districts and communities. It was suggested that NRCS should have negotiated with the government to allocate the most affected districts for the RCM partners. A suggestion from district line agencies was that RC should go to more remote areas of the district and should cover more communities.

	• District selection should have been carried out in consultation with the local chapter and their priorities. Community selection should have been based on vulnerability and capacity assessment or other assessments so that the most vulnerable communities could have been identified for the program interventions under RCM. However, the selection of most vulnerable families in the communities appears to have been ensured in the livelihoods program through Focus Group Discussions, wellbeing analysis and data from secondary sources. This has not been the case in all program interventions. • The cash for work (CfW) scheme has been provided to the poorest families. One of the criteria for selection of the most vulnerable families for CfW scheme is those families who have not removed debris of their houses yet. For the cash grant provision under livelihoods program, a set of selection criteria has been developed and applied. • Lack of a standard tool for the categorization of vulnerabilities at the community level such as VCA and the absence of Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs) were two areas that could help target the most vulnerable families, identify the neediest households and resolve local development issues through active participation. • Local elected authorities and line agencies believed that NRCS should have covered more VDCs. Some stakeholders suggested that NRCS should have also targeted the more remote VDCs of the district. • NRCS does not have any plan to address unmet needs of the communities.
Programs (4+1)	100% respondents in the district opined that all the program interventions are in line with the community needs. The 4+1 interventions and general activities were designed by the NHQ whereas specific activities of each component such as livelihoods were designed by the local chapter in consultation with local stakeholders such as Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), political parties and ward secretaries. Livelihoods • Seed and toolkit support, conditional cash grant (CCG) in agriculture, livestock and small businesses, and vocational trainings for youth were some of the key activities implemented under the livelihood component in the district. Among them CCG with a cash grant of Rs 20,000 to each family has shown some visible impacts in the lives and livelihoods of some the poor families. Some successful small businesses include iron workshops, mobile shop, and ladies shoe-making. Although the amount allocated for Kathmandu valley districts is half of the amount given to other districts, which is not clearly justifiable, the study (interviews and field observations) shows that the lesser the amount the higher the chance of the poorest of the poor families to be selected for the scheme. • The selection of beneficiaries for CCG and CfW has sparked controversies and resentment among some community members who were excluded from the benefit. Some families have blamed the social

	mobiliser or community representatives who took part in the selection process for having excluded them intentionally. - Community resentment may have been avoided had a standard tool such as VCA applied and the outcomes socialized at the beginning of the program interventions. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) - Key activities implemented under this component include the training of trainers (ToT), school sanitation program, maintenance of water resources, water quality training, toilet construction and support to the declaration of ODF. - A significance progress has been achieved in this as was shared in a Powerpoint presentation to the MTR team. Some activities such as assessment for rainwater harvesting, school toilet construction, drinking water schemes are ongoing. - The concerned line agency in the district opined that the RC is quite ahead of other NGOs in terms of service delivery and package. However, it was reported that RC chose the closest communities for its interventions. No joint monitoring visits have been held in WASH sector. Health - RC has helped develop health contingency plan. RC is very active in DDRC and DLA in the district. - The concerned line agencies in the district believe that the completion of the immunization was a major challenge. NRCS' support in this regard was highly commendable. - RC also helped District Public Health Office in tackling diarrhoea outbreak last year and this year. RC has also helped in winterization. - Joint monitoring visits together with the concerned line agencies in the districts are also held. Shelter - Construction of shelter was not part of the program in the district. However, software components such as Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) training and community awareness raising, mason and carpenter trainings and community mobilization activities were implemented in the project communities. - Support for the debris clearance through cash for work scheme was also provided. - The community members who have received technical skill development trainings especially masons and carpentry are active in supporting to building earthquake resistant houses. This has helped build resilient houses as well as supported their own livelihoods. Institutional Capacity Building - Increased relationship between district and NHQ
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	• Increased capacity of governance (<i>Shesh, on what basis do you observe this?</i>) • DRR fund is present at the community level. • Coordination meetings are held on a regular basis; BRC also participates • Staff members are recruited by NHQ. • One door policy in the procurement has tied hands of the district. NHQ spends budget on behalf of the district. District chapter believes that the financial and procurement guidelines should be different for recovery operation from the normal development operation. • No exchange visit for learning from other districts had been made.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS district chapter has extremely good relationship with the line agencies and almost all line agencies mentioned that NRCS is the closest, most trusted partner in both the response as well as recovery operations. However, they observed that the support provided by NRCS chapter during the response was higher than that of recovery operations in terms of coverage, timeliness and package. • NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. • NRCS is the District Lead Agency (DLA) in the district. One line agency mentioned that as a DLA in the district NRCS chapter could play more active role in coordination with NGOs than it does now. • NRCS has mobilized district level resources especially technical experts from line agencies for facilitation of skill development trainings. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies. Most of the line agencies did not make monitoring visits to the RC supported communities.
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the program interventions have increased the resilience capabilities of communities. They believe that awareness raising, technical trainings, linking communities to the district level resources, strengthening the household level livelihood options, and improving local leadership have made the communities safer and more resilient. • The programs have helped connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), build skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increase livelihoods options, improve local leadership, and so.
Management issues	• Chapter steering committee has worked as a bridge between communities and line agencies. Almost all line agencies interviewed believed that RC is the trusted partner in times of response and recovery operations in the district. However, some respondents believed that RC chapter management is a bit weak, needs improvement especially in beneficiary selection and cash disbursement system. Programs are more top-down and could be made bottom up through the adopting standard tools such as VCA and other assessment and planning tools and by involving local level stakeholders. So far assessments are done only for certain sector such as livelihoods.

	• There are gaps in the beneficiary communication. Socialisation of beneficiary selection criteria and findings in a participatory manner could help resolve many issues and grievances of community members. • DRR structure and funds exist at local level. RC should take some initiatives to be active part of it. • Volunteer mobilization could be made more inclusive especially in planning and community meetings. They are usually mobilized in the implementation without involving them in the planning and community meetings. They are involved in street drama, livelihoods business planning, data entry, PMER/CEA, PSS in school, PASSA. • Volunteers feel that the visibility of volunteers in the district is lacking. Some sorts of visibility items such as t-shirts, caps with RC logos could be provided. • The relationship between chapter steering committee and the ERO chapter staff members could be improved. Complaints from staff members regarding the attitude of steering committee members towards them were raised. Similarly, steering committee members were not happy about the difference in salary scales between the core staff and ERO staff. Clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the steering committee should be made on time. Also, the grievance handling mechanism for staff members should be in place.
Other issues	• District line agencies are impressed with the complaint handling mechanisms adopted by NRCS in the district. • Sectoral integration at community level, recovery focused guidelines and urban specific tools were felt necessary. Understanding of the sectoral integration needs clarity. The study shows that implementing various sector activities in one location but in silos has been understood as an integration. Joint planning, adoption of joint tools, sectoral coordination at all phases of the operation and joint monitoring and reporting are some of the key elements of an integrated approach. • Majority of the respondents from the community and line agencies suggested that NRCS should expand its program areas to the wider community (vulnerable people).
Actions to be taken	6. Trainings should be more gender inclusive. 7. Clarifications to beneficiaries needed on the daily rate for workers under the Cash for Work scheme. 8. Need to strengthen local level institutions such as LDRRMC/CDMCs for sustainability of local infrastructures. 9. District sub-branch should be in the loop for community level intervention...sub-chapter should be empowered and mobilized. 10. Sector integration needs further clarity and applications (see: description in 'other issues' section above for details).

Appendix 3: Ramechhap

Issue	Key issues, observations and any suggested actions
Overall	• There is a sharp distinction between the work in Rampur and Manthali; work is now in full flow in Rampur but is slower to progress in Manthali, with recognition that working in urban environment has been further complicated by the recent constitutional changes. • An integrated approach is being achieved in Rampur; generic social mobilisers and volunteers are supporting the programme across the sectors. The integrated approach evident through interviews and FGDs – having generic volunteers and SMs who are able to combine different issues when visiting homes makes sense and there is evident cross-team support, for example between the engineers regarding toilet construction, etc. Recognition that working in a neglected VDC where other organisations are not working makes it easier for RC to deliver a more integrated programme. • FGDs reveal community members generally very pleased with the RC interventions which are clearly meeting perceived need and filling gap not being filled by government in many cases. FGDs suggest that the recovery operation will mean that vulnerable people's quality of life will be better in some respects than before the earthquake (particularly related to access to water). • Good and meaningful involvement of community in determining individual eligibility for programme, eg determining who will be priority beneficiaries; missed opportunity not to have used VCA as the basis for community level planning and engagement. • The operation is maintaining a strong relationship with most key line agencies; RC activities are enabling government to far exceed its own targets in Rampur.
Coverage, targeting etc	• While following the government beneficiary lists for shelter, in the other three sectors ERO is focusing on lower caste and marginalised people, in what was characterised by interviewees as a “forgotten place by government”. KIIs and FGDs confirm that communities are actively participating in the definition of priority beneficiary selection criteria and FGDs were strongly in favour of the approach being taken. • RC is taking on an advocacy role when cases of people being mistakenly left off the shelter list are known to them, with reported successes, although FGDs suggest that there are still some vulnerable people (eg elderly women living on their own) who are not on the lists. • A key issue for Ramechhap district authorities is the inequality of response between the different VDCs, given that there are very few partners working in this district compared to some of the other priority districts (CDO reported that there is only one other partner (MedAir) working in 1 VDC, despite there being 49 VDCs in total, with 20 badly affected). Concern was expressed at the large number of RC staff and volunteers working in Rampur compared to neighbouring VDCs with only very limited staffing, meaning that results are much more limited. Informants believed that RC should be trying to support more of the badly affected VDCs through technical training and support, particularly related to shelter construction.
4+1: WASH	• Water activities estimated to be 30% complete, finishing first large drinking water scheme before starting second. Impact of RC water schemes will dramatically improve access to water to marginalised communities – FGDs confirmed the impact of limited access of water particularly on women who currently have to travel long distances during the night to collect water.

	• Water scheme involves community contribution through labour, being calculated as a rupee contribution. The user committee decided on the daily rate equivalent for senior and junior labourer – all HHs are contributing one person on a turn by turn basis, user committee also agreed those who do not need to contribute (elderly, PWD, etc). • General view that work on the water scheme should have started earlier in order to provide water for shelter construction (see below) and to ensure that there is not too much overloading of community contribution of labour. It was suggested that this would have enabled better shelter progress to have been achieved. • Government counterparts pleased with the RC work on water schemes and the close working relationship (ERO is providing monthly progress reports and attends monthly meetings), although suggested that more monitoring of WASH activities generally would be beneficial (eg to pick up some quality issues related to construction, although it was noted that when this was raised with RC, it responded positively). All suggested that RC should try to expand work in water to other VDCs given the dryness of the district. • Toilet construction seen to be effective by community members and government counterparts, with the provision of materials constituting a top-up for most vulnerable households. • FGDs suggest that more communication with women in communities regarding water systems could be useful; it was noticeable that women were unaware of the details of the Aitabar drinking water scheme compared to men. • Good examples of accessible construction (eg school toilets with ramps, water taps for children). Will be encouraging rain water harvesting, building plastic ponds shared between 4-5 houses through cash for work.
4+1: Shelter	• Strong, positive contribution by RC to ramping up the capacity of government to deliver EQ resistant housing to affected VDC; all government informants confirmed how happy they were with progress which is way ahead of target and progress in other VDCs (DUDBC target in Rampur is 10% of houses completed; Rampur is at 60% - 1st instalment completed, over 50% of 2nd instalment disbursed). • Shelter activities slow in Manthali (20-30 houses complete) – engineers believe that they will need another 12-15 months to finish. Given complications related to land ownership, lack of space etc, may have been better for RC to have focused on another isolated VDC instead. • DUDBC/ward/NRA all feel they are part of a team; they plan together and RC provides weekly update reports. All confirmed that the work is well coordinated. • RC is taking a positive advocacy role for people who have been missed off the government lists. • The financial incentive that was offered in April for households that had completed to DPC level by the anniversary of EQ (25,000 rupees) was very successful, but as 285 rather than the 100 HHs reached this target, the payments have not been made and this is resulting in complaints being received, by DUDBC as well as RC. Understood that decision is pending HQ approval (requested the budget in March). • An important RC contribution is tracking the processing of approvals for the payment tranches so that it takes on average 15 days (compared to a reported 2-3 months in other VDCs due to lack of personnel), although it is suggested that limited NRA capacity to sign off on approvals for each tranche of funding is still delaying progress. • Lack of water is also delaying construction rates, with families spending a reported 25-30,000 rupees on buying water per house.

	• Mason training generally seen to be good, although engineers recognise that they would have benefited from more hands-on training as most had not had practical education regarding building with stone. • General view from staff and FGDs that the programme needs to focus on retrofitting for category 2 houses and those that were rebuilt before the building codes were published. Requires retrofitting training to be held for engineers. FGDs revealed confusion around what is going to happen to people whose houses were defined as partially damaged, suggests that more communication around this required. • Informants all suggested that 3 lakhs was insufficient to build a house, with concern raised in some FGDs that some vulnerable people would not be able to raise additional money, even if they took on the labour, suggesting that people need access to loans. It was suggested that the only way that people are managing to build within the 3 lakhs budget is by reusing materials from the old house, which is against the guideline. • Good examples of accessible construction (eg school toilets with ramps, water taps for children, locks on doors and windows of houses suitable for old people and children) • Some views among engineers that it would have been better to have purchased materials for owners rather than giving money as would have resulted in better quality materials; may be useful to research this (may also have achieved better economy of scale?). • A number of informants (both government and RC) believe that the RC funds would have had more impact if they had been channelled into technical training and support, ramping up the NRA/DUDBC capacity to deliver the 3 lakhs and focusing on most vulnerable people for cash top ups (as reportedly done by MedAir, although has not been independently verified).
4+1: Health	• Reportedly on track to finish the health activities by March 2018, at about 75% for health training, 60% of the budget spent to date (had been over-budgeted so additional activities have been implemented it is understood). • In the view of district health personnel, the health awareness activities carried out by NRCS and other local NGOs has resulted in fewer than anticipated cases of people affected by diarrhoea and no outbreaks of epidemics. FGDs also confirmed that illness had decreased. • Baby kits (winterisation) were seen to be a good thing, providing the right clothing and of good quality. The distribution of solar lights to female health volunteers was said to be motivational. • Provision of additional rooms for the health post will enable it to accommodate women to give birth, welcomed by HP and all FGDs who raised this as a need. General view expressed that RC should stay longer to support the health post to reach more marginalised people. • Health activities have been implemented through existing groups and structures (such as mothers' groups, FCHVs, HP etc). • Volunteers/SMs felt they should have had more extensive first aid training in order to have more impact at community level.
4+1: Livelihood	• Of the four sectors, livelihood seems to be the one that has most still to achieve. It was also noticeable that most FGDs seemed confused about the plans for livelihoods. It is understood that there has been about 40-50% progress with goat sheds, 40% of the budget spent. • The focus on agricultural practices was welcomed by the Agriculture Office, which noted that "many people have stopped rearing animals since the EQ as they are focusing on housebuilding". The construction of goat sheds, purchase of animals, skill enhancement through training, provision of animal insurance etc were all supported by the office, although it was noted that the level of coordination was weaker than with other sectors (with some examples of duplications of effort shared). the Agriculture Office requested that

	monthly and quarterly reports be provided and that RC should meet regularly. It also suggested that RC should include vaccination and parasite control as part of the intervention and that social mobilisers could be used to pass on key agricultural messages • The provision of livestock insurance is a good sustainability mechanism. • A number of other interventions are being planned including rehabilitation of irrigation canals and construction of water harvesting ponds, to be carried out through cash for work (not a sustainable recovery strategy, caution must be exercised to ensure that CFW interventions do not undermine the strong community engagement that is underlying the integrated operation).
4+1: ICB	• ICB has not really started yet (10%), strategy needs to be developed • The steering committee believes that this should have been integrated from the start of the operation in order to draw in sub-chapters etc. It recommended that the plan needs to include support for the blood bank (particularly provision of solar panels so can maintain freezers). • Regrettable that more long term chapter volunteers have not been involved to date in the operation. It is suggested that more may be available when activities ramp up in Manthali, but this represents a lost opportunity for the chapter to have more hands-on involvement in delivering a community-focused programme.
DRR / resilience	• The next phase of the operation will be strengthened by integrating DRR across the programme. Should be a key part of the transition/exit strategy. • Missed opportunity not to have used some sort of VCA approach at the start of the operation to build relationship with community and help identify key vulnerabilities and capacities from the community perspective. A focused VCA approach could be useful for identifying the appropriate approach here.
Timing of activities	• Concern raised by line agencies, FGDs and staff/volunteers about the fact that many activities are currently happening at the same time, all drawing on the same community members to participate through provision of labour etc. This risks over-burdening community members (and SMs) and may result in a loss of the goodwill between communities and RC that was very evident in the FGDs. It is strongly recommended that activities need to re-scheduled to give more breathing space. • All sectors believe that more time is needed in order to ensure a good quality finalisation of activities. All feel under too much pressure to finalise all activities by end of 2017. It will be important to plan activities sector by sector and community by community to ensure that adequate time is given for a quality and timely completion of activities, with time dedicated to ensuring sustainability.
Relationships with line agencies	• As mentioned before, RC is seen to be a supportive and active partner by all government partners; a number highlighted additionally how the RC was responsive to issues raised, which they appreciated. All agencies view the relationship with RC as a strong partnership; building local capacity of these institutions. • The integrated approach is well appreciated and feedback was positive for all the interventions. Having all the political parties, agencies and NGOs/INGOs in the DDRC ensures that RC activities are well-coordinated and there was little evidence in FGDs of perceptions of political influences on the operation. • ERO is clearly coordinating its work well through achieved strong working relationships with activities/locations identified through D-WASH-CC and DDRC, involvement of VDC and stakeholders.
Management issues	• Budget expenditure currently estimated to be only 20% so far, although as mentioned before there is good progress on second instalment of funds, so this will begin to show through on the budget.

	• Evidently a strong and supportive team which takes a multi-disciplinary approach with a number of examples shared of how different teams support each other (eg health doing injury awareness sessions for shelter training, shelter engineers supporting on toilet construction). In view of this, may be over-staffed; opportunities to streamline staffing going forward, some staff have the capacity to deliver across several sectors. • The Steering Committee is clearly supportive and enabling, although being only three people, there are times when they are not available which can hamper field activities.
Community Engagement and Accountability	• Line agencies satisfied with the complaints mechanisms in place, which are streamlined with their own (toll-free numbers, suggestion boxes, FaceBook page, etc) but believe that public meetings and one-to-one meetings are the most important. FGDs suggest that women don't know about the toll-free number or the suggestion boxes. However, it is clear that the main conduits of concerns are the local volunteers and SMs in each ward. FGDs also highlighted positive use of SMSs. • FGDs demonstrated that communities are clear about the financial contribution of RC to different activities, for example the Aitabar water scheme. • Used community meetings to share information and plan, using local committee members, volunteers checking to ensure that the information reaches the household level. Also sharing information on budget and expenditure on notice boards, which FGDs value.
Relationship with key RC partner	• Seems that there is a strong relationship between ERO and IFRC. Good support, although ERO believes it should have opportunities to meet and share strategies & solutions with Sindhuli and Okladunga (and the other priority districts). • Logframe for Ramechhap was developed by IFRC, still in draft form, needs to be finalised and better ways of measuring certain outputs developed in the view of PMER. Should have been developed with closer district involvement.
Suggested actions to be taken:	1. RC should consider whether/how it can support neighbouring VDCs in order to achieve a more equitable response for vulnerable communities. This could involve inviting participants for mason training from neighbouring VDCs, offering engineering support and technical site visits, for example. RC should also explore whether RC engineers could be authorised by NRA to approve constructions in order to speed up the processes. 2. Prioritise the payment of incentive funds for reaching DPC level in order not to sour good RC-community relationships. 3. May be useful for RC to carry out another round of communication to pick up any remaining cases of people left off government housing list. 4. Determine RC strategy related to retrofitting, including provision of retrofitting training to engineers. 5. Increase communication efforts regarding operational plans particularly with women at community level. 6. Increase the level of coordination with the Agricultural Office, including providing monthly progress reports. 7. Re-plan integrated community level activities with community involvement to ensure that community members are not over-burdened with too many conflicting priorities for community engagement. 8. Put in place a programme of weekly meetings between ERO and steering committee with a nominee identified who can take decisions in the event that the president is unavailable.

Appendix 4: Rasuwa

Categories	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	- The implementation of the program activities in the district has mixed results. Social mobilization, livelihoods, cash for work (CfW), drinking water and WASH activities are going well, whereas construction of shelter and toilets has been seriously delayed. - Construction of private shelter and toilets was implemented only in <i>Thulogaun</i> VDC. The quality of the houses, foot trails and toilets are of high quality. District line agencies including CDO and NRA district head highly appreciated the quality of the construction. Community members who have received the support are extremely happy despite the delay and the higher investment of the construction. - Drinking water scheme in Vorle is going well and the team estimate that it will be finished in one or two months. The water users' committee (WUC) and beneficiary households are extremely happy with the scheme. However, they have a grave concern related to the protection of the source point which is prone to landslides. - Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that they will complete all the planned activities (related to livelihood, drinking water and WASH), apart from shelter construction, by end of December 2018. Program delivery so far is reported to be around 50% in software and around 40% in hardware. - The relationship between the district chapter and line agencies, especially the Drinking Water Office and District Coordination Committee (former DDC) has not been smooth. - The construction of the district hospital is in the final stage of completion. It was reported that it will be completed by October this year although the target of completion was June 2017. Our observation shows that the quality has been well maintained and supervision by engineers is being carried out. - Program interventions especially livelihood component have yet to show some initial impacts on the improvement in the local household level economy. Some examples of successful ventures include vegetable farming and goat raising. - The need for strengthening of the CDMCs and linking them to LDRMC was clearly noticed. - Relation between chapter steering committee and ERO staff was normal. However, the steering committee wanted to hire the staff locally or through their active involvement. Steering committee has strong disagreement on the centralized procurement system of ERO. They believe that the procurement authority should be delegated to the chapter. This is one of the delays of construction works in the district.

	• The rate for CfW is too low compared to the market rate. It should be discussed prior to the implementation of this modality. It was learned that the market rate is more than Rs 1000/person/day, whereas the RC provides Rs 500 per person per day. • Community members who have received support from NRCS are happy despite identifying some areas for improvement, especially in identification of the most vulnerable households. • Sector integration could have been improved especially through joint need assessment and planning, synergies in program implementation including monitoring.
Targeting/coverage	• The district chapter had implemented the RIMA project in Thulogaun <i>and</i> Vorle VDCs supported by American Red Cross prior to the earthquakes. Emergency operations were carried out in 10 VDCs. For the recovery operations, 7 VDCs were selected situated around the RIMA project area. The district chapter steering committee members were not happy regarding the project selection. They believe that the project team at NHQ insisted in the selection for the ERO activities in the lower part of Rasuwa district. The upper part of the district has been excluded from the benefit. Assessments were done only in the lower part of the district and selected 7 VDCs out of 10 emergency support VDCs. • Chapter steering committee members opined that the selection of communities was based on the prior work experience i.e. nearby VDCs of RIMA project areas, and they seemed not happy with this decision. All of these VDCs lie in the lower part of the district and no VDC from the upper part is included in the recovery operations. However, beneficiaries within the VDC were selected based on pre-VCA⁴¹ through Recovery Action Group (RAG). RAG-facilitated village recovery plans were developed. District selection should have been done in consultation with the local chapter and their priorities. It seems it was imposed from the centre based on the interest of the previous project (RINA) • No CDMC formed or strengthened, but followed RAG approach. It would have been more appropriate and sustainable if the project could have strengthened LDRMC or CDMC instead of RAG, which will be dissolved after the recovery operation is over. • Community selection should have been carried out based on the vulnerability and capacity assessment or based on certain assessments so that the most vulnerable communities in the district could have been identified for the RCM program interventions. • NRCS did not have any plan to address the unmet needs of the communities. Apart from the new schemes beyond 4+1 program areas, additional drinking water schemes, cash grant for business for more families and trainings for women were reported as the unmet needs.

⁴¹ Some participatory tools were used to select the communities such as wellbeing ranking. This is called pre-VCA. However, detailed VCA was not conducted.

	- Newly elected local authority ward chairman who was former WUC member is very happy with the work done in the community with support from the Red Cross. He insisted the need for the expansion and continuation of such support. - Beneficiaries are inclusive, selection criteria have been followed, <i>janajati</i>, <i>dalits</i>, women, PWDs are included.
Programs (4+1)	Program activities generally seen to be realistic, appropriate and relevant. The steering committee members and staff believe that overall program is on track. “<i>Thuloagaun</i> shelter has 40% progress, but in fact it is the progress of 6-7 months. It will be sped up after rainy season”. Shelter - Thuloagaun is the only shelter VDC. Households were selected based on the Red Card recipients from the Government. PASSA was not carried out; however, beneficiary communication was conducted. - The government rate of Rs 300,000 per house is not enough and the total cost has reached from Rs 800,000 to 1.2 million. The ‘<i>arma parma</i>’ method of labor support has slightly delayed the completion of the construction; however, this traditional way of supporting neighbors has strengthened the cohesiveness and unity among community members. - Cash grant support has been provided by RC. In total, 433 HH have received 1st installment, 153 HHs have received second installment and 123 have received the third installment. - The quality of private shelter and toilets is very high. Community members, local elected authorities and line agencies have all appreciated the quality of construction support provided by RC. - District steering committee and the staff members are not fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of the Build Change. - Rs 3 lakh is not enough for building a house. Communities have spent as much as 1.2 million Rs. They have added more than double of the Government allocated fund. RC has followed the government rule, however provided additional support for plantation, construction of trails and toilet construction. - Two shelter social mobilisers (RC) are currently working at the community level. - Informants suggest that it will take a minimum of 1.5 years more to construct the total target of 433 houses. Might go beyond Dec 2018. - RC has provided mason training to 96 community workers; the number is not enough for the construction of houses at the same time. Some of them have gone abroad or are not active. Additional mason trainings are being conducted. - Community participation in the shelter is reported to have excellent. Shelter beneficiaries seemed happy, despite the delay in house construction. They say the delay is due to the <i>arma parma</i> approach and their engagement in paddy cropping at the time of the field visit.

	Livelihoods • Livelihoods- social mobilization, VCA (criteria based format), beneficiary selection, training, first installment Rs 15,000, after initial work 25,000. Total provided 40,000/HH. No impact seen yet. • Livelihood activities have been completed in 2 VDCs, ongoing in one VDC, and in 1 VDC has not been started yet. • More focus has been given to shelter and WASH than livelihoods. • Overall, 50% work has been completed. Institutional latrine, irrigation, foot trails are activities under livelihood component through cash for work. • Generally, beneficiaries appear happy with their involvement in the livelihood activities. However, the schemes were not so impressive, which could have been done with their own. For instance, just to raise 2-3 goats and do vegetable farming of low scale, it seems no external support is needed and it won't have much impact on their livelihood. WASH • Five drinking water schemes in 3 VDC have been completed, rest ongoing, school sanitation and hygiene education (8 target schemes in 2 VDCs). Household latrine in 4 VDCs (Saranthali, Vorle, Yarsa, Thulagaun) are ongoing. Yarsa VDC was already ODF, but after EQ it was damaged. One more month needed to complete toilets in Saranthali. Line agencies are blaming RC saying RC did not support their plan of declaring ODF in the mid 2017 • The overall progress is 55% in terms of budget. • Lengthy procurement process, election time and rainy season caused delay to complete the toilet construction. • <i>Pariwartan Patra</i> works in 3 VDCs- especially in wash sector. RC is a co-lead together with DWSSCC. • Blanket approach in toilet construction could have been avoided – would have been better to have focused only on the poorest families. (Shesh, on what basis do you say this?) Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) • The steering committee and chapter staff believed that the institutional capacity has been improved after the ERO interventions. The capacity of district chapter has increased through the increased financial management, mobilization of human resources, receiving training and orientations, exposure visits to other program districts. • District chapter has formulated its 5 year strategic plan in line with the NRCS NHQ strategic plan. • Institutional memory might be lost as there is not a single core staff member at the chapter at present, and majority of ERO staff are from other districts.
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	Staff members lack knowledge and skills on disaster risk reduction, recovery operations and facilitation skills and need more training in these areas.
Relationships with line agencies	- NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. However, update of the progress at the forums, and playing active role in coordination as a District Lead Agency (DLA) was found lacking. - The concerned line agencies including the Chief District Officer (CDO) mentioned that the target of declaring ODF in the district could not be achieved due to RC's failure to complete toilet construction in one of the communities. They also believed that the blanket approach taken by RC is against the Government policy. Some line agencies believe that as the District Lead Agency (DLA) the Red Cross has not played a sufficiently active role in coordination with NGOs and other development partners in the district. - Coordination between Chapter staff and Line agencies especially District Agriculture Office, Disaster Coordination Office (former DDC) and District Administration Office is not smooth. It was told to the MTR team that the RC did not support their plan of declaring ODF by not completing the toilet construction work in the RC-led VDCs. This must be improved through clarifying the issues and causes of the delay and updating the plans and progress at the district level forums such as DDRC and cluster meetings for effective program delivery in the district. The relationship could be improved through clarifying the issues and updating the plan and progress, etc. - Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies, although most of the line agencies did not make monitoring visits to the RC supported communities. - The relationship between district chapter and line agencies should be significantly improved in order to effectively implement the program activities in the district. This should be both at Steering committee as well as staff level. Problems were observed at both levels. Three line agencies criticized RC for the delay of the toilet construction in the RC-led VDCs that affected the plan of declaring ODF. They were also not happy with the RC chapter branch in their updating the progress at DDRC meetings. However, NRA was very positive towards the quality of houses that RC is supporting in the communities.
Community resilience	- Most of the respondents believed that the program interventions have increased the resilience capabilities of communities by helping connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), building skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increasing livelihoods options and improving local leadership. - Disaster risk reduction component is not well reflected at the community level. More activities on disaster risk reduction, capacity building of communities and linking recovery operations to the long term development should be ensured in the next phase of the operation.
Management issues	Relationship between district chapter and ERO MHQ needs improvement especially in the issues related to procurement, staff recruitment and budget ceiling of the chapter.

	• DRR structure and funds do not exist at local level. But water users' committees are planning to raise the tariff and establish O&M funds. RC should take some initiatives to be an active part of it. • Visibility of volunteers is lacking - need to provide visibility items such as caps and t-shirts with Red Cross logos and ID cards, etc. • The relationship between chapter steering committee and the ERO chapter staff members could be improved. SC members are not happy with the recruitment process.
Other issues	• NRCS procurement policy and guidelines need to be improved. SC and staff are of the opinion that there is a need for a recovery friendly policy as the current policy is more development-friendly. Chapters should be allowed to be involved in the procurement process for more than Rs 500,000. • Monitoring from NHQ is OK, although no monitoring plan exists at present.
Actions to be taken	• Better coordination with district stakeholders (line agencies, NGOs) should be maintained through regular participation in the meetings, regular update about the progress of recovery operations at the district level mechanism. • Speed up the shelter and toilet construction as planned. • The quality of the shelters constructed under the RC support is extremely high compared to the shelter constructed by other agencies. However, cost effectiveness should also be taken into account. • Need to strengthen local level institutions such as LDRRMC/CDMCs for sustainability of local infrastructures • The rate for CfW is too low compared to the market rate. It should be discussed and agreed with the communities prior to the implementation of this modality. • More activities on disaster risk reduction, capacity building of communities and linking recovery operations to the long-term development should be ensured in the next phase of the operation.

Appendix 5: Sindhupalchok

Issue	Observations and any suggested actions
Overall	• Unlike other districts, the chapter is being supported by two PNSs running separate operations. with very different time frames; as the JRC-supported operation very delayed compared to that supported by NRC, the MTR mainly focused on activities in VDCs supported by NRC and field visits were conducted only in these VDCs. • FGDs with communities showed that the majority of the activities being delivered as part of the operation are meeting priority needs of affected people. FGDs revealed concerning perception of political bias influencing the implementation of the operation. • Concern raised by ERO staff that insufficient time to finish all the activities before end of 2017. Need to do bottom-up planning activity by activity to ensure sufficient time is given to finishing the various activities and ensuring that sustainability actions are in place.
Coverage, targeting etc	• Baseline assessments were carried out from April to June 2016 by the district team, survey through sampling, carried out by social mobilisers and volunteers. • The ERO worked initially through Ward Citizen Forums and created a Recovery Action Groups (RAG) in each ward, which is involved in targeting of activities such as health trainings together with volunteers. • For each activity, a set of criteria for participation was developed within the team, then volunteers collected data through surveys which are then verified with appropriate line agency, for example with the support of FCHVs for the winterisation programme. Not clear to what extent community members themselves were involved in developing and verifying these criteria, although FGDs revealed that they were aware of them and broadly agreed with them, although there were concerns that the application of these criteria may have been politically manipulation in some cases.
4+1: WASH activities	• Estimated to be at about 70% completion/rehabilitation of drinking water schemes, 90% of school latrine construction, 45% completion of HH toilets, carrying out large number of hygiene promotion awareness sessions, including in schools. Planning to include more district water schemes in the coming period. • Community feedback regarding the work on water schemes and canals positive. Using cash for work approach, providing insurance and volunteer with FA skills, both appreciated. • One FGD revealed some confusion regarding toilet construction, with some participants saying that materials had been provided twice to each HH so there were now more toilets than houses and one man whose land is adjacent to a road; the government has requisitioned his land so he won't be able to build back his house on the land but he is moving ahead with constructing the toilet. • Engineers have very high work load; one engineer who participated in FGD said that he was responsible for 2 water schemes and more than 200 toilet constructions. • Although government pleased with the progress achieved by RC, there is concern regarding the overall limited impact of the work - RC is targeting 14 District Water Supply Schemes (DWSS) in the district but there are more than 600 damaged DWSSs and few other organisations that are supporting. • Some issues highlighted with the distribution of toilet materials – some people constructed without having received instructions about how to construct (ie using bands and rods); some people constructed incorrectly – these will need to be corrected. May have been in part because only one engineer responsible for overseeing the construction of 200+ toilets.

4+1: Shelter activities	• Trained volunteers and social mobilisers in PASSA facilitation in all VDCs supported by NRC, following which PASSA sessions held at ward level. • Large number of masons trained, but has experienced a high level of mason attrition which had not been expected. It was suggested that only half of the 800 masons trained are currently active in the district, with 200 working outside the district and 200 not working, so this is negatively impacting progress. (Construction was paused in Sindhupalchok at the time of the MTR visit due to community members focusing on planting crops.) • The ERO has piloted a 50 day on-the-job mason training together with TRACE Nepal for those who have not previously worked as masons, resulted in 2 houses being built for highly vulnerable households. Not clear whether it is the intention to carry on with these trainings but will be important to monitor the 12 participants to see whether they use their skills and the quality of their work. • The on-the-job training included several female participants who are now working on their own houses it is understood, although unclear how realistic it is for women to be employed in house construction (even the women were sceptical that they would be employed by men). • Men who had gone through the 7 day mason training also said that they needed support to get hired as masons, although it is understood from ERO that banners advertising names of those trained have been placed in each VDC. FGDs with people who had gone through the mason training suggested that the training was good and the RC was receptive to their suggestions about how to improve the training. They also suggested that model houses should be built in all wards to encourage more people to construct; it is understood that there are currently only two per VDC. • Reports from the ERO show that engineers are carrying out large numbers of household visits to provide technical advice, with volunteers and social mobilisers passing on IEC materials and messages regarding building back safer. However, there is clearly a high work load for both DUDBC and RC – in Badegaun for example there are a reported 1,362 households and 7 engineers in total (4 RC and 3 from DUDBC) – suggests that more are needed. Feedback suggests that wards such as Nawapur are currently at 10% completion, due to lack of manpower. • There is a good working relationship with DUDBC; it highly rates the NRCS, particularly in comparison with some other organisations, although disappointed that it has not yet supported the creation of a technical resource centre in the VDC. • DUDBC suggests that the RC needs to support the government plan which has another two years to go (first instalment has taken one year to disburse). Needs concerted effort to continue training masons, particularly master masons who can work in a mobile way to support house construction – KII feedback that massive focus on this needed if the level of construction is to be raised. • Not clear how relevant/useful the shelter volunteer training on temporary housing construction will be; the FGD with volunteers suggested that they had received it only in June 2017. • FGD suggests that engineers need training/orientation in the NRA corrections manual (retrofitting?) that has recently come out; referred to the fact that other organisations are organising this for their staff. • View of most informants that 3 lakhs is insufficient for house construction. • The delays in provision of cash grants for housing construction in the JRC-support VDCs is leading to criticism of the RC. • Lack of water has held up the shelter programme in some places.
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4+1: Health activities	• Most health training activities completed – estimated that around 60% of activities completed, with trainings due to be finished by end September 2017, although it is noted that KII suggest that most volunteers and community volunteers have yet to start health activities at the community level. • Community volunteers are to be trained in first aid and first aid boxes to be distributed. Informants believe that these activities could/should have started much earlier. It will be important to closely monitor these sessions and provide feedback to the volunteers in the coming months. • Winterisation (nano jhola) project was seen to be useful and relevant to the community needs.
4+1: Livelihood activities	• Livelihood activities to date have focused mostly on cash for work activities (reconstruction of roads, foot trails and irrigation canals) and support to agricultural activities, including running livestock health camps and two kitchen garden trainings. • Livestock camps highly appreciated by livestock office and FGDs, as is focus on supporting goat shed construction. • Good level of coordination achieved with livestock office. Livestock office suggests that it needs to be in control of the purchase of animals to ensure that good quality and healthy animals are purchased and imported into the district; this needs to be discussed and agreed with the livestock office. Would like the RC programme to include training regarding vaccination and parasite control. • The next phase of the livelihood programme is in process and aims to support community members in activities that they identify, either directly or through directing them to other organisations who can help. FGD participants shared some potentially interesting ideas that could be supported through the livelihood programme, such as coffee processing and lychee farming. • The ERO is concerned that despite the baseline data identifying 467 most vulnerable HHs to be supported by the programme (reportedly within budget), NRC now wants to reduce beneficiary number to 400. The ERO unclear why this decision has been made and how they will go about reducing the numbers in a fair way.
4+1: ICB activities	• A number of RC volunteers have participated in a range of training courses. • The ERO strategy is to require the active involvement of the chapter in leading the activities (as beneficiaries), for example securing land for the new building. However, it appears from KIIs that the chapter governance is not participating as actively as it could be in realising the planned-for activities. The ERO has hired an experienced staff member to support the ICB activities with the chapter but the planned activities are delayed.
DRR / resilience	• A key limitation for the chapter was not being able to work directly with the formation of the LDRMCs in the VDCs where they are working, as this activity had been ‘allocated’ to other organisations. However, this should not prevent the RC supporting these organisations through offering its expertise in core RC competence, for example the provision of first aid training, VCA etc and it is understood that there are reportedly some funds available in the budget for this and some support to CDMCs at the VDC level has been provided.
Other activities	• KIIs with beneficiaries who had received the small one-pot metal cooking stoves (supplied by the district chapter through a collaboration with Alternative Energy Promotion Corporation) suggested that these stoves are not being used; those that were observed were clean and had clearly not been used. It is understood that this was an initiative led by the chapter and the ERO has no information regarding this activity

Integration	- Although the district is implementing activities in the all four sectoral areas defined in the 4+1 plan, it is a limited version of integration and it is not clear how integrated the programme is at the community level. This is partly due to the large number of other organisations working in the VDCs where RC is working. - Sectors are supporting each other where they can, for example including first aid trained volunteers are present in the mason trainings, but this does not constitute integration. - The fact that volunteers and social mobilisers work in only one sector means that the opportunities for integration are diminished and may result in duplication at the community level (as well as giving the impression of large staff numbers to communities).
Relationships with line agencies	- KIIs show that government counterparts are generally pleased with the supportive relationships they maintain with the NRCS. - The RC participates actively in the various district coordination committees, but notes difficulties with some NGOs/INGOs that are not coordinating, resulting in cases of duplication (eg Oxfam distributing materials for toilet construction in the VDCs allocated to RC).
Management issues	- The ERO is largely maintaining two parallel structures for the NRC and JRC-funded target areas; staffing, budgeting, reporting are all separate. Budget information provided was different between the two funders, which makes it difficult to compare. - KIIs with staff reveal a concern that operational plans are rigid, making it difficult to shift the operation in line with changing requirements on the ground. Informants suggest that the rigidity comes both from the PNS and the ERO at NHQ. ERO staff believe that the plan and budget need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is responding to the priority needs of people which can change. - Internal and external delays are having a negative impact on the operation. Internal delays include very slow decision-making both at the district level and NHQ levels. - Concern that recruitment decisions at the district level are not involving the sector coordinators and is resulting in poor decisions being made in some cases, with people not having the appropriate technical skills required. - General view that the district is over-staffed in certain areas and that there is room for a more integrated work force. This should include looking for opportunities to transition social mobilisers and volunteers into more generic roles that can support a range of sectoral activities at the community level. - KIIs also suggest that decision-making should be decentralised, with more authority given to the district level ERO, eg for local level recruitment, procurement etc. A number of examples were shared where small, local level requests from line agencies for support could not be provided as they required a long approval process from NHQ, meaning that RC loses out to other small NGOs that are more agile.
Governance	- Widespread frustration with delays due to unavailability of steering committee for decision-making. SC sees itself responsible for low-level managerial decisions such as staff movement, recruitment, finance etc and concern that personal interests may be seen to influence decision-making in some instances. There is a tense relationship between the chapter steering committee and the ERO; the ERO does not feel supported by the SC. - KIIs revealed a high level of concern that the steering committee is influencing the recovery operation for political purposes. FGD participants spoke openly of the RC operation not being neutral and shared feelings that they were not chosen for particular activities (such as cash for work or particular trainings) because they came from “the wrong political party”. This was heard repeatedly. - FGDs suggested that the RC needed to make programmatic decisions with an increased involvement of the entire ward, not giving responsibility to only one or two people who might manipulate the process. Participants in these FGDs were aware of the selection

	criteria for these trainings/activities and were in agreement with them but believed that in a number of cases they were not being followed.
Community Engagement and Accountability and GESI	• Recovery Action Teams (RAG) were formed in each community for the duration of the operation, although it was noticeable that FGD participants did not talk about these. These structures are not sustainable. • FGDs suggest that RC needs to organise much more regular meetings to which all the community are invited, to ensure that effective monitoring of activities is undertaken and that information is regularly posted around the ward regarding activities. FGD participants felt that the operation was not being implemented transparently, reported that community meetings only invite people from one political party and that staff are always too busy when they come to the field so cannot be interrupted. • Just completing a data collection exercise regarding PWD, using that data to ensure to ensure that toilets are disabled friendly, providing additional support to widows. It should be noted however that feedback from FGD suggested that at least in some cases, a disabled person was registered for cash for work but the work was carried out by another person who benefited from the pay. Measures should be put in place to ensure that this does not happen. • Good use of banners within VDCs to share information regarding complaints mechanisms, cash for work activities (including the allocated budget - although budgets for other activities are not shared it is understood), lists of trained masons etc. FGDs revealed however that participants are not always aware of these banners, suggesting that other forms of communication should complement. • Regarding suggestion boxes and toll free number, community members suggested that they had had poor experiences of these in the past so don't have confidence in them and experience to date suggests that suggestions boxes are not being used frequently. • ERO staff are strongly recommended to ensure that they spend time in the communities when they are available to meet with community members; this could be communicated (perhaps through SMS).
Relationship with key RC partner	• Some frustrations expressed with programmatic interference from PNSs – for example the decision regarding the reduction of livelihoods beneficiaries, overriding what the ERO sees as programmatic needs coming from the community level. Reported confusion in the minds of some staff as to whether responsibility for budget adjustment lies with NHQ or PNSs. • ERO found the involvement of NRC delegates useful at the planning stage of the operation but now believe they are not adding much value and are sometimes a distraction, “making us write documents rather than work in the field”.
Suggested actions to be taken:	1. The ERO requires the intervention and support of the RCM (through the MMC) to resolve this situation regarding allegations of political bias; the fact that FGD and KII participants shared their views that the RC is not acting politically impartially is highly concerning. 2. As part of transition planning, ERO should review staffing plan and look for opportunities to combine responsibilities where possible, particularly related to social mobilisers and volunteers, so that they are able to provide integrated support at community level where possible. Efforts should be made to amalgamate the two parallel structures associated with two different donors. 3. ERO and steering committee to put together a clear ICB plan with clear dates and responsibilities in order to ensure that progress can be made in the ICB plan. 4. ERO should look to see opportunities for integrating RAGs into other permanent community structures such as CDMCs/LDRMCs. NRCS should also aim to build connections with these groups, for example through DRR and first aid activities. 5. Review workload of WASH engineers, particularly related to oversight of toilet construction. Will need to put in place a programme to support retrofitting/correction in cases where toilet block incorrectly constructed.

	6. Develop a strategy to encourage people to hire female trained masons. 7. Develop a retrofitting strategy and provide training to engineers. 8. NRCS and NRC to agree livelihood approach to support those highly vulnerable families who have been identified through the assessment process, if possible to avoid reducing the numbers of people to be targeted. 9. Review livestock livelihoods interventions with the livestock office with a view to incorporating their ideas regarding parasite control, vaccination, etc. 10. NRCS should carry out monitoring visits to families who have received stoves to gather feedback (this should involve viewing the stoves to see if they are being regularly used as well as asking for feedback). This information should be shared with AEPC.
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**Mid Term Review of
Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation
July-September 2017**

*Anna Dobai and Shesh Kanta Kafle
8 October 2017
Nepal EQ MTR FINAL Oct 8 2017.docx*

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1 Acronyms

AEPC	Alternative Energy Promotion Corporation
ARC	American Red Cross
BRC	British Red Cross
CDO	Community Development Office
CDMC	Community Disaster Management Committee
CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
CfW	Cash for Work
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CMM	Cooperation Management Meeting (NRCS, IFRC, ICRC)
DCC	District Coordination Committee (previously DDC – Development Committee)
DDRC	District Disaster Relief Committee
DLA	District Lead Agency
DLO	District Livestock Office
DPC	Damp-Proof Course
DUDBC	Department of Urban Development and Building Construction
D-WASH-CC	District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Coordination Committee
DWSS	Department of Water Supply and Sewerage
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FCHV	Female Community Health Volunteer
GoN	Government of Nepal
HH	Household
HRRP	Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform
ICB	Institutional Capacity Building
IPRA	Integrated Participatory Rural Appraisal
JRC	Japanese Red Cross
KII	Key Informant Interview
LDRMC	Local Disaster Response Management Committee
NHQ	National Headquarters of Nepal Red Cross Society
NRA	National Reconstruction Authority
NRC	Norwegian Red Cross
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
ODF	Open Defecation Free
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PASSA	Participatory Approach to Safer Shelter Awareness
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment produced by GoN
PWD	People with Disabilities
RAG	Recovery Action Groups
SC	Steering Committee
SM	Social Mobiliser
SRC	Spanish Red Cross
ToR	Terms of Reference
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
VDC	Village Development Committee
VWASHCC	Village WASH Coordination Committee
WCF	Ward Citizen Forum
WUC	Water User Committee

2 Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the morning of 25 April 2015 which was felt across 57 of Nepal's 75 districts¹ and a series of aftershocks caused further damage and loss of life. The combined impact caused the death of at least 8,856 people, injured more than 18,000 people and caused extensive destruction and damage to housing and livelihoods affecting more than 1.1 million families, with 700,000 families displaced, 600,000 houses fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged, together with schools, health facilities, bridges and roads.

Following initial emergency relief activities, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC and 10 partner National Societies in-country) is supporting recovery activities in the 14*² government identified priority districts through a Movement Recovery Plan agreed in June 2016 which built on the Recovery Framework endorsed at a partnership meeting in June 2015. This plan aimed to ensure a coherent Movement-wide approach under the leadership of NRCS. The plan promotes an integrated approach bringing together shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), livelihoods and health activities, together with NRCS institutional capacity building (the so-called "4 + 1" approach).

The roll out of the plan has been considerably delayed, due both to external factors related to the creation of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) by the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the development of policies to guide the recovery process, but also internal factors as the NRCS and RCM similarly scaled up its capacity to respond to the challenges of delivering a largescale recovery programme across many districts.

REVIEW PURPOSE, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The mid-term review (MTR) process (see Terms of Reference annex 1) is designed to help the RCM reflect upon progress to date and identify both how to build on past successes but also to recommend improvements in order to better address the recovery needs of affected communities on the ground. The objectives are: 1) to assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNS's structure, system and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively; 2) to review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms; and 3) to identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach and make recommendations as to how identified weaknesses may be addressed.

An independent evaluation team of two consultants (an international team leader and a national team member) was hired through competitive tender. Following an inception visit to Nepal in May 2017 (see inception report annex 2), the main data collection activity started at the beginning of July 2017. Methodology was tested in the first district, following which each consultant visited two districts, undertaking a series of key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). In total, 197 informants were interviewed (47 female, 150 male) and 12 focus groups were held, involving 142 people (58 female, 84 male). Meetings and interviews were held without the presence of ERO/chapter staff or NRCS volunteers, the purpose and confidentiality of the discussion was explained. Detailed interviews were then carried out in Kathmandu with informants from NRCS national headquarters (NHQ), IFRC, ICRC, PNSs and key government line agencies and a set of documents was provided by IFRC. Data collected through KIIs, FGDs and primary and secondary document review was triangulated in order for themes and issues to be identified. On 20 July, the evaluators gave a presentation of the initial findings to a Movement Coordination meeting attended by all the main RCM actors, following which the report was put together.

Limitations of the MTR included the inability to randomly sample districts due to monsoon making access to some districts and communities difficult/impossible, only visiting five of the districts where the operation is being implemented, meaning that findings may not be representative of the operation as a whole. The timing

¹ Taken from NRCS assessment report.

² RCM is working in the 14 priority A districts plus two further districts that were categorised as priority B but were where the NRCS and partners had been working prior to the earthquake. This report will therefore refer to 14* districts (with the asterisk recognising that activities are being undertaken in two further districts).

of the review coincided with much shelter-related activity, resulting in FGDs and interviews tending to concentrate on these activities.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance and Appropriateness

The One Plan is contributing to a common approach being implemented across the districts in the four sectoral areas of shelter, WASH, livelihoods and health, with NRCS policies and frameworks generally used to guide activities. The majority of line agencies and community members interviewed believe that the RCM is providing a comprehensive recovery package that is relevant and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, particularly the construction/re-construction of water systems, support for the construction of houses and toilets and livelihood activities. While the decision was taken by NRCS to be actively involved throughout the recovery phase in identified communities in all the GoN designated priority A districts³, it is unclear whether alternative approaches or the consequences of this decision were seriously explored. It is similarly unclear what approach was followed to determine how the RCM partners would support work in the different districts or to what extent decisions were made guided by beneficiary numbers/need or the availability of funds, presence of other organisations, etc. The review team believes that the RCM should have focused its integrated recovery work in less well-covered districts and perhaps considered a lighter, more targeted 'gap-filling' approach that built directly on Red Cross core competence in districts such as Ghorka and Sindhupalchok where many actors are active.

The RCM aimed to target the most vulnerable people within the communities they served, being guided by the NRA's beneficiary lists at ward level for shelter activities, together a combination of participation in the Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), convening specific community meetings and house-to-house survey samples. Kavre is the only district that decided to follow the guidance of the Recovery Framework and use Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology, with community members themselves identifying the caseload. The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised and that communities better understood these decisions.

The omission of an organisational scale-up strategy to accompany the Recovery Plan, together with the loss of detail underpinning the Recovery Framework (resulting in the omission of much of the nuance of how the Movement would work together) and the short timescale of the plan, with no time dedicated to organisational planning and preparation, meant that in the view of the reviewers, the plan was not appropriate to the circumstances.

Achievements to date

Shelter: Following substantial delays in 2016, RCM work in shelter (both software and hardware-related) is now considerably enhancing the capacity of the Government of Nepal to deliver earthquake-resistant housing to families who lost their houses, both through the direct support to the construction of 7,000 houses in seven districts, together with supporting the training of masons and provision of close technical supervision. A widespread view shared with the reviewers was that the RCM could have had greater impact if it had focused in shelter entirely on the provision of mason training, site monitoring through engineers etc, in this way bolstering the capacity of the NRA/DUDBC. FGDs and KIIs suggested that 300,000 rupees was insufficient for the construction of a new house with knock-on negative consequences. The RCM is finding soft ways to support vulnerable households to overcome this, for example by providing materials for toilet construction.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): The focus on the construction of drinking water systems within this programme is highly valued by affected communities, together with the work it is carrying out to support household toilet construction, with FGDs suggesting that this intervention will have an important impact, improving the situation pre-earthquake in many instances. Notwithstanding this, KIIs revealed a widespread view that work on water schemes should (and could) have started much earlier. There are some good

³ Together with two districts from the B priority list where NRCS and partners had been working immediately prior to the earthquake.

examples of nuanced community labour/cash for work contributions to water scheme development projects. Appropriate consideration of the sustainability of the water schemes was evidenced.

Livelihood: This component has gained momentum in yielding some initial impacts and is roundly supported by community members, although its delayed roll out in some locations undermines its impact as a recovery strategy for affected households in some instances. Some KIIs with NRCS informants were critical of the approach being advanced by the Red Cross Livelihoods Centre, suggesting that it was not adapted sufficiently to the Nepal context. The MTR noted that different amounts of conditional cash grants were provided in different districts (between 20,000 and 40,000 rupees) and was not clear how the amounts were arrived at; agreeing a shared approach across the districts would have given more coherence to the operation nationally. The focus on livestock was broadly welcomed, although there were mixed views regarding cash for work activities.

Health: The software components are generally well advanced and are reportedly well-coordinated between the ERO and the NRCS health department. Most districts visited expect to have completed the majority of these by the end of 2017. While FGDs with both volunteers and social mobilisers revealed their enthusiasm for their work, it proved difficult to gather views of community members, few of whom seemed to recall these activities unprompted, with the exception of the winterisation (*nanojhola*) programme; feedback suggested that this activity had a highly positive impact and was well-timed. The construction of health posts in a number of districts is generally delayed for a variety of reasons. Concerned line agencies and stakeholders were generally happy with the quality of the construction work when it has finally got underway, although critical of the delays and some now disagree with the decision to support the construction of pre-fabricated “temporary” structures given the amount of time it has taken to get the constructions finished.

Institutional Capacity Building (ICB): This sector focuses on capacity building at NHQ and chapter levels, together with rebuilding damaged chapter buildings and training of volunteers, with the reconstruction activities yet to have been implemented in the districts visited, although training opportunities are being provided to NRCS volunteers in a range of subject areas. Retention of capacities will be an issue, within a context where many volunteer positions are filled by people recruited from outside the NRCS and the district level ERO structures are predominantly staffed by personnel coming from outside the NRCS and outside the district, so attention will need to be paid to ensuring that skills are not lost when the operation ends. There has been insufficient investment in district chapter level administrative capacity, in particular related to financial management and the Recovery Plan has not focused sufficiently on encouraging chapters to become active participants in the implementation of the operation or in extending learning and capacity building opportunities across the wider organisation, although some limited opportunities have been provided.

To date **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)** has not been central to the plans in a number of the districts visited, which represents a lost opportunity, particularly in terms of not using VCA as the key assessment and community engagement approach, an approach that is also useful for longer term sustainability reasons. The inclusion of a **Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)** unit within the ERO has been an important support to the ERO operation and to the PMER officers placed in each of the districts. The focus on the collection of gender disaggregated data was particularly noted.

Effectiveness and Timeliness

While too early to undertake a deep analysis of the effectiveness of the operation, FGDs and KIIs with beneficiary communities confirm that the operation is now beginning to meet the priority needs of people affected by the earthquake in the VDCs where the RCM is working; the early recovery contributions of the operation, particularly the winterisation project and the unconditional cash grants were also identified as effective support strategies. However, KIIs revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction throughout all parts of the Movement (and echoed by some line agencies) that the operation took more than eighteen months to get going, due both to external delays related to government but also the slowness of the internal decision-making, which led over time to increasing strains upon the relationship between NRCS and its partners and informants continue to be concerned about extended delays in decision-making.

Sustainability and Strengthening Local Capacity

As many of the activities are still mid-implementation, it is too early to say to what extent the operation is contributing to strengthening local community capacity overall. A number of inputs are supporting existing structures and are strengthening the connectedness of communities to line agencies and district level resource organisations which is contributing to overall resilience building, although there are lost opportunities in linking communities to local level structures such as the CDMC (Community Disaster Management Committee) rather than creating temporary groups (such as Recovery Action Groups) that will be dissolved when the operation is completed. The recruitment of volunteers and social mobilisers from the local communities where the RC is working can also be considered a contribution to strengthening local capacity. By working closely alongside line agencies such as DWASH, NRA, DUDBC, DoH, etc, the programme has boosted the capacity of these agencies to respond to community priorities at the local level, although informants from these bodies were also critical of delays in some instances. The operation is funding a number of positions at NHQ in areas such as communications, GESI, CEA etc that are not sustainable beyond the lifetime of the operation. However, efforts are being made to train and support resource people at chapter level who may be able to continue the focus on these issues.

Communication, Access, Participation, Complaints and Feedback

The operation has invested time and resources into community engagement and accountability (CEA) processes which was evident during the district level visits. Feedback from line agencies shows that they are generally happy with the complaints mechanisms put in place by the NRCS. Following some initial reluctance to follow a targeting rather than blanket approach, the recovery operation is now demonstrating various efforts to ensure that it is targeting the most vulnerable members affected by the earthquake and in each district visited there was strong recognition of the importance of following NRCS's GESI policies and there was clear commitment to gathering gender disaggregated data, although there was evidence that the organisation needs to consider other strategies in order to improve access, particularly for women.

Integration, External Coordination and Learning

An integrated multi-sector strategy is being achieved in VDCs/wards where the RC is the main (or only) organisation, although it is proving more difficult to roll out as planned in districts where other organisations have been allocated responsibilities. Having multidisciplinary social mobilisers is a good strategy for promoting integration at the community level.

Feedback from the districts and at central levels show that NRCS has generally maintained a high level of coordination with government line agencies, although there were requests for the NRCS to provide regular written updates on work in the form of monthly or quarterly progress reports and to participate in more regular meetings, rather than relying on informal contacts.

While the Recovery Framework presented a compelling vision of how an integrated recovery programme could be implemented in a theoretical context, it was not built upon sufficient analysis, of the wider Nepal context and there was insufficient reflection on recent previous RCM operations (such as the floods in Pakistan), resulting in what a number of informants saw as the repetition of mistakes seen in previous operations. Having to rely on a series of short-term recovery advisers, rather than being able to bring in a longer-term recovery expert at an early stage in the relief phase with a brief to research and understand that broader context was seen to be detrimental. CEA mechanisms are allowing the district EROs to adapt programming approaches to feedback received from community members. ERO staff at the district level regret that there were few opportunities to meet (either in person or through online forums) with technical counterparts in other districts to share experiences and ideas.

Efficiency, Management, Governance and Partnership

A key failing of the operation is its inability so far to deliver against one of the visions presented within the Recovery Framework, namely that the recovery operation would be characterised as one demonstrating *“joint responsibility, light coordination (and) swift decision making”*⁴.

⁴ NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015, p11

Management, governance and decision-making: While it was a good decision to create a separate ERO Steering Committee (SC), there appears to have been insufficient definition of its roles and levels of responsibilities, while the closed nature of the SC, without representation of partners, is seen to be an impediment to inculcating the spirit of partnership and joint responsibility that is at the heart of the Recovery Framework's intentions. Slow decision-making at the central level has significantly slowed down the pace at which the district EROs could roll out programming at the community level. Most informants believe that decision-making authority, together with financial authority levels, need to be delegated, both within the ERO at NHQ level but particularly down to the district level, with the SC focusing on taking high-level strategic decisions, delegating the managerial decisions to the ERO as close as possible to where the decisions are implemented. The decision to manage the recovery operation using the existing procedures of the NRCS, without an examination as to whether they would meet the requirements of a USD100M recovery operation that needs to be swift and agile was generally seen to be a mistake; most informants believe that the recovery operation should be supported by a set of agile recovery policies and procedures. This particularly related to the NRCS procurement and human resource recruitment processes.

Governance at the district level: As at the central level, there was some concern regarding the lack of clarity of the role of the district chapter steering committee, with some district EROs experiencing long delays in decisions being made by the district SC. At least one district ERO has been experiencing political interference in the operation from the SC, while another district is currently under investigation for alleged improper use of funds. A number of district chapters believed that sub-chapters should be more closely involved in the implementation of the operation.

The ERO structure is generally believed to be an appropriate structure although there are concerns about the time it took to create and staff the unit, the fact that it was not supported by appropriate policies and procedures and the fact that the ERO did not become the "home" of the Movement as the Recovery Framework described it, which has resulted in the proliferation of PNS structures and the loss of significant potential capacity building opportunities for the NRCS. Had the Movement put in place a human resource strategy to accompany the recovery plan to consider how it could use the technical capacity of Movement partners in the short and medium term to bolster NRCS capacity while it was in the process of hiring ERO staff, this could have resulted in considerable benefits for all parties.

Different implementation models

The original Recovery Framework contemplated a common model of implementation across all districts, something that has not really materialised, although the concept of a consortia approach with a lead PNS has been applied in all but one of the districts. The preferred model of implementation in the view of many NRCS informants was the Kavre model, involving the light presence of the PNS at the district level supporting in specific technical areas; this seems to be closest to the modus operandi envisaged in the Recovery Framework. It is difficult to say without considerable comparative analysis whether it is delivering in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Coordination within the Movement

Efforts to ensure that there is close collaboration and coordination throughout the operation have been made, but some of these initiatives have failed to achieve their potential. Sectoral technical working groups have become infrequent and in some cases ceased to meet, although there has been some recent success in reinvigorating some of the groups. For most informants, the IFRC is seen to have little influencing power within the Movement dynamics in Nepal, partly due to having no role within the SC, and partly because it is also acting as a donor in three districts, which in the view of some informants compromises its capacity to be able to act as the neutral arbiter and Movement coordinator. Movement coordination meetings do not meet the expectations of partners, partly as it seems that NRCS leadership participation has been low.

Partnership

It is clear from interviews is that the concept of partnership, joint responsibility and co-management that the Recovery Framework articulates and the Movement-wide approach is predicated upon has not materialised

as anticipated, resulting in a deterioration in the levels of mutual trust and openness between NRCS and its partners. Each side feels that its views and opinions are not valued or listened to by the other. The next phase of the operation needs to find ways of returning to a position where a positive, trustful and respectful partnership can be re-established for the mutual benefit of the operation and its ability to deliver to affected communities. It would seem that not enough attention was given at the start of the recovery programme to identifying how to develop a true partnership approach, for example how to orientate staff (NRCS and partners, both new and existing) related to how partnership translates into norms and behaviours. Staff turnover, particularly within the partners, has not helped in this regard. That fact that it did not prove possible to roll out an ERO structure where technical personnel from the partners were inside the structure working closely with NS counterparts has meant that a crucial way of exercising partnership has not materialised.

Resource Management and Cost Effectiveness

The current RCM recovery set up, working across 14* districts with management structures in each, is clearly a structure-heavy - and therefore costly - way of working (recognising that the extent of the area across which the RCM is working and the challenging and isolated conditions where many of the people affected by the earthquake are living means that the operation would always be an expensive one to mount). It is not clear to what extent the RCM examined the likely cost effectiveness of the approach or whether serious consideration was given to implementing alternative recovery strategies that might have prioritised humanitarian need over consideration of internal RCM influences. Some districts believe that the staffing structures were too heavy and positions could have been effectively streamlined.

Staff from the ERO (both in districts and NHQ) and PNSs were extremely concerned by the expenditure ratio between support costs and direct programme costs of the operation, with a number of PNS informants believing that perhaps only between 40-60% of the funds raised will go directly to beneficiary activities, due both to the logistical challenges of access to affected people mentioned previously, but also to the fact that support structures were maintained over relatively long periods of time when the operation was delivering little (for the reasons mentioned before). Although attempts have been made by IFRC to gather data from partners regarding direct and indirect costs per district, without a common understanding of what constitutes a direct and indirect cost, this exercise cannot be undertaken. The MTR team suggests that this exercise would be valuable but should be managed at a higher level, for example IFRC Geneva or Kuala Lumpur.

Transition and Exit Strategy

The MTR noted a level of confusion and anxiety at district levels related to messages coming from the ERO centrally regarding transition; it seems that for some, the concepts of transition and exit planning have been erroneously conflated to mean that they need to rush to finish activities before the end of 2017 and feel under enormous pressure to spend. Some informants regret that there is a strong narrative related to phasing out the ERO structure just at the time when it is now working relatively effectively and the operation still has much to achieve. The MTR team suggests that the districts review their plans activity by activity, community by community, ensuring that a sustainability strategy for each activity is put in place and worked through. Having this information in place will allow an appropriate transition plan to be developed at central level

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations focus on different aspects of the next phase of the Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation, with a separate section focusing on recommendations for the wider Red Cross Movement coming out of the Nepal experience to date.

Recommendations for the Next Phase of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation

Recovery operation planning	Planning should start at the district level, activity by activity, community by community. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff (both at district and central levels) and delegates which will feed into a Movement-wide staffing plan, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers and bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts
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	NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget for each district is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC and the steering committee to oversee progress in the district.
	The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extend support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc.
	NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families are being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.
	Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.
	The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation, beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters. The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.
ERO structure and processes	NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.
	Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.
	Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.
Rebuilding relationships	Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to reflect upon their own behaviours and processes, understand the views and opinions of all parties, confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties for mutual benefit.
	A peer review process could be considered to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made in order to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.
ERO governance	The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.
	The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.
	It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.
	Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made available to all RCM actors in Nepal.
	It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (eg the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that

	can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required. NRCS partners (line agencies, NGOs and PNS) should input into this review.
	An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. The DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.
Movement-wide reflection	A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – ie is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

Reflections from Nepal recovery operation to the wider RCM

The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and fully understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a minimum of six months.
Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.
It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.
As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to <i>how</i> this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.
The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.
The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.

3 Background

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara on the morning of 25 April 2015. The epicentre was 80 kilometres northwest of Kathmandu but its impact was felt across 57 of Nepal's 75 districts⁵ and a series of aftershocks caused further damage and loss of life. The strongest aftershock, measuring 7.3 magnitude, struck on 12 May. The combined impact of the 25 April quake and the 12 May aftershock caused the death of at least 8,856 people, injured more than 18,000 people and caused extensive destruction and damage to housing and livelihoods affecting more than 1.1 million families. 700,000 families were displaced, with around 600,000 houses fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged, together with infrastructure (including schools, health facilities, bridges and roads).

Following initial emergency relief activities, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC and 10 partner National Societies [PNS] in-country) is now

⁵ Taken from NRCS assessment report.

supporting recovery activities in the 14*⁶ government identified priority districts through a Movement Recovery Plan agreed in June 2016 which built on the Recovery Framework endorsed at a partnership meeting in June 2015. This plan aimed to ensure a coherent Movement-wide approach under the leadership of NRCS. The plan promotes an integrated approach bringing together shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), livelihoods and health activities, together with NRCS institutional capacity building (the so-called “4 + 1” approach).

The roll out of the plan has been considerably delayed, due both to external factors related to the creation of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) by the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the development of policies to guide the recovery process, but also internal factors as the NRCS and RCM similarly scaled up its capacity to respond to the challenges of delivering a largescale recovery programme across many districts.

4 Review Purpose, Methodology and Limitations

Two years after the approval of the Recovery Framework, the mid-term review (MTR) process is designed to help the RCM reflect upon progress to date and to identify both how to build on past successes but also to recommend improvements in order to better address the recovery needs of affected communities on the ground. The MTR objectives as specified in the Terms of Reference (annex 1) are: 1) to assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNSs’ structures, systems and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively; 2) to review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms; and 3) to identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach and make recommendations as to how identified weaknesses may be addressed. The guiding criteria for the review follow the OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria and have been defined as:

1. The relevance, appropriateness and coverage of the recovery operations;
2. The efficiency and effectiveness, especially to meet the intended results;
3. Coordination within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors;
4. The sustainability and connectedness of the recovery operations.

An independent evaluation team (comprising an international team leader and a national team member) was hired through competitive tender. The team leader made an initial inception visit to Nepal in May 2017 to carry out a round of interviews with key interlocutors from NRCS, IFRC and PNS partners, following which an inception report (annex 2) was written, criteria were determined for the identification of five representative districts to be visited and a review matrix developed. This matrix brought together the evaluation criteria and key questions from the ToR, together with quality criteria taken from the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), in order to ensure that the MTR would maintain focus on the ability of the Earthquake Response Operation (ERO) to deliver to affected communities while at the same time concentrating on systems, processes and relationships. It is likely that the approach to the identification of the districts to be visited may have resulted in some positive bias.

The main data collection activity started at the beginning of July 2017 with the team (now joined by a staff member from the Karachi branch of the Pakistan Red Crescent and a staff member from NRCS) being fully briefed in Kathmandu, before moving to the first district to pilot, review and refine the methodology and tools, following which they split into two teams to carry out field visits in the other four districts. In each district, an agenda for the field visit was developed by the ERO District Programme Coordinator (DPC) following the guideline provided in the inception report and instructions from the head of the ERO; a minimum of two focus group discussions (FGDs) with between 10 and 15 community members invited were held, plus FGDs with volunteers and social mobilisers. It is likely that focus group participants possessed strong feelings about the programme which will have prompted them to attend, which may have introduced positive/negative bias into the sampling. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were also arranged with interlocutors from the NRCS chapter,

⁶ RCM is working in the 14 priority A districts plus two further districts that were categorised as priority B but were where the NRCS and partners had been working prior to the earthquake. This report will therefore refer to 14* districts (with the asterisk recognising that activities are being undertaken in two further districts).

government line agencies, NGOs working in the district where possible and all ERO officers. In total, 197 informants were interviewed (47 female, 150 male) and 12 focus groups were held involving 142 people (58 female, 84 male) – some of these FGDs were mixed female and male, some were women or men only, advised by the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) in each district.

Meetings and interviews were held without the presence of ERO/chapter staff or NRCS volunteers. At the start of each meeting the purpose (and confidentiality) of the discussion was explained and participants asked if they were comfortable to proceed. Any photographs taken were with participants' permission. FGDs generally took around one hour following a semi-structured format based on relevant questions from the review matrix (with the consultant taking notes throughout) and were, where possible, followed by a walk-about with either residents or staff to get to know the community, talk in a more informal atmosphere and where relevant, to visit sites where infrastructure and/or shelter work was proceeding, again noted and photographed.

On returning to Kathmandu, the evaluation team carried out detailed interviews with a large number of informants coming from NRCS national headquarters (NHQ), IFRC, ICRC, PNSs and key government line agencies. A set of documents was provided by IFRC to support the review process drawn from NRCS, NRA, IFRC and partners, with additional documents collected during the field visits. On 20 July, the evaluators gave a presentation of the initial findings to a Movement Coordination meeting attended by all the main RCM actors, after which further interviews were carried out. Data collected through KIIs, FGDs and primary and secondary document review was triangulated to identify themes and issues. A review report was drafted that brought together the reviewed/triangulated primary and secondary data; unless pointed out in the report, issues are only reported upon where there are multiple sources.

A number of limitations were experienced by the MTR team. This included the timing of the review during the monsoon period, which meant that the opportunity to randomly sample districts was severely constrained by logistical considerations (some districts and many communities were deemed too difficult to get to, due to the road conditions). The fact that the MTR team was only able to visit five of the districts where the operation is being implemented was also a limitation, meaning that findings may not be representative of the operation as a whole; although attempts were made to gather data, views and opinions related to other districts, it is inevitable that the report reflects more upon the operation as witnessed in these five districts. It would also have been useful for the team to have consulted with other chapters of NRCS outside the priority districts, to gather their views on the earthquake operation and how the focus on the priority districts has impacted upon them. It was also noted that the timing of the review coincided with much shelter-related activity in the majority of the districts being visited. This resulted in FGDs and interviewees tending to concentrate more on shelter activities and it proved more difficult to gather detailed data related to health activities (most of which had been completed at the time of the visit) or livelihood activities (which in some districts were only just starting to scale).

The review findings are laid out following the structure of the MTR Review Matrix. Each section starts with an introduction, with sub-sections exploring each issue raised in more depth.

5 Key Findings

5.1 *Relevance and Appropriateness*

The MTR visits to five of the priority districts revealed the extent to which the One Plan is contributing to a common approach being implemented across the districts. Although there is some variation in *how* particular activities are rolling out (which will be touched on later in this report), the fact that in most districts the RCM is aiming to meet priority needs in the four sectoral areas of shelter, WASH, livelihoods and health by implementing a similar range of activities was notable. While NRCS and partners may be more aware of what separates them, from an external perspective this commonality in approach was striking, as was the fact that NRCS programmatic policies and frameworks are generally being used to guide activities. In the view of the majority of line agencies and community members interviewed, in

the communities where it is working, the RCM is providing a comprehensive recovery package made up of a range of activities that are relevant and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, although there are concerns related to the approaches taken to district and community level targeting and needs assessment processes used. This section of the report examines these issues and concerns in more detail.

5.1.1 Relevance of activities for affected communities

FGDs and KIIs with beneficiaries from affected communities at district level all confirm that the main activities of the Recovery Plan are responding to their key concerns, most particularly those related to the construction/re-construction of water systems and support for the construction of houses and toilets, with livelihood activities generally seen as the third priority. The work supporting the rehabilitation of health posts was identified as being relevant and appropriate particularly by those people directly involved in the provision of health services. While focus groups generally did not identify or mention the soft health-related activities without prompting (except the '*nanajhola*' winterisation programme, which FGD informants valued highly), people working as volunteers with either the district health office or NRCS believed that some of the health interventions at community level had contributed to positively changing behaviours, particularly in isolated communities. See 5.2 for more information regarding the sectors.

5.1.2 District and community targeting

While all NRCS district chapters were involved to different degrees in supporting people who had been affected by the disaster during the relief phase, an early decision was taken by NRCS to be actively involved throughout the recovery phase in all the GoN designated priority A districts⁷ and the recovery framework was developed around this decision, with subsequent identification of one or more VDC per district. It is unclear whether alternative approaches were seriously considered at this time⁸, for example whether to focus full-scale integrated recovery support in a larger number of communities in a limited number of districts or to what extent the down sides of this broad approach (such as the costs related to setting up support structures in all the districts) were discussed.

It is similarly unclear what approach was followed to determine how the RCM partners would support the different districts. Some partners (eg American, Danish and British RC) wished to continue to work where they had been working prior to the earthquake, a decision which had logic to it (and as the Recovery Framework pointed out could 'provide an excellent entry point for recovery programming'⁹), but other partners seemed to make choices based on less sound reasons, such as where their Emergency Response Unit had been allocated as part of the relief operation for a few months, a decision that makes little strategic sense. It is not clear to what extent decisions were made guided by beneficiary numbers/need or the availability of funds (this is pertinent as today there are notable differences in the financial size of programming per district (even adjusting for the fact that some districts are providing shelter cash grants)¹⁰).

While the decision to have RCM presence in each of the 14 prioritised districts implementing the 4+1 programme in a small number of Village Development Committees (VDCs) was defended by a number of informants who believed that it was appropriate for NRCS to follow the GoN prioritisation approach, others expressed their view that the RCM should have concentrated full recovery programming in a limited number of locations, focusing on harder-to-reach, more vulnerable communities in districts receiving less national and international attention from NGOs/INGOs and aiming for wider coverage within a smaller geographical area. In the light of experience in Ghorka and Sindhupalchok (where the RCM had little space to develop an integrated approach due to the large number of other actors, these

⁷ Together with two districts from the B priority list where NRCS and partners had been working immediately prior to the earthquake.

⁸ Some IFRC informants suggested that this had been raised as an issue but had not been seriously considered.

⁹ Draft Recovery Framework dated 9 November, 2015, p6

¹⁰ The team would have liked to have further explored this issue but the absence of directly comparable data related to funds meant that this was not possible.

being two of the most-affected districts) and Ramechhap (where few other organisations are working, meaning that the RCM is able to implement an integrated approach at the community level), the review team believes that the RCM should have focused its integrated recovery work in less well-covered districts and perhaps considered a lighter, more targeted 'gap-filling' approach in districts such as Ghorka and Sindhupalchok that built directly on Red Cross core competence.

The other side of this focus on priority A districts is that the institutional capacity building (ICB) activities incorporated into the Recovery Plan (primarily interpreted as rebuilding of damaged chapter buildings and training for volunteers) are also focused on these districts and a valuable opportunity to extent ICB activities to involve staff and volunteers from all districts so that the entire organisation could learn and develop through the experience of recovery programming has yet to be taken advantage of sufficiently. This is taken up in 5.2.

Within each district, decisions regarding which VDC or wards RCM operations would support were taken in close consultation with the District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC) and validated by NRCS NHQ; interviews at district level suggested that chapters and sub-chapters should have been more proactively included and involved in this process. Most line agencies and elected authorities interviewed at the district level believed that RC should have covered more VDCs. This was particularly the case in districts such as Lalitpur and Ramechhap, where fewer NGOs and INGOs are working, resulting in very different levels of support being provided between VDCs, possibly fuelling resentment for people living in VDCs with little external support. In Rasuwa the NRCS district chapter was unhappy that it was not able to prioritise communities in the upper, more vulnerable parts of the district as well as the lower part, reportedly due to the insistence of the PNS to only select communities in the project area it was supporting prior to the earthquake.

5.1.3 Targeting the most vulnerable people within the community

While RCM shelter-related activities follow the NRA's beneficiary lists at ward level, in the majority of districts a combination of participation in the Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), convening specific community meetings and house-to-house surveys through sampling was used to carry out needs assessment and determine beneficiaries for different activities, although it is understood that some districts used more participative approaches than others. Kavre is the only district that decided to follow the guidance of the Recovery Framework and use Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology across all communities so that community members themselves identified beneficiaries for each of the main activities¹¹. In most FGDs (although notably not in Kavre) participants articulated a measure of confusion, disappointment or resentment related to vulnerable people being omitted from beneficiary lists; had these districts followed the participative processes of VCA this may have been avoided, as well as establishing a strong basis for ongoing community engagement throughout the operation and beyond. Given the VCA experience that NRCS has developed (and the fact that it could have been adapted to be completely appropriate to the recovery environment), the review team consider this to have been a lost opportunity¹². It is understood that NRCS was initially reluctant to target the most vulnerable people within a community in some instances, preferring to opt for a blanket approach, but this reportedly changed over time and the targeted approach was approved of by the vast majority of informants.

KIs provided evidence that in some districts NRCS has had some success in advocating for the inclusion of people who have been left off the government beneficiary lists, although it was suggested that it was less successful at raising awareness of people on the lists who were in fact ineligible¹³. The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most

¹¹ Although there were some cases of pilot VCAs that were undertaken, for example in Sindhupalchok, which also piloted Participatory Rural Appraisal or IPRA in one ward.

¹² It is understood that the NRCS advocated that this approach should be used but partners were generally not in agreement.

¹³ For example, cases where one family was being supported to re-build several homes.

vulnerable people in each community were prioritised and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them.

5.1.4 Omission of an organisational scale-up strategy to accompany the Recovery Plan

While the RCM Recovery Plan has successfully framed a shared vision for the recovery operation, the fact that it omitted to include an all-important scale-up strategy to ensure that the appropriate organisational capacities were in place means that its realism is compromised. It would also appear that much of the detail underpinning the recovery approach as defined in the Recovery Framework (June 2015) seems to have been lost in the 2016 One Plan document. This resulted in the loss of much of the nuance of how the Movement would work together, eg the underlying principles of recovery and partnership, the key step of undertaking a *participatory* needs assessment process to build community engagement, ensure relevance of the programming and avoidance of duplication with others or the importance of incorporating disaster risk reduction at the district level (among other issues).

For any organisation, scaling up its capacity to deliver an operation more than ten times the financial size of previous programmes and spread across 16 districts would be extremely challenging. As 5.9 shows, neither the One Plan nor the Recovery Framework included a process to review the capacity of the systems, processes and procedures of the NRCS/Movement to ensure that they would be fit for purpose for delivering an operation where timeliness and agility would be of the essence; similarly, neither plan nor framework developed a strategy for how NRCS was going to achieve the massive organisational scale-up implied by the creation and staffing up of the ERO, which in the view of the reviewers means that it cannot be seen to be appropriate to the circumstances.

Informants generally suggested that the recovery operation should have been planned to be implemented over a four to five-year timeframe, with the first year focused on organisational planning and preparation, with the concurrent implementation of a relief/early recovery programme including a limited range of direct beneficiary support activities, such as the winterisation project and unconditional cash grant distribution. Such a strategy may have helped manage the expectations of communities and partners. While the recovery framework presents an idealised view of how an integrated recovery programme should be rolled out, this mostly top-down planning approach was not grounded in reality, either at the district level in terms of priority needs and how government and other organisations were responding, or considering the existing capacities and experience of the RCM and the broader humanitarian sector in Nepal¹⁴. The RCM ability to implement the one plan vision was further complicated by continual changes within the external environment (with the creation of the NRA only in December 2015, the slow development of the policies and guidelines underpinning the NRA's work and a number of fundamental changes to those guidelines, such as the amount of money to be allocated per house construction).

5.2 Achievements to Date

5.2.1 Shelter

Following substantial delays in 2016, RCM work in shelter (both software and hardware-related) is now considerably enhancing the capacity of the Government of Nepal to deliver earthquake-resistant housing to families who lost their houses. As of the end of July 2017, the RCM shelter programme is delivering against its targets of directly supporting the construction of 7,000 houses through the GoN's owner-driven housing scheme in seven districts, through the provision of a cash grant of 300,000 rupees (three lakhs), supporting the training of masons following the DUDBC's curriculum and providing close technical supervision through a cadre of engineers and junior engineers, supported by social mobilisers and volunteers. In other districts where RCM is not providing cash grants, the NRA's

¹⁴ Several informants pointed out that the GoN has long been unable to absorb more than 40-50% of development funding received annually (a Google search yielded large numbers of articles reflecting upon this) so that it was unrealistic to expect that it would be different in relation to the recovery programme.

work is being supported through training for masons and carpenters, training in Participatory Approaches for Safer Shelter Awareness (PASSA) and community sessions in some districts and other community awareness-raising activities. With NRA guidelines, policies, procedures and standards reportedly all in place, it appears that agreements with NRA/DUDBC are now being signed off in a timely manner, although it was noted that it took an extended period of time to reach this point. It was also noted that the lack of water in some districts has had a detrimental impact on the plans to advance in shelter construction, requiring households to spend considerable sums in purchasing water in some cases. This issue is taken up below.

Table 2 contrasts the results to date for the NRA (with the responsibility to deliver 700,000 new houses in 14 districts) with that of the RCM. Although the data categorisation is slightly different, it is clear that the RCM approach is yielding better results than that of NRA, which is probably unsurprising given the difficulties that GoN is facing, including having smaller numbers of technical staff per VDC¹⁵, high levels of vacancies for engineers in some districts¹⁶, backlogs in approving payment of tranches, etc. In some districts, eg Ramechhap, the shelter programme is offering modest financial inducements for reaching DPC level (and thus being eligible for the second tranche of funds), which has contributed to significantly boosting the numbers reaching this milestone¹⁷.

	NRA (4 August 2017)		RCM (9 June 2017)	
	HH numbers	%	HH numbers	%
HH beneficiaries	651,606		7,000	
housing under construction	115,597	17.74%		
First tranche received			6,426	92%
second tranche applicants	82,064	12.59%	2,198	33%
approved second tranche applicants	70,821	10.87%	1,641	25%
non-approved for second tranche	6,592	1.01%		
third tranche applicants	9,600	1.47%	1,152	17%
approved third tranche	6,881	1.06%	277	4%
non-approved for third tranche	430	0.07%		

Table 1 Comparison of NRA house construction statistics with those of RCM (will update these figures if can be provided with end July data from NRCS/IFRC)

A widespread view expressed by informants from RCM, line agencies and some beneficiaries was that given that government is providing cash grants for shelter construction and that the RCM's contribution to house construction is small (1% of households), the RCM could have had greater impact if it had focused in shelter entirely on the provision of mason training, site monitoring through engineers etc, in this way bolstering the capacity of the NRA/DUDBC to deliver high-quality owner-driven housing across many more VDCs (many NRA/DUDBC informants are extremely concerned about the stark differences in advances between a RC-supported VDC and its neighbours). Finding ways to offer extended support (eg including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc) should be explored.

The MTR team consistently heard through both FGDs and KIs that three lakhs is generally insufficient in order to construct a new house; there is concern that some people are being forced into debt in order to complete their houses, while other people may not complete their houses quickly or may be forced to deviate from the NRA guidelines (eg inappropriately recycling materials from their old houses) or chose to take only the first instalment and rebuild without following the NRA guidelines (a possibility that is supported by the evidence of the huge difference in the number of households that have received the first and second instalments). RC is finding soft ways to support vulnerable households to overcome this, for example by providing materials for toilet construction (in all districts) or providing cash incentives to advance construction as mentioned previously, but it is suggested that the NRCS could play a useful role to gather data regarding the unfolding experience and advocate for the provision of additional support for highly vulnerable households beyond the 50,000 rupees already

¹⁵For example, in Rampur, Ramechhap the DUDBC representative pointed out that he was supported by the ERO engineers, volunteers and social mobilisers and had massively surpassed his target (of 10% completion in fiscal year 2016-17 – he suggested that Rampur was at approximately 60%), while neighbouring VDCs with only two or three engineers were struggling to meet this target.

¹⁶For example, in Sindhapalchok, DUDBC reported that more than a third of the vacancies are unfilled.

¹⁷285 households reached the DPC level rather than the anticipated 100, meaning that Ramechhap has had to apply for a budget revision to enable it to honour the agreement to pay 25,000 rupees (USD 238).

being supplied. KIIs also suggested that the RCM needs to consider how it will support the retrofitting of houses.

It is noted that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, such as the construction of prefabricated and permanent health post and hospital buildings, school buildings, blood bank buildings, warehouses, district chapter building, etc. It may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward. Some reflection on rebuilding of health posts is included in 5.2.4 below (the review team was not able to gather data related to other building activities).

5.2.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Lack of access to water was identified during FGDs as a major concern for communities visited during the MTR, thus it is unsurprising that the focus on the construction of drinking water systems within the WASH programme is highly valued by affected communities, together with the work it is carrying out to support household toilet construction.

In some districts such as Ramechhap, FGDs suggest that the impact of the operation will be huge, improving the situation pre-earthquake in many instances, while the focus on household toilet construction is strongly contributing to VDCs being able to declare themselves open defecation free (ODF) areas. The RC support of toilet construction has also helped build the NRCS image generally and relationship with district level line agencies. In Kavre, Lalitpur, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchok line agencies including the Chief District Officer (CDO) believed that RC is among the most trusted partner in the district. This was not the case in Rasuwa, where the inability to complete toilet construction in one VDC has unfortunately tarnished the relationship with the concerned line agencies¹⁸.

KIIs revealed a widespread view that work on water schemes should have started much earlier; not having sufficient water available has impacted not only on the wellbeing of people, but also on the ability of shelter activities to progress. In the view of a number of informants, NRCS could have signed an agreement with the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) at the beginning of 2016 (as opposed to July 2016) and moved forward in implementing activities and it is not clear why this did not happen.

Although the water schemes are focusing on ensuring their long-term sustainability through the creation of water user committees and the setting up of Operation and Maintenance (O & M) funds, districts are using different approaches to construction; in Sindhupalchok community labour is paid through Cash for Work (CfW), in Ramechhap the community labour for the Aitabar water scheme is entirely organised through community labour contribution (calculated as a rupee contribution per person per hour of labour, an approach that the community members appreciated highly as it values their contribution and makes them feel true partners in the project), while in Kavre a mixed approach is being taken, involving some household labour contribution topped up with CfW made available to priority beneficiaries identified through VCA (also an approach that community members approved of). The MTR team had some concerns regarding the exclusive use of CfW in this context, given that it could work against the need to encourage community ownership of the water schemes for long term sustainability (see 5.2.3 for more reflection on CfW).

The ERO WASH unit suggests that the 1% guideline on investment in O & M systems is being surpassed, although the team was unable to verify this. However, at the district level it was clearly noted that focus is being maintained on creating water user committees, providing seed funding for a maintenance fund and encouraging community members to make regular contributions to this fund.

¹⁸ It is understood that slowness of toilet construction was due to delays in signing a comprehensive 4+1 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with government, which was finally overcome by NRCS moving ahead to sign a separate MoU with the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation.

5.2.3 Livelihood

Although a new area of intervention for NRCS and less intensive in scope, the livelihood component has gained momentum in yielding some initial impacts and is roundly supported by community members, although its delayed roll out in some locations undermines its impact as a recovery strategy for affected households in some instances (eg the District Livestock Office in one district noted that many households had ceased to raise livestock in the months after the earthquake and had permanently focused their attention to other livelihoods activities as their animals had been killed in the earthquake). Livelihood activities are generally running behind schedule, although it is not clear why this is as they did not need to be delayed by the NRA decisions. As mentioned previously, reviewers felt that livelihood activities could have been brought forward into an early recovery strategy. As a new intervention NRCS did not have a strategy, framework or guidelines related to livelihood programming, so it did take some time to adapt the IFRC approach.

A similarity of approach across the districts visited was noted, often referred to as the “Spanish Red Cross” approach¹⁹, involving livelihoods training, developing a business plan, provision of conditional cash grants, vocational training in a number of areas (generally defined through community consultation), with emphasis in rural settings on to the provision of livestock and construction of livestock sheds (for goats and cows). Some KIIs with NRCS informants were critical of the approach being advanced by the Red Cross Livelihood Centre, suggesting that it was not contextualised sufficiently to the Nepal context.

The MTR noted the differences of amount of conditional cash grants in the amounts provided in different districts; eg Lalitpur provided 20,000 rupees, Kavre distributes two different amounts depending upon how individual HHs are ranked for vulnerability through VCA (40,000 and 30,000 rupees), Sindhupalchok (40,000 rupees). It is not clear how the amounts were arrived at, for example whether the district EROs performed a market survey to inform the decision (in some cases it was suggested that the figure was agreed upon by the PNS delegate). Agreeing a shared approach for determining the allocation of funds across the districts would have given more coherence to the programme.

Livestock camps organised between RC and District Livestock Office (DLO) in some districts were seen to be useful both by FGDs and the DLO; The RCM provides the transport, funds the medication and mobilises the people²⁰. Other DLOs (eg in Ramechhap) suggested that they would also welcome the inclusion of livestock camps in the operation. Feedback from the DLOs interviewed suggests that the programme should also include support for vaccination and parasite control of animals. The inclusion of training on building safe animal shelters and the provision of insurance for animals was strongly approved of by informants.

Cash for Work (CfW) is a strategy adopted in all the districts visited and is seen by informants to be integral to the livelihood programme. District informants believe strongly that this is an appropriate way of helping the most vulnerable people in a community earn additional income, although for the reviewers it was difficult to determine what was the main objective of this part of the programme (getting the work done or providing income). It is notable that different approaches are being taken to implementing this strategy (see 5.2.2 above for several examples related to WASH), in Rasuwa the CfW scheme is used for the construction of foot trails, whereas in Lalitpur, it has been used for debris clearance). Decisions related to CfW have been controversial in some districts; community members in some districts (eg Lalitpur) suggested in FGDs that some people had been excluded due to their poverty status, while in Sindhupalchok community members said that they had been excluded due to

¹⁹ Or perhaps more accurately the approach being advocated by the IFRC Livelihoods Centre which is based in Spanish Red Cross.

²⁰ The mobilisation seems to be particularly effective, with a number of KIIs suggesting that attendance was two or three times the numbers that the DLO was expecting in some instances. This is a great example of using the comparative advantage of the NRCS through its volunteer network to massively increase the impact of an intervention.

their party-political allegiances. The daily rate provided for CfW was also described by informants in some districts (eg Lalitpur and Rasuwa) to be lower than the market rate, which further questions the purpose of this activity. On the plus side, people who had taken up CfW in a number of districts were pleased with the provision of insurance. Some concern was raised that CfW (and cash grants) may negatively influence community cohesiveness and solidarity (“killing volunteerism” as one informant put it, noting that in some districts such as Ramechhap the community was volunteering its labour for the completion of the Aitabar water scheme) and may also not be suitable for marginalised people such as disabled individuals, the very young or the very old, although it was noted that in a number of districts efforts were made to find appropriate CfW roles for disabled people, which is commendable.

5.2.4 Health

Activities focused on health within the Recovery Plan consist of hardware inputs (principally reconstruction of health facilities in some districts) together with the delivery of community-based health interventions such as first aid, disease/epidemic prevention, health promotion and psychosocial support through training. It proved difficult to gather much data from community members regarding the health activities within the community, while Department of Health (DoH) officials tended to focus more on the support provided by RCM in relation to the hardware.

The construction of health posts in a number of districts is generally delayed for a variety of reasons, including issues related to the selected contractor/consultant. However, field observation and interviews with key stakeholders suggest that most of these structures are expected to be completed within the stipulated time or shortly afterwards. Although the district representatives of the DoH generally accept the quality of the construction work when it has finally got underway, they were highly critical of the delays, with some informants expressing their view that the decision to support the construction of pre-fabricated “temporary” structures was the wrong one given the amount of time it has taken to get the constructions finished. However, it was acknowledged that at the time the agreement was signed with DoH, it was the policy of the GoN to quickly get prefabricated structures constructed, so supporting this approach was seen to be appropriate, even if the relevance of these prefabricated buildings is now in doubt.

The software components of the plan are generally well advanced and are reportedly well-coordinated between the ERO and the NRCS health department. Most districts visited expect to have completed the majority of these by the end of 2017. Districts worked through volunteers and social mobilisers to raise awareness in a whole range of primary health care issues; while FGDs with both volunteers and social mobilisers revealed their enthusiasm for their work, it proved difficult to gather views of community members, few of whom seemed to recall these activities unprompted. The exception to this is the winterisation (*nanojholā*) programme, which was very positively rated by FGDs with affected communities and KIs with health personnel. Feedback suggested that the activity made a positive impact on affected people, as well as acting as an important gesture of solidarity at a time with community members often felt that their plight was being ignored.

5.2.5 Institutional Capacity Building (ICB)

Each priority district plan includes an element of capacity building, which generally focuses on rebuilding damaged chapter buildings and training of volunteers. Chapter level ICB activities are generally at an early stage, as districts focus on delivering programming to affected communities, although training opportunities are being provided to NRCS volunteers in a range of subject areas. In some districts, the majority of volunteer positions are filled by people recruited from outside the NRCS rather than existing volunteers, so it will be important in the next phase for the NRCS chapters to consider how it can retain some of these volunteers within their organisation over the longer term. Similarly, the district level ERO structures are predominantly staffed by personnel coming from outside the NRCS and outside the district, meaning that when the operation is closed that capacity will be lost to the organisation. This situation is also mirrored to some extent at NHQ level, meaning that when the ERO is phased out, much of the capacity that has developed may be lost to the organisation,

although the decision to second some staff from the main NRCS structure will hopefully enable some of that experience to be re-absorbed back into the organisation.

There has been insufficient investment in district chapter level administrative capacity, in particular related to financial management²¹. Many of the districts are still operating cumbersome manual systems and it is reported that this is negatively impacting upon their abilities to manage the level of ERO expenditure in some instances.

In the view of the reviewers, the Recovery Plan has not focused sufficiently on encouraging chapters to become active participants in the implementation of the operation. In some cases, chapters have had limited previous experience of largescale humanitarian activities, so the operation provides valuable opportunities in this regard, for example learning through participating in the whole programme management cycle required in implementing a large-scale recovery operation, developing institutional relationships with line agencies, local government structures and communities in their district, etc. These experiences can contribute to building chapter capacity and desire to continue community-focused work in the future.

The current ICB plan is focused primarily on the 14* priority districts and NHQ and thus misses valuable openings to extend learning and capacity building opportunities across the wider organisation, although some limited opportunities have been taken up, for example involving all 75 districts in orientation around Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) initiatives and the dissemination of the child protection policy. A revision of the ICB plan should look to find ways to involve chapters across the country not only in terms of participating in trainings, but also whether there are broader opportunities for staff/volunteer exchange or secondment so that these people can have direct first-hand experience. The ICB component of the Recovery Plan should be reviewed and should aim to build on the core competences of NRCS as expressed in its 7th development plan and the findings of the 2014 OCAC review; community resilience building should be at the centre of these plans. The overall ICB strategy could be designed to cover three levels: the policy and strategic level; institutional and operational level; and the individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

5.2.6 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

The Recovery Framework suggests that DRR, as a core competence of the RCM, should be a cross-cutting activity underpinning the 4+1 programme²², enabling RC to focus not only on the very occasional hazards such as earthquake, but also on the annual events such as landslides, floods and droughts that impact heavily on vulnerable people. To date this has not been central to the plans in a number of the districts visited, which represents a lost opportunity, particularly in terms of not using VCA as the key assessment and community engagement approach²³. While it is understood that in some districts (eg Sindhupalchok) the RC was unable to focus on DRR as this work had been allocated to other organisations, it was noticeable that it was only in Kavre that a link had been forged to the local structures such as CDMCs and LDRMCs, an important sustainability strategy, both for the communities and for the NRCS chapter. It will be important going forward to find ways to engage with these local structures through implementing a DRR strategy moving towards transition and phase out; for those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS to engage as an important national volunteer organisation with a core mandate in DRR.

²¹ It was noted that a common financial management software was identified to be introduced into the chapters and training was provided to finance officers, however to date this has not been rolled out.

²² To quote from the Recovery Framework (p13): *"The recovery programming, as a foundation for building community resilience, will then be gradually transformed into Community Based DRR/resilience programme during the transition phase of the recovery. Based on past experience, community engagement as well as level of knowledge, skill, attitude and practices of local communities before the earthquake and now will be identified through KAP survey as a basis for programming."*

²³ Perhaps the recovery framework should have been known as the 1+4+1 plan.

5.2.7 Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)

The inclusion of a PMER unit within the ERO has been an important support to the ERO operation and to the PMER officers placed in each of the districts. These district level officers have provided valuable support to the sectoral officers working in each district and in a number of cases in the districts visited, it was clear that PMER officers work closely with the technical teams, collecting data in the field, knowing the communities where the operation is working and able to support them in a wide range of ways. The PMER team has encouraged the collection of gender disaggregated data which is also to be commended.

5.3 Effectiveness and Timeliness

At the time of the MTR the operation was in full swing; except in areas where the community is temporarily focused on planting crops due to the onset of the monsoon, the construction of housing, toilets, health posts and water systems was ongoing, large numbers of volunteers and social mobilisers have been recruited, trained and are out in the villages raising awareness of a range of issues, offering training, following up at the household level, etc. But time and again the issue of the timeliness of the activities was critically raised during KIIs and FGDs (although community members seemed generally more pragmatic in being pleased with any progress, however late in the day it may be).

5.3.1 Effectiveness

While it is probably too early to undertake a deep analysis of the effectiveness of the operation (and would be difficult to achieve, due to the wide range of formats, time periods and levels of budgetary information available to the consultants at the time of the review), FGDs and KIIs with beneficiary communities confirm that the operation is now beginning to meet the priority needs of people affected by the earthquake in the VDCs where the RCM is working. The support that RCM is providing to government in meeting the huge numbers of houses that need to be re-constructed through the delivery of mason training and the on-site monitoring of construction works, together with the focus on rehabilitation of water systems and household toilets were consistently highlighted as being particularly effective interventions that will make a substantial difference to the lives of affected people. FGDs indicated that the work on livelihoods is also beginning to have an impact at the household level, helping some vulnerable families re-establish a means of income generation (such as livestock raising) that was destroyed by the earthquake.

Beneficiaries who participated in the FGDs believed that the early recovery contributions of the operation, particularly the winterisation project and the unconditional cash grants were effective support strategies. It is understood that some PNSs had proposed a similar approach during monsoon 2016 to bridge the gap before the operation kicked in, but it is understood that the government was reluctant to allow this as it wished cash grants to exclusively focus on encouraging livelihood re-generation.

Determining the effectiveness and timeliness of the recovery operation depends upon when one considers that the operation actually started. Documentation and KIIs show that needs assessment at the district level was generally carried out between April and July 2016, led by the central ERO. However, in Kavre the decision to use the hiatus in implementation to start with community focused planning through undertaking VCA processes in all communities, which happened before the needs assessment was carried out, was a decision that not only helped this district advance in its programme implementation but has clearly brought dividends in terms of its relationship with the communities where it is working.

A number of informants from EROs across the districts visited were concerned about the rigidity of the operation, citing examples of inflexibility that makes it difficult for the programme to respond to emerging changing needs at the community level as well as the changing policy environment. These

informants believed that regular reviews and adjustment of the programme in line with findings would enable the programme to have increased levels of impact at the community level²⁴.

5.3.2 Timeliness

KIs revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction throughout all parts of the Movement (and echoed by some line agencies) that the operation took more than eighteen months to really get going. While there is recognition that many delays were beyond the control of the RCM, related as they were to the creation of the NRA and other key government decisions regarding how recovery was to be managed, informants were generally critical of the slowness of the internal RCM decision-making that affected many aspects of the operation, from the creation, set-up and staffing of the ERO unit in Kathmandu and the districts, delays in signing project agreements between NRCS and partners, etc. The slowness in taking a number of key strategic decisions following the 2015 partnership meeting, led over time to increasing strains upon the relationship between NRCS and its partners.

The failure to take timely decisions is even now having an impact upon the ability of the operation to deliver in a timely way at the community level in some instances. Many informants interviewed both at the district and NHQ level shared examples of extended delays in decision-making regarding what should be relatively simple issues that have already been approved within budgets and plans, eg approvals for payments at district level, recruitment decisions for key posts or tenders for the delivery of services, as well as delays related to funds transfers from partners. These delays point to the decision-making processes not always being fit for purpose.

It is not clear to reviewers why delays related to the creation of the NRA held back progress in the non-shelter activities of the recovery plan; many informants believed that the RCM could have moved forward in the other sectors (health, WASH and livelihoods) while the complex shelter policies and guidelines were being finalised. This would not only have had a positive impact at the community level, but may also in the case of advances in the provision of water, have had a positive impact on the shelter programme also.

While there is a potential loss of control (and hence slowness of delivery) inherent in taking an owner-driven approach to housing which may contribute to further delays, there was overwhelming agreement that this was the most appropriate way to support the challenge of rebuilding. FGDs and KIs identified the need for the RCM to continue to support the government's objectives in this regard, particularly through the provision of mason training and technical support. The ability of the RCM to deliver on shelter targets in those districts where they are funding shelter grants is being held up by the lack of personnel within the NRA/DUDBC to sign-off for the different tranches of funds. This again points to views that suggest that the RCM shelter funding could have been put to better use supporting/enabling NRA/DUDBC through the provision of training and technical support rather than funding a comparatively limited number of housing grants.

Some of the delays experienced were caused by the lack of adequate planning for how NRCS and the wider Movement were going to bring in the skills and capacity to deliver the operation. Recruiting and training the huge numbers of technically skilled people required for this operation would be challenging for any organisation, but in Nepal post-earthquake context, with a highly competitive market due to large numbers of other organisations also recruiting, this was an even more challenging task. As mentioned previously, had a realistic scale-up plan been developed, built upon an objective assessment of the existing policies, systems, processes and human resources of the NRCS (to determine what adjustments would need to be carried out to ensure that they were fit for the purpose of delivering a multi-million-dollar operation in multiple locations with multiple donors) this may have gone more smoothly. This scale-up plan should also have considered how PNS expertise (in the form of international, regional and locally-recruited staff/delegates and technical experts from PNS

²⁴ An example shared was the inability in some cases to be able to include increased numbers of beneficiaries in livelihood activities despite the fact that they had met the assessment criteria set for the activity.

headquarters) could have been strategically used within the ERO²⁵ to help fill the gap while the upskilling was ongoing and how these personnel could have been used to orientate and train new NRCS staff coming from outside. More strategic planning of this kind could have helped not only the NRCS to become operational quicker, but could have helped plan an early reduction in the numbers of expatriate staff as the national staff were recruited.

5.4 Strengthening Local Capacity

5.4.1 Communities

Considering that many of the activities are still mid-implementation, it is too early to say to what extent the operation is contributing to strengthening local community capacity overall, although it is clear that there is mixed experience across the districts and sectors. Inputs such as the training of masons in safer building techniques, livelihoods and livestock training, awareness-raising related to health issues etc, are all contributions to local capacity strengthening valued by community members participating in FGDs. The trained masons are helping build earthquake-resistant houses and at the same time are being provided with skills that are an asset to the community and therefore potentially a means to earning an income. Similarly, the creation and support of water user committees (with O&M funds to support the ongoing maintenance of the installations), training of female community health volunteers, working through mother's health groups (in Ramechhap) are all examples of supporting existing structures and thus are considered to be strengthening longer-term local capacity. Crucially, the operation is helping in most cases to strengthen the connectedness of communities to line agencies and district level resource organisations which is contributing to overall resilience building. The recruitment of volunteers and social mobilisers from the local communities where the RC is working can also be considered a contribution to strengthening local capacity.

The work in Kavre using the VCA methodology and explicitly working through the CDMC will be contributing to strengthening the capacities of the local communities by working through a permanent structure. In some other districts evidence was shared of some support to other permanent local level structures such as LDMRCs; not doing this across all districts is seen as a lost opportunity, as is the creation of temporary Recovery Action Groups (RAG) in some districts (eg Sindupalchok and Rasuwa) which will be dissolved when the operation is completed. Districts are encouraged to look to whether there are possibilities of integrating RAGs into other permanent community structures.

5.4.2 Institutional Strengthening²⁶

By working closely alongside line agencies such as DWASH, NRA, DUDBC, DoH, etc, the programme has boosted the capacity of these agencies to respond to community priorities at the local level. In some cases, it has also contributed to strengthening capacity, for example training FCHVs who are a permanent part of the DoH health strategy and the work in shelter.

While most government line agencies were complimentary about the role of the RC during the relief phase and, at the district level most were similarly pleased both with the 4+1 programme and the quality of most RC services, a more critical tone was evident when reflecting upon the recovery phase with line agencies at central level. There was criticism of the delays in support from NRCS regarding hospital and health clinic construction, and a concern was aired that the RC livelihoods programme is violating government policy as it constitutes a "back door strategy" for increasing the amounts per house.

5.5 Communication, Access, Participation, Complaints and Feedback

²⁵ Following the original intention of the Recovery Framework that all partner delegates and staff were working inside the ERO, side by side with ERO staff.

²⁶ Strengthening the capacity of the NRCS - a core institution in Nepal - is covered under 5.2.5 above.

5.5.1 Community Engagement and Accountability

The Recovery operation has invested time and resources into community engagement and accountability (CEA) processes. During district level visits evidence was seen of efforts to share information regarding the work the RC at the local level, although it appears that different levels of detail is provided; in Ramechhap the ERO also held a press conference to share information regarding budget expenditure to date related to the Aitabar water scheme and posted this on public noticeboards, although in other districts it was suggested that such budgetary information may not be systematically shared across all districts.

A range of ways that communities can provide feedback or raise concerns or complaints with the RC directly are also being promoted across the districts, including the 1130 national phone hotline, suggestion boxes, kiosks, FaceBook pages, email, etc. Despite this, it was notable that very few FGDs reflected any knowledge or use of these mechanisms²⁷. Although the hotline receives an average of 130 calls a month (with some spikes in calls when cash disbursements happening), KIs suggest that other approaches such as suggestion boxes are not particularly popular²⁸ and the hotline itself tends to be used predominantly by men rather than women.

Feedback from line agencies shows that they are generally happy with the complaints mechanisms put in place by the NRCS, which are streamlined with their own (toll-free numbers, suggestions boxes etc), although they pointed out the importance of holding regular public meetings and one-to-one meetings as the key to ensuring good community engagement, something confirmed through the FGDs, with participants suggesting that at the community level, face-to-face contact is still the preferred route for raising issues, underlying the importance of ensuring that locally recruited social mobilisers and volunteers are trained to receive and follow-up on any complaints or concerns that are raised with them in a consistent and confidential manner.

5.5.2 Access

Following some initial reluctance to follow a targeting rather than blanket approach, the recovery operation is now demonstrating various efforts to ensure that it is targeting the most vulnerable members affected by the earthquake, eg identifying wards predominantly inhabited by lower caste families, targeting criteria that encourages participation of women and marginalised people in community groups such as water user committees or trying to open mason training to women. In each district visit there was strong recognition of the importance of following NRCS's GESI policies and there was clear commitment to gathering gender disaggregated data etc, however in some instances it appears that meeting targets alone is not enough and the organisation needs to consider other strategies it might need to adopt in order that these efforts have an impact²⁹. A hard-headed look at female inclusion targets also needs to be undertaken; while setting a target of 40% female participation in a water user committee may appear to be progressive given that the government target is 30%, in communities where the majority of working aged men are absent, these targets may still be quite low.

NRCS has also worked hard to find ways to open access to its programmes to disabled people, for example looking to include disabled people in appropriate cash for work initiatives and it is understood that it is undertaking a pilot project with Handicap International in Tanahun and Lamjung. As has been previously mentioned, there is concern that the government decision to provide only three lakhs for the reconstruction of a family house may result in highly vulnerable people without access to additional funding being excluded from the shelter reconstruction programme. Undertaking research at the district level to discover whether this is the case will be important, as armed with this evidence

²⁷In one district the FGD participants seemed completely unaware of the different CEA mechanisms available to them, despite the fact that a large banner was in the street immediately opposite the NRCS office.

²⁸FGDs in some districts indicated that some communities had had previous experience of using suggestions boxes provided by other organisations and failing to get adequate response, meaning that they were not inclined to use them again.

²⁹For example, in Sindhupalchok the inclusion of women trainees in the 50-day mason training as a livelihood option for the future needs to be followed up with a strategy to enable the women to find work.

the NRCS has the opportunity to advocate for additional support for these households (beyond the additional 50,000 rupees identified in GoN policies).

5.6 *Integration*

Most informants believe that an integrated multi-sector strategy is an appropriate response, particularly in VDCs/wards where the RC is the main (or only) organisation, although it is proving more difficult to roll out as planned in districts such as Sindhupalchok where other organisations had been allocated responsibilities, suggesting that perhaps in these districts a different approach may have been more appropriate built from the bottom up on the results of the needs assessment processes.

It was notable that integration for some was defined as the RCM delivering all four sectors within the district, however for most informants, integration of activities needs to be achieved at the community/household level and for these informants it was felt that in some instances more could be done to achieve an integrated approach. One strategy for achieving a more joined-up approach is employing social mobilisers who perform a generic role within their wards (the approach taken in Ramechhap and Lalitpur). This encourages integration opportunities, for example bringing together awareness raising activities that crosscut several sectors (eg health and hygiene, livelihoods and shelter). In districts such as Sindhupalchok and Rasuwa SMs have sectoral responsibilities and support staff in only one sector, which may inhibit the opportunity to integrate activities and may be duplicative (as well as giving the impression of very high staffing levels to the community which may be counterproductive). In the view of the MTR team, this approach should be avoided.

A few informants were concerned that the RCM did not necessarily have the expertise to be able to deliver effectively in all four sectors or that an integrated approach was too complicated and there was evidence that some districts (and partners) paid less attention to achieving an integrated approach than others.

5.7 *External Coordination*

Feedback from the districts and at central levels show that NRCS has largely maintained a high level of coordination with government line agencies, participating in a whole range of coordination meetings. At the district level, line agencies (such as DUDBC, DoH, NRA and DLO) frequently identified the NRCS as a valued key partner and commended it for its efforts to support and coordinate. In a number of instances at the district level (it is understood that at central levels, NRCS sends NRA a monthly report), there were requests for the NRCS to provide regular written updates on work in the form of monthly or quarterly progress reports and to participate in more regular meetings, rather than relying on informal contacts. Coordination issues within the RCM are taken up in 5.10.5.

5.8 *Sustainability*

As mentioned previously, many RC interventions are closely linked and coordinated with the work of government line agencies, thus maximising their sustainability potential, while the training being provided at community level (including training of volunteers) will remain once the operation comes to an end. However, some interventions are not sustainable, for example the creation of the Recovery Action Groups. Using VCA as part of the initial needs assessment would have provided a solid community base to the subsequent work of the RC on which recovery activities could have been built, linking into community level organisations such as CDMCs which would have contributed to longer-term resilience. Even within the lifetime of the operation, some unsustainable activities were observed; in Sindhupalchok and Lalitpur recruiting social mobilisers from the ranks of the previously trained volunteers is resulting in reduced numbers of community volunteers being available to the operation.

The operation is funding a number of positions at NHQ in areas such as communications, GESI, CEA etc that are not sustainable beyond the lifetime of the operation. However, efforts are being made to train and support resource people at chapter level who may be able to continue the focus on issues related to access of women, children, disabled people etc.

5.9 Learning

The Recovery Framework presented a compelling vision of how an integrated recovery programme could be implemented in a theoretical context and was enthusiastically endorsed at the June 2015 partnership meeting on the back of what was universally seen to be a successful Movement-wide approach to relief operations. However, it was not built upon sufficient contextual analysis of the wider environment (for example the likely amount of time it would take for the GoN to scale up capacities to be able to deliver against the needs identified in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment [PDNA]), as well as insufficient reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of recent RCM operations, such as Pakistan floods. A number of informants with experience of other recovery operations reflected upon what they saw as the repetition of mistakes seen in previous operations. Having to rely on a series of short-term recovery advisers, rather than being able to bring in a longer-term recovery expert at an early stage in the relief phase with a brief to research and understand that broader context was, in this regard, seen to be detrimental.

Having CEA mechanisms in place is allowing the district EROs to adapt programming approaches to feedback received from community members; for example, comments after the first mason training sessions in one district resulted in the training methodology being changed in response to observations from experienced masons who had participated in the course. However, as has been noted previously, there was some concern articulated by DPCs that there was little space to be able to adapt the operation budget to respond to emerging local issues.

It is probably too early to reflect upon the extent that the recovery operation is systematically documenting experiences and sharing these between districts. However, ERO staff at the district level generally regretted that there were few opportunities to meet (either in person or through online forums) with technical counterparts in others districts to share experiences and ideas. Although there are technical working groups, KIs suggest that some of these have not been particularly active over the last year. These could be one appropriate forum for the sharing of experiences between different districts.

5.10 Efficiency, Management, Governance and Partnership

A key failing of the operation identified by an overwhelming majority of informants interviewed for the review and coming from all parts of the RCM (NRCS staff at district and NHQ, IFRC and PNS) is its inability so far to deliver against one of the visions presented within the Recovery Framework, namely that the recovery operation would be characterised as one demonstrating *“joint responsibility, light coordination (and) swift decision making”*³⁰. The following section of the report will examine these three issues, together with other management-related issues that came out strongly throughout the data collection period.

5.10.1 Management, governance and decision-making

While it was generally seen to be a good decision to create a separate ERO Steering Committee (SC) that focuses on the operation, there appears to have been insufficient definition of its roles, levels of responsibilities, or the required turn-around time for operational decisions to be taken³¹. Informants generally seemed unclear as to what its role was, how often it met and it appears that the minutes from the SC are not shared³². A set of minutes from the first few months after the creation of the SC in 2015 was viewed by a member of the MTR; it was noted that it generally met only once a month, which given that this was a period of key strategic decision-making related to the future operation would appear to be infrequent. The closed nature of the SC, without representation of partners is also seen to be an impediment to inculcating the spirit of partnership and joint responsibility that is at the heart of the Recovery Framework's intentions. This is taken up below. With decision-making centralised in the SC, a number of informants also noted the limited authority and influence of the head of the ERO, although he does attend the SC meetings.

³⁰ NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015, p11

³¹ Although requested, the terms of reference for the SC has not been shared with the MTR.

³² It was interesting that many NRCS informants described the SC as “the management” of the operation, rather than seeing it as the strategic governance body, given its involvement in taking what would generally be viewed as managerial decisions.

For the majority of informants, the slow decision-making at the central level had significantly slowed down the pace at which the district EROs could roll out programming at the community level. Multiple examples were shared with the team of how the slow approvals process has delayed the ERO at the district level to implement, which is having a knock-on effect and slowing down the ability of the operation to make a positive impact on the lives of people who have been seriously affected by the earthquake. Most informants believe that decision-making authority, together with financial authority levels, need to be delegated, both within the ERO at NHQ level but particularly down to the district level. The SC should focus on taking high-level strategic decisions, delegating the managerial decisions to the ERO as close as possible to where the decisions are implemented. The lack of devolution to the district level ERO is contributing to DPCs feeling unable to provide the leadership that is required (they are managing large teams but do not, for example, have the authority to directly recruit a new staff member) and some informants felt that the inability to devolve responsibility was an expression of lack of trust.

The decision to manage the recovery operation using the existing procedures of the NRCS without an examination as to whether they would meet the requirements of a USD100M recovery operation that needs to be swift and agile was generally seen to be a mistake. Most informants believed that the recovery operation should have been supported by a new set of policies and procedures developed to be swift enough to support what should be a relatively fast-moving recovery operation of relatively short duration in comparison to development programmes, for which the NRCS policies were developed. This was a widespread view shared by ERO staff at NHQ and in the districts, PNS and IFRC staff and delegates. This view was also shared by a number of informants from line agencies interviewed at district level who were working alongside the RCM.

Two NRCS processes in particular were identified as requiring extensive revision in order to be fit for the purpose of supporting a recovery operation:

- The current NRCS **procurement process** involves a large number of steps across several different departments as well as the involvement of the NRCS procurement committee, resulting in significant delays. In addition, the absence of a comprehensive procurement plan capturing all procurement needs has resulted in ad hoc, district by district procurement, which has implications on efficiency and cost effectiveness (as the operation may not have benefited from potential economies of scale). Had a scale-up and planning period been put in place following the definition of the recovery plan, then this situation might have been avoided. While informants suggest that the procurement processes are now improving, feedback suggests that the creation of a unified procurement and logistics department would significantly help, together with a review of the authorisation levels for districts, which in the view of many informants is too low at 15,000 rupees, making it significantly lower than the government level (at 50,000 rupees) and not appropriate to the scale of the recovery operation. Informants also believe that a separate recovery procurement committee needs to be formed that can meet very regularly to ensure that delays do not impact upon the ability of the programme to deliver at the field level.
- The NRCS **recruitment process** is similarly seen to be inadequate to the task of recruiting huge numbers for the recovery operation. Although an external recruitment agency was used, relying on a recruitment committee that meets infrequently (thus further slowing down the recruitment process) and having overly centralised recruitment processes that do not empower the senior managers at district level (DPCs) to take decisions regarding junior recruitments were all seen to be critical in this regard. There is also widespread concern raised by informants from both NRCS and partners that in some instances technical departments are not sufficiently involved in recruitment decisions, resulting in recruits not always having the appropriate level of experience and technical expertise. A number of informants were also concerned by instances of staff recruitment decisions appearing to have been influenced by governance (this was reported at both district and central levels). A missed opportunity for NRCS, identified by a number of

informants, was not to have reached out to the large numbers of ex-NRCS staff working outside Nepal (both within and outside the Movement); drawing upon this expertise could have helped in the scaling up of the operation from these known and trusted high calibre personnel.

5.10.2 Governance at the district level

As at the central level, there was some concern regarding the lack of clarity of the role of district chapter steering committees. While in some cases they provide invaluable support to the district ERO, in others they are seen to be too involved in the day-to-day management of the operation rather than providing the strategic leadership and support to the operation and the DPC. It was also notable that although the NRCS guideline specifies that the district SC should consist of five members, this is not followed by the districts (eg Kavre has seven, Ramechhap three). A number of district chapters believed that sub-chapters should be more closely involved in the implementation of the operation.

Some districts are experiencing long delays in decisions being made by the district SC, which is negatively impacting on the ability of the operation to move forward and was identified as being demotivating for both affected communities and staff. At least one district ERO has been experiencing political interference in the operation from the SC, something that was identified unprompted also through KIIs and FGDs with affected people, while another district is currently under investigation for improper use of funds.

5.10.3 The ERO structure

With a few exceptions, the majority of those interviewed believed it was appropriate for the ERO to have been created. Concerns were less about its creation and more about the time it took to create and staff the unit, the fact that it was not supported by policies and procedures appropriate for a recovery operation and that it seems to have become a separate and independent entity³³. The vision for the ERO presented within the Recovery Framework was that it would be the “home” of the Movement, with partners and IFRC inside the structure; not achieving this has resulted in the proliferation of PNS structures and the loss of significant potential capacity building opportunities for the NRCS³⁴.

The failure to integrate personnel from Movement partners into the ERO was attributed by NRCS to there being insufficient physical space to have them all sitting in one building. While probably true that there was not sufficient space in one building, it could have been possible to have teams sitting together in different buildings throughout the NRCS compound and the failure to make that happen has had serious consequences and damaged the strong spirit of partnership that was evident at the time of the 2015 partnership meeting. The inability to “*maximise the value of Movement resources by using them in common wherever possible*”³⁵ represents a considerable lost opportunity; had the Movement put in place a human resource strategy to accompany the recovery plan to consider how it could use the technical capacity of Movement partners in the short and medium term to bolster NRCS capacity while it was in the process of hiring ERO staff, this could have resulted in considerable benefits for all parties.

In some instances, the ERO has also operated separately from the main NRCS sectoral departments. This risks a loss of experience in the longer term if the connections are not forged through the next phase, although there is some evidence that efforts are being made in this regard, for example in the WASH area.

³³As it was often described during KIIs.

³⁴One example of how this decision played out was the fact that today PNS have many more finance-related staff (approximately 20 across the different partners) compared to NRCS (which has seven). Had a more unified approach been developed, NRCS may have been able to undertake a higher level of monitoring and support at the district level, something that the finance department would have liked to do.

³⁵NRCS Recovery Framework, June 2015

Reviewing the ERO organogram, the MTR team are struck by the impossible number of direct reports to the head of the ERO (14 DPCs plus six coordinators based in NHQ and three field coordinators), exacerbated by the difficulties of retaining the programme manager position (the deputy head of the ERO effectively). Even with that position, the structure would be difficult for anyone to manage, suggesting that some intermediate level should have been created, for example recruiting three programme managers reporting to the head of the ERO, responsible for sharing the management of the DPCs, for example in three geographical clusters (it was notable that no one at the district level believed that the three field coordinators in the current structure added any value at all). Districts also reported different levels of support from the sector coordinators and the PMER team based in NHQ, recognising that the responsibility placed on them to provide support to 14* districts was excessive for the same reasons.

5.10.4 Different implementation models

The original Recovery Framework contemplated a common model of implementation across all districts, something that has not really materialised, although the concept of a consortia approach with a lead PNS has been applied in all but one of the districts, which is broadly positive (in Sindhupalchok the result of being supported separately by two PNSs is that there are effectively two different ERO structures, two different reporting models, etc, a situation that the Recovery Framework aimed to avoid).

The preferred model of implementation in the view of many NRCS informants was the Kavre model, (with the traditional IFRC model also identified as one that many NRCS informants felt comfortable working within, probably because this was familiar to them). The Kavre approach, involving the light presence of the PNS at the district level supporting in specific technical areas, seems to be closest to the *modus operandi* envisaged in the Recovery Framework³⁶ and looks to be delivering in terms of quality and timeliness while not appearing to smother the NRCS, although it is difficult to say without considerable comparative analysis whether it is delivering in terms of cost-effectiveness. Partners working in consortia with DRC in Kavre were also appreciative of this model, highlighting fluid communications, timely development of project documents and reasonable rates of implementation and observed that DRC's long experience of implementing through a consortium shared partnership approach helped the approach work smoothly.

Given that other consortia leaders may have had little experience of working in consortium with others, time should have been devoted at the beginning of the recovery operation to work across the Movement to consider how best to facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles of leader and participant, appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns in consortia relationships might be handled.

5.10.5 Coordination within the Movement

Efforts to ensure that there was close collaboration and coordination throughout the operation were made, but some of these initiatives failed to achieve their potential. Sectoral technical working groups (which had brought together staff from NRCS and partners quite effectively during the drafting of the Recovery Framework) were reported to have become infrequent and in some cases ceased to meet, which has further weakened the opportunities for promoting collaboration and coordinated approaches, although there have been some successes of reinvigorating some of the groups, such as the working group that brings together PMER, information management (IM), GESI, CEA and communications (the so-called Acronym Working Group). It is also understood that two ad hoc meetings of the SC with the IFRC and partners have also been convened to date.

For most informants, the IFRC is largely seen to have little influencing power within the Movement dynamics in Nepal. There are a number of reasons for this; partly due to having no role (or even observer status) within the Earthquake Operation Steering Committee, the key decision-making body

³⁶ See the diagram on p10 of the NRCS Recovery Framework (ibid)

related to the operation and partly because it is also acting as a donor in three districts, which in the view of some informants, compromises its capacity to be able to act as the neutral arbiter and Movement coordinator.

Movement coordination meetings do not seem to have met the expectations for being the key coordination mechanism among partners, partly it seems because NRCS leadership participation has been low. It would also seem to have been a mistake for the facilitation of the Movement Coordination Meeting not to have been taken back by the IFRC country representative when he arrived in October 2015.

5.10.6 Partnership

Exploring relationships between partners is a complex and sensitive issue. The aim of this section of the report is to lay out the different views and opinions that were shared through the MTR process as a basis for suggesting a way forward.

What is abundantly clear from interviews is that the concept of partnership, joint responsibility and co-management that the Recovery Framework articulates and the Movement-wide approach is predicated upon has not materialised as anticipated, resulting in a deterioration in the levels of mutual trust between NRCS and its partners. Interviews often seemed to reveal a situation of “us versus them” and the level of mutual frustration that was aired by all sides was high.

For some NRCS informants, the Recovery Framework and One Plan approach is viewed as having been primarily developed by partners, with little active involvement from the NS. They believe that partners have defined the recovery strategies, then gone on to select which districts they want to work in, have exercised strong influence over all levels of decision-making in “their” districts through micro-management of planning and budgeting and are not following the correct channels of communication, all of which is at odds with the rhetoric of partnership articulated by the Recovery Framework, the Movement Coordination Agreement (MCA) and by the IFRC country representative. For partners, the considerable enthusiasm that there evidently was at the time of the partnership meeting in 2015 with its strong spirit of partnership, seems to have been translated into an atmosphere of internalisation, regulation and control on the side of NRCS, which seems to have encouraged partners to revert to more traditional bilateral behaviours as they feel increasingly on the outside of decision-making and with what they see as little influence over decisions regarding how the funds that they raised (and are accountable for in their home country) are used.

A general breakdown of trust and lack of openness seems to characterise the relationship between partners today. For NRCS the lack of openness from the partners relates to how they are allocating and spending the more than 220 million CHF that has been publically acknowledged as raised by the RCM, when committed funds to the NRCS earthquake operation currently stands at around CHF 80-85 million for the recovery phase. For partners, the lack of openness relates to management decision-making, which they feel on the outside of. Both NRCS informants on one side and PNS informants on the other feel that the other side is not being open and transparent. Each side feels that its views and opinions are not valued or listened to by the other.

Partnership requires valuing what each side brings to the table and the mutual dependency that exists between the parties. At the risk of stating the obvious, in this operation each side is dependent on the other for success. At its most basic, PNSs would be unable to ensure that their funds are used to implement programmes at the community level without the collaboration of NRCS, while the NRCS would be unable to deliver the level of programming across the most affected districts without the funds of partners. The next phase of the operation needs to find ways of returning to a position where a positive, trusting and respectful partnership can be re-established for the mutual benefit of the operation and its ability to deliver to affected communities.

It would seem that not enough attention was given at the start of the recovery programme to identify how to develop a true partnership approach, for example how to orientate staff (NRCS and partners, both new and existing) related to how partnership translates into norms and behaviours. Informants reflected upon the fact that many staff (in NRCS and within partners, including delegates) reverted to previous ways of working, characterised as the “bilateral project approach”. Breaking out of that way of thinking would have required a clear definition of ways of working, drawn from the Recovery Framework and upheld by the management. Staff turnover, particularly within the partners, has not helped in this regard. The fact that it did not prove possible to roll out an ERO structure where technical personnel from the partners were inside the structure working closely with NS counterparts has meant that a crucial way of exercising partnership has not materialised.

There is an unrealistic level of impatience on the part of some partners, perhaps due to lack of understanding of the context of Nepal. The huge amount of scrutiny that PNS are under by their own HQs and their national media to be seen to be actively and rapidly disbursing funds, together with an over-optimistic expectation fuelled by the rapidity and smooth relief implementation period probably also contributed to this. There was a rush to bring in technical delegates before the country - and by extension NRCS - was ready for this; once in-country there was increased pressure to start delivering due to the high indirect monthly costs – an issue taken up in 5.11 below.

Another area of tension between NRCS and partners has been related to some partners’ wish to collaborate with the assistance of other non-RC organisations. While the MCA signed by all partners is not averse to this, it does clearly request that decisions to work in this way are agreed to by NRCS. Some partners feel that NRCS is unnecessarily reluctant to allow such sorts of collaboration, while NRCS feels that these partners have moved ahead in agreeing such forms of collaborations without the agreement of NRCS. The MTR team considers that collaboration with other organisations can be useful, both to augment RCM capacity (particularly in areas that are outside the NS’s core competency) and provides opportunities for learning and development. However, ensuring that NRCS is directly involved in the process of identifying any external partner and that an impartial process is used to identify the partner, in which the views of each side is taken into account, would help in this regard.

5.11 Resource Management and Cost Effectiveness

The current RCM recovery set up, working across 14* districts with management structures in each, is clearly a structure-heavy - and therefore costly - way of working. It is not clear to what extent the RCM examined the likely cost effectiveness of this approach or whether serious consideration was given to implementing alternative recovery strategies³⁷ that might have prioritised humanitarian need over consideration of internal RCM influences. Even without a deep investigation of the costs associated with this operation³⁸, it is clear that an operation of this size and complexity was always going to be a costly one to deliver, particularly given the extent of the area across which the RCM is working and the challenging and isolated conditions where many of the people affected by the earthquake are living. However, even taking this into account, many concerns were raised during the MTR data collection process regarding the cost effectiveness of this operation, given the district level structures, the large numbers of expatriate delegates and PNS staff, the parallel structures and systems to those of NRCS, the fact that funds raised are being used not only to support these PNS structures but also in some instances contributing to costs regionally and at headquarters.

At the district level, a number of RC informants raised their concerns related to what they saw as inefficient expenditure compared to other organisations³⁹, for example that too much is spent on expensive food during training courses, provision of per diems etc. Several line agencies (such as NRA, CDOs, District

³⁷ It is understood that the GoN did suggest to the NRCS that a different approach be taken, focusing the main recovery activities in only one priority A district. It is not known when this suggestion was made and to what extent this suggestion was seriously considered.

³⁸ And it proved impossible for the consultants to undertake this as the budget information is not presented in a consistent way across all the districts.

³⁹ This assertion could not be tested as the terms of reference for the review did not include comparison with other organisations.

Agricultural Offices and DoH) were critical of what they described as lavish displays of expenditure by one PNS (for example, too many vehicles plying up and down the road, training courses for staff in expensive locations), suggesting that this is tarnishing the reputation of the RC work generally.

FGDs with community members in two different districts were critical of how the operation was being delivered in their district. Participants spoke of too many staff being appointed, too many vehicles, motorcycles, laptops etc being used and in one case questioned whether the programme was being run for the benefit of people affected by the earthquake or the staff⁴⁰. DPCs in several districts expressed their view that staffing levels were too high in their districts and that it was difficult to justify the numbers of staff. These informants felt that it should have been possible to have amalgamated some roles and responsibilities in order to streamline numbers but they did not have the authority to take these decisions.

Staff from the ERO (both in districts and NHQ) and PNSs were extremely concerned by the expenditure ratio between support costs and direct programme costs of the operation. A number of PNS informants believed that perhaps only between 40-60% of the funds raised will go directly to beneficiary activities, due both to the logistical challenges of access to affected people mentioned previously, but also to the fact that support structures were maintained over relatively long periods of time when the operation was delivering little (for the reasons mentioned before). In hindsight, it is clear that some partners scaled up their structures prematurely before there was a clarity of approach between NRCS and GoN and perhaps, had there been more triangulation of the Recovery Framework with the conditions on the ground as previously suggested, this might have been avoided. While the ratio between direct and indirect costs is likely to improve in the coming period due to the fact that implementation is now moving strongly ahead, NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts and thus reduce the duplication that exists.

Attempts have been made by IFRC to gather data from the PNS regarding direct and indirect costs per district, but there is a recognition that this cannot be undertaken without a common understanding of what constitutes a direct and indirect cost and how different partners are categorising these, so the majority of partners have refused to participate in this locally-managed exercise. The MTR team suggests that this would be an extremely useful and important exercise to undertake, but given the global implications of such an exercise, it should be managed at a higher level, for example IFRC Geneva or Kuala Lumpur.

5.12 Transition and Exit Strategy

Some confusion and quite a bit of anxiety was expressed at district level by the messages coming from the ERO centrally that activities need to be transitioned by the end of 2017; the decision of some partners to exit by the end of 2017 has added to this stress. It seems that for some, the concepts of transition and exit planning have been erroneously conflated to mean that they need to rush to finish activities as soon as possible and some district ERO staff are concerned that this may affect the quality and particularly the sustainability of some activities, together with potentially damaging relationships with the community (in Ramechhap the FGDs revealed that communities are also stressed by the high level of concurrent activities that are being implemented, pointing out that while they are strongly in agreement with the participative implementation approach, it is difficult for households to be available to contribute to shelter and water system construction at the same time). Some DPCs feel that they are under enormous pressure to spend; as one informant put it (reflecting the views of a number of people interviewed), "the objective should not be spending the budget only, but making a difference at the community level".

⁴⁰ Author's reflection: I'm sharing this comment as in more than 10 years as a consultant, this is the first time that I have ever heard this type of feedback being articulated during a focus group.

Some informants regret that there is a strong narrative related to phasing out the ERO structure just at the time when it is now working relatively effectively and the operation still has much to achieve. The MTR team suggests that the districts review their plans activity by activity, community by community, ensuring that a sustainability strategy for each activity is put in place and worked through. Having this information in place will allow an appropriate transition plan to be developed at central level, with appropriate dates and modalities for transition being developed that are in harmony with the field-level operational plans. As mentioned previously, DRR should be a key part of the transition strategy, linking to what should be core competence of the NS, building relationship of chapters with CDMCs, LDRMCs and communities etc.

The transition period should provide opportunities for organisational learning, for example documenting processes and outcomes of the operation and ensuring that all trainings relevant to the NRCS development plan happening within the EQ districts are open for a proportion of attendees from other district chapters.

6 Recommendations

6.1 *Recommendations for the Next Phase of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operation*

6.1.1 Recovery operation planning

- Districts should carry out activity by activity, community by community reviews to plan the next phase of the recovery operation. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff, both at district and central levels.
- NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan for the coming period, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with district implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts (including to place certain delegates within districts where appropriate) and thus reduce the duplication that exists.
- NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget for each district is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC, the district steering committee and the head of the ERO to oversee progress in each district.
- The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extend support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance etc.
- NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families are being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.
- Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.
- The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation (ie beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters). The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

6.1.2 ERO structure and processes

- NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.
- Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.
- Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.

6.1.3 Rebuilding relationships

- Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to reflect upon their own behaviours and processes, understand the views and opinions of all parties, confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties for mutual benefit.
- A peer review process could be considered, to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner, in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.

6.1.4 ERO governance

- The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.
- The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.
- It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.
- Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made publically available.
- It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (eg the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required. NRCS partners (line agencies, NGOs and PNS) should input into this review.
- An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. The DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.

6.1.5 Movement-wide reflection

- A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – ie is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

6.2 *Reflections from Nepal recovery operation to the wider RCM*

- The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and fully understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a minimum of six months.
- Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.
- It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.
- As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to *how* this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.
- The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.
- The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.
- Given that partners seem to be increasingly choosing to work through consortia, reflection on past experiences of working through consortia should be undertaken. This should offer reflection on how to best facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles and responsibilities of leader and participant, the appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns in consortia relationships might be handled.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference



1. Summary

1.1. Purpose: The Mid-Term Review (MTR) will assess the earthquake recovery response structure, system, procedure and performance through the lens of thematic sectors and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) chapters, as per the Movement Recovery Plan 'One Plan' to the Nepal earthquake from late April 2015. The focus will be on the application of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance, cooperation and coordination within the Movement components. Key recommendations from this MTR will guide modifications and improvements required to the ongoing recovery interventions.

1.2. Commissioner: The IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), Deputy Director, on behalf of the Movement partners in close collaboration with the NRCS. The findings and products arising from this review will be owned and managed in accordance to NRCS policy and procedures.

1.3. Audience: Findings of this MTR will be used for learning by the Nepal Red Cross, IFRC country office in Nepal, the IFRC regional office in Kuala Lumpur, the IFRC headquarters in Geneva, the National Societies participating in the recovery operation, the Movement managers and the ICRC to plan for future strategies and interventions.

1.4. Review team: An independent review team leader (international consultant) drawn from the IFRC membership, supported by one national (Nepali speaking) consultant, one NRCS staff, and one member from sister National Societies within the Asia Pacific region.

1.5. Duration of consultancy: Up to 40 working days (including approximately 30 days in Nepal).

1.6. Estimated dates of consultancy: The review exercise will take place from 10 May 2017.

1.7. Location of consultancy: Nepal

2. Background

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) comprises 190-member Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and a secretariat in Geneva to support humanitarian activities around the world. The IFRC is committed towards increasing the impact of the Movement in terms of quality assurance, standards and a culture of lesson learning in disaster recovery operations. Those operations that require an international response and meet certain criteria of scale, scope, complexity or risk, as does the Nepal earthquake response, are committed to carrying out this MTR during the recovery phase. The [IFRC Framework for Evaluations](#) requires that a review be undertaken for any programme over 24 months in timeframe.

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude struck an area between Kathmandu and Pokhara in the

morning of 25 April 2015. The epicenter was 80 kilometers northwest of Kathmandu but its impact was felt in 32 of Nepal's 75 districts. A series of aftershocks have continued to impact, causing further damage and panic. The strongest aftershock, measuring 7.3 magnitude, struck on 12 May at 12:50 local time.

The combined impact of 25 April quake and the 12 May aftershock has caused more than 8,856 people casualties and at least 17,932 injured. In addition to loss of life and human suffering, the two quakes have caused extensive destruction and damage to housing, infrastructure and livelihoods, leading to a drastic reduction in living conditions, income, and access to basic services, such as health and water and sanitation. More than 1.1 million families were affected and 700,000 families displaced. Secondary data analysis and earthquake intensity mapping indicate that up to 600,000 houses were fully destroyed and a further 280,000 damaged. The infrastructure damaged included schools, health facilities, bridges and roads. More than 30,000 classrooms were destroyed or damaged. According to the government, 14 districts were severely affected 'Category A' and include Gorkha, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Sindhupalchowk, Ramechhap, Dolakha, Nuwakot, Dhading, Rasuwa, Sindhuli, Okhaldhunga, Makwanpur, and Kavre (altogether 14). Additionally, nine districts with medium level damages fall under 'Category B', were also affected.

The Movement Coordination Meeting (MCM) that was established prior to the earthquake, and continued to be in place in order to facilitate coordination and decision making process. The NRCS, IFRC, partner National Societies (PNSs) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are keeping close contact to coordinate the Movement response to date. NRCS is responsible for the coordination and the overall implementation of the recovery plan, with IFRC supporting Movement coordination and partners contributing to the overall plan. Currently, there are 11 PNSs in Nepal supporting the NRCS in the implementation of recovery plan (through bilateral, multi-lateral and in consortium as well) for people affected by the earthquake, in the 14 most affected districts (category A). The in country PNSs include American, Australian, Belgium – Flanders, British, Canadian, Danish, Finnish, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish and Swiss Red Cross.

In early June 2016, a partnership meeting was held between NRCS, IFRC, PNSs and ICRC. Upon completion of the meeting, a Movement Recovery Plan called 'One Plan' was developed that provides a framework of activities for the operation. All partners of the Movement agreed to follow one framework, one plan and one approach, while maintaining NRCS's ownership of the entire programme implementations on the ground. The Movement partners agreed that NRCS will be on the lead to report against priorities identified together through established Earthquake Response Operations (ERO) structure and management at headquarter (HQ) as well as in district chapters. However, different PNS have been contributing in different ways within the One Plan based upon resources available and priorities. Key deliverables listed in the Movement Recovery Plan are being supported by the Movement partners through multilateral mechanism via IFRC appeal or bilateral arrangements with NRCS who is the implementer of activities on behalf of the Movement in Nepal. The Red Cross recovery programme components is based on an integrated FOUR plus ONE approach: four technical sectors that include shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH); livelihoods; and health; plus, National Society capacity building for NRCS.

The sectoral working groups (Shelter, WASH, livelihood and PMER-IM-CEA-Comms-GESI) continued to hold their meetings with the interested Movement partners in order to update each other and discuss sectoral issues encountered during implementation on the ground.

There have been numerous delays in the activation of the Movement's One Plan in Nepal, influenced by changes to government, extended bandhs (general strikes) and blockade of Indian border leading to logistical issues and the need for the Government of Nepal (GoN) to set the policies and guidelines to direct the humanitarian sectors approach to recovery.

The main Red Cross Red Crescent planned actions for recovery are:

- 7000 households to be provided with Shelter grants,
- 316,193 people to be provided with water and sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion
- 137,625 people to be provided with health services and community health activities,
- 124,696 people to be reached with livelihood activities,
- 16 Nepal Red Cross chapters to be supported with capacity building. For the one year progress report of the Movement-Wide Report, please click [here](#).

3. MTR purpose and scope This Nepal earthquake response MTR will be a learning oriented and forward looking review. This will recommend how improvements should be made in earthquake recovery structure, system, procedures and implementation strategies in order to better address the recovery needs on the ground. To do so, the review will be taking into consideration relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the entire operations with reference to One Plan. The review will also assess the application of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance, cooperation and coordination within the Movement components. The findings of MTR will suggest possible operational directions to the Movement partners to further support NRCS recovery programmes based on context, need and capacities of the Movement partners.

The unit of analysis to be assessed – This will cover the partner members of the One Plan including ERO both at headquarters (HQ) and district chapters, IFRC Nepal Country Office and in country PNSs. It will look at measures put in place including structure, system, procedures, implementation/ working models - consortium/bilateral, as well as coordination mechanisms in line with the One Plan.

The time period - the review will cover the period from June 2015 partnership meeting when the present structure of the Nepal Earthquake Operations was endorsed until 25 April 2017 (second year anniversary of the earthquake).

The geographical coverage - This will later be decided in close consultation between the MTR task force and review team. However, focus will be to consider a representative sample size i.e. 4-6, out of 14 operational districts in Nepal.

4. MTR objectives, criteria and key questions Below are the specific objectives, criteria and possible key questions to be addressed in this MTR. These are initial guidance and can be further elaborated in consultation with the consultant and MTR team.

4.1. Objectives:

- 1) To assess the capacity of NRCS, IFRC and in country PNS's structure, system and procedures to deliver the recovery assistance effectively;

- . 2) To review the application and timeliness of programme management, decision making, coordination and integration mechanisms in place, and recommend how these can be strengthened;
- . 3) Identify weaknesses and strengths in the 4+1 approach of the One Plan including cross cutting themes, and provide solutions/recommendations to the NRCS and the Movement partners to address shortfalls.

4.2. Criteria: The MTR will be guided by following criteria:

- . i) the relevance, appropriateness and coverage of the recovery operations.
- . ii) the efficiency and effectiveness, especially to meet the intended results.
- . iii) coordination within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors.
- . iv) the sustainability and connectedness of the recovery operations.

4.3. Questions: The questions below are initial guidance and should be considered in line with the One Plan approach. These questions are expected to be further elaborated in consultation with the review team while working on the inception report. Additional guiding questions can be found as appendices under section 11 on the later part of this TOR.

To what extent has the recovery operations achieved the expected objectives and been relevant and appropriate to the needs and context?

To what extent has the recovery operations ensured optimization of resources and supported implementation of programmes in an effective and efficient manner?

To what extent coordination and integration applied in line with the One Plan?

To what extent, is the intervention taking into consideration long term needs of NRCS, such as linkages between recovery and longer-term development programmes?

To what extent has the programme been effective in reaching the most vulnerable people and groups effected by the earthquake?

5. MTR methodology & process

The methodology will adhere to the IFRC Framework for Evaluations³, with particular attention to the processes upholding the standards of how MTR should be planned, managed, conducted, and utilized.

A MTR task force will manage and oversee the MTR process as well review team. The review will be carried out by a team of experts not directly involved with the implementation of recovery programmes. This review team will consist of up to four people: an international consultant, who will be team leader, one national consultant (Nepali speaking), one staff member of NRCS, and a member of the sister National Society from the Asia Pacific region. The team should be gender balanced.

The review team leader will provide an independent, objective perspective on review, and will be the primary author of the MTR report and recommendations. In line with the IFRC Framework for Evaluations to meet the criteria for an “external review”, s/he will not have been involved or have a vested interest in the recovery operation being reviewed, and will be hired through a transparent recruitment process, based on professional experience, competence, ethics and integrity for this review. The team leader will report on progress or challenges to the MTR task force.

It is expected that the applicant to propose an approach and methodology for the review. The proposed review methodology will be further detailed out in close consultation between the MTR task force and review team. Some of the primary methods can draw upon as follows:

1. **Desktop review** of operation background documents, and background and history of relevant organizations, including guidelines and policy documents of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) of Nepal government.
2. Conduct consultation process/meetings with the partner members of One Plan and other stakeholders as appropriate.
3. **Field visits/observations** to selected sites.
4. **Key informant interviews** (institutional and beneficiaries as appropriate).
5. **Focus group discussions**, (institutional and beneficiaries) as time and capacity allow.

The review team will meet with and interview key Red Cross Red Crescent stakeholders at NRCS HQ and district chapters, PNSs, and the relevant IFRC Secretariat offices. The team will also consult with other partners and organizations such as NRA of GoN, the UN, INGOs / NGOs as appropriate.

6. MTR deliverables (or Outputs)

- **Inception report** with review questions, detailed methodology, initial discussion with the MTR task force and work plan within a week.
- **Debriefings / present initial findings** to MTR task force, NRCS, IFRC and in country Movement partners: The review team leader will present its preliminary/initial findings with recommendations for discussion and feedback.
- **Draft report:** A draft report identifying key findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons for the current and future operation, will be submitted to the MTR task force after three weeks of the consultancy.
- **Final report:** The final report will contain a short executive summary (no more than 1,000 words) and a main body of the report (no more than 10,000 words) covering the background of the intervention reviewed, a description of the review methods and limitations, findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and clear recommendations. Recommendations should be specific and feasible. The report should also contain appropriate appendices, including a copy of the ToR, cited resources, a list of those interviewed and any other relevant materials. The final report will be submitted within two weeks after receiving the consolidated feedback on draft report.

The findings and all products arising from this review will be jointly owned by the Nepal Red Cross Society and IFRC on behalf of the Movement partners. The reviewers will not be allowed, without

prior authorization in writing, to present any of the analytical results as his / her own work or to make use of the review results for private publication purposes.

The preliminary and final reports will be submitted through the MTR task force, who will ensure the quality of the report providing input if necessary. The task force will submit the final report to the Commissioner, Steering Committee of the earthquake operations and IFRC head of country office in Nepal for review, clarifications and management response.

6. Proposed Timeline (or Schedule)

The following table presents some key activities with a timeline:

Timeframe	Activities	Outputs	Responsibility
Pre-work	1. Prepare and distribute review TOR for consultation within in country Movement partners 2. Form review task force, finalize TOR, commission the MTR 3. Recruit/Identify review team including international and national consultant	Final TOR	IFRC Nepal CO IFRC APRO and MTR Task Force
Week 1	4. Brief the review team 5. Review background documents 6. Draft and share inception report (any update to the TOR should be approved by the MTR task force and reflected in the report)	Inception report with review questions, methodology and data collection tools	MTR task force Review team leader
Week 2, 3 & 4	9. Field data collection at designated sites 10. Debriefing/present preliminary findings to key stakeholder groups and task force	Sharing of initial findings	Review team leader
Week 5+	11. Submission of the draft report 12. Management response 13. Review of comments, consolidation and make	Summary draft report with key recommendations Management response Final report	Review team leader ERO Steering Committee, IFRC MTR task force

	revisions for the final report.		and review team leader
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8. MTR quality and ethical standards

The reviewer should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the MTR is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of the people and communities involved and to ensure that the review findings are technically accurate and reliable, is conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and contributes to organizational learning and accountability. Therefore, the review team should adhere to the standards and applicable practices outlined in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation.

The IFRC evaluation standards are:

1. Utility: Evaluations must be useful and used.
2. Feasibility: Evaluations must be realistic, diplomatic, and managed in a sensible, cost effective manner.
3. Ethics & Legality: Evaluations must be conducted in an ethical and legal manner, with particular regard for the welfare of those involved in and affected by the evaluation.
4. Impartiality & Independence; Evaluations should be impartial, providing a comprehensive and unbiased assessment that takes into account the views of all stakeholders.
5. Transparency: Evaluation activities should reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.
6. Accuracy: Evaluations should be technical accurate, providing sufficient information about the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods so that its worth or merit can be determined.
7. Participation: Stakeholders should be consulted and meaningfully involved in the evaluation process when feasible and appropriate.
8. Collaboration: Collaboration between key operating partners in the evaluation process improves the legitimacy and utility of the evaluation.

It is also expected that the review will respect the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: 1) humanity, 2) impartiality, 3) neutrality, 4) independence, 5) voluntary service, 6) unity, and 7) universality. Further information can be obtained about these Principles at: www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp

9. Qualifications

Selection of the international and national consultant will be based on the qualifications outlined below:

1. Demonstrable experience in leading and managing evaluations and review of recovery operations in complex situations where multiple partners and sectors involved related to

major disasters;

2. Knowledge and experience working with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and knowledge of the IFRC's disaster management systems;
3. Experience of working in Nepal and familiarity with culture and political situations would be an advantage.
4. Knowledge of strategic and operational management of humanitarian operations and proven ability to provide strategic recommendations to key stakeholders;
5. Strong team leadership and management skills including negotiation, facilitation and time management.
6. Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations and to prepare well-written reports in a timely manner;
7. Proven track record of conducting qualitative research including the development of interview schedules and qualitative data as well quantitative data analysis, especially in emergency and recovery context;
8. Demonstrated capacity to work both independently and as part of a team;
9. Excellent writing and presentation skills in English (for international consultant) and Nepali languages (for national consultant) required.
10. Immediate availability for the period indicated.
11. Strong preference for the international consultant to have his/her own translator and in country team.

10. Application procedures

Interested applicants should submit their expression of interest to the following email: pmer.apzo@ifrc.org by 10 April 2017. In the subject line, please state the consultancy you are applying for, your company name or last name and first name. **(SUBJECT: Nepal Earthquake Recovery Operations Mid-Term Review - Last Name, First Name).**

Application materials should include:

1. **Curriculum Vitae** (CVs) of international and national consultants.
2. **Cover letter** clearly summarizing your experience as it pertains to this MTR, daily consultancy fees (in Swiss Francs) and three professional references.
3. Applicants will be required to provide a **2-pager approach paper** with review methodology and a sample of previous written report most similar to that described in this TOR.

4. Financial proposal: It is expected from the international consultant to submit the financial bid for themselves and the Nepali speaking consultant only.

Application material are non-returnable, and we thank you in advance for understanding that only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the next step in the application process. Please take note that incomplete application will be rejected.

Mid Term Review of Nepal Earthquake Recovery Programme 2017 Review Inception Plan (*amended 21 June 2017*)

This document lays out proposed focus, approach and methodology to be adopted for the review, together with a tentative itinerary for the field visits

1. Review criteria and key review questions

The review will build on the questions included in the terms of reference (see below) and will be framed within the nine Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), which will help keep the focus of the review on the ability/potential for the recovery programme to deliver services that meet the priority needs of those people most affected by the 2015 earthquakes.

MTR Criteria:

1. The **relevance**, **appropriateness** and **coverage** of the recovery operations.
2. The **efficiency** and **effectiveness**, especially to meet the intended results.
3. **Coordination** within the Movement partners (NRCS, IFRC, PNS and ICRC) and external actors.
4. The **sustainability** and **connectedness** of the recovery operations.

MTR key questions:

1. To what extent has the recovery operations achieved the expected objectives and been relevant and appropriate to the needs and context?
2. To what extent has the recovery operations ensured optimization of resources and supported implementation of programmes in an effective and efficient manner?
3. To what extent coordination and integration applied in line with the One Plan?
4. To what extent, is the intervention taking into consideration long term needs of NRCS, such as linkages between recovery and longer-term development programmes?
5. To what extent has the programme been effective in reaching the most vulnerable people and groups effected by the earthquake?

The Core Humanitarian Standard:

Note: given the nature of the review, focus will be deeper in some areas - particularly those related to effectiveness, efficiency and coordination – and lighter in other areas more related to programming, due to this being a mid-term review (these have been italicised below). The links to the MTR criteria and key review questions are noted in square brackets.

1. Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs. [RELEVANCE, APPROPRIATENESS, REACHING MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE]
2. Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time. [TIMELINESS IE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS]
3. *Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action.*
4. *Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.*

5. *Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints.*
6. Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance. [COORDINATION, CONNECTEDNESS]
7. Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection. [LEARNING ORGANISATION, LINKAGES WITH NRCS LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES]
8. Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers. [EFFECTIVENESS, MANAGEMENT ISSUES]
9. Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically. [EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS, OPTIMISATION OF RESOURCES]

2. Review approach

The following steps will be followed during the review:

- Inception visit (undertaken 28 May – 6 June 2017, 9 days) – Interview main actors from NRCS, IFRC and RC partners to understand current context and gather views regarding the focus of the mid-term review, criteria for districts to be visited and suggestions regarding which districts to be visited. See Annex 1 for list of those interviewed
- Development of inception report, to include draft field visit itinerary – *NRCS, IFRC and partners will need to develop key informant lists for Kathmandu and the districts to be visited in order to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is given for the different stages of the review visit*
- Document review
- Development of the main review tools (semi-structured interview scripts for individual informant interviews and focus group discussions)
- At the start of the field visit, team briefing, revision of review tools and methodologies to ensure uniformity of approach between the two teams
- Travel to sites for data collection (the proposed approach would require the first district to be visited by all four team members, in order to pilot and review the tools and ensure a coherent data collection approach. Following this, the review team will split into two, each visiting two districts)
- Interviews in the districts and Kathmandu will include:
 - Community members (through focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews)
 - NRCS leadership, staff and volunteers, HQs and in the chapters
 - IFRC staff
 - PNS staff
 - Government partners, both central and district-level
 - Personnel from other stakeholders (such as NGOs)
- Review team debrief in order to identify key findings and recommendations to be included in the review report before team members return to home base
- Return to home base, interviews (via Skype) with any other key informants who are not based in Nepal (eg Kuala Lumpur, partner HQs, etc)
- Data analysis and preparation of final draft review report

3. Draft itinerary for field visits

**TL = Team Leader, NC = National Consultant*

Activities	Date	# days
Inception visit - Team leader visit to Kathmandu, interviews with 30 key internal RCRC stakeholders in order to identify priority focus for the mid-term review	28 May to 6 June	9 (TL)
Develop draft inception report, including data collection methods and tools, document review	8 – 25 June	4 (TL) 2 (NC)
Travel to Nepal	2 July	1 (TL)
Team meet, briefing meetings, finalise/agree the review approach and data collection tools following feedback from review team	3 – 4 July	2
Full team to KAVRE (district 1) – undertake KIIs, FGDs, field visits etc, reviewing and amending the approach, methodology and data collection tools	5 – 7 July	3
Rest / Team split into two, travel to separate districts: • Anna+Sajjad+translator travel to Sindhupalchowk (district 2) • Shesh+Amar to Lalitpur (district 3)	8 July	1
Field visit as above in districts 2 and 3	9 – 11 July	3
Travel to next districts: • Anna+Sajjad+translator travel from Sindhupalchowk to Ramechhap (district 4) • Shesh+Amar travel from Lalitpur to Rasuwa (district 5)	12 July	1
Field visit as above in districts 4 and 5	13 – 15 July	3
Travel back to Kathmandu from Ramechhap & Rasuwa	16	1
Interviews with key informants in Kathmandu	17 – 19 July	3
Team data share and analysis	20 July	1
Travel to home base	21 July	1
Prepare draft report	25 July – 15 August	10 (TL) 6 (NC)
Revise and finalise report	20-25 August	2 (TL) 1 (NC)

Please note that due to the addition of the inception visit and the complexity of the issues revealed during the inception visit, the number of days of engagement for both the team leader and national consultant have been modestly increased to 45 days for the team leader and 27 days for the national consultant.

4. **Review Matrix**

A review matrix with all the review questions that will be used to guide the field research will be prepared and provided later in June.

5. **District visits**

Following the inception interviews, criteria to guide the identification of districts to be visited were agreed with the MTR task force. These are:

- Accessibility (bearing in mind the monsoon season), both to the district and VDCs where work has been carried out – the ability to consult with affected communities is extremely important and should inform the decisions regarding which districts to visit (and is not something that the consultant can take decisions about);
- Capacity of the chapter to receive and host the visit of the review team (it is understood that some chapters may have been overburdened with visits from external people in the last few months);
- Representative of the ‘global’ experience and thus likely to provide lessons learned that can be relevant to all 14 district chapters;
- Offering a range of different partnership models (no partner presence, single partner presence, several partners working alongside each other, multi-partner consortium) and levels of integration between the different 4+1 sectors;
- Spanning experience in both rural and urban environments;
- Offering a range of experiences, both positive and more challenging, likely to elicit a strong range of emerging good practices and lesson learned.

Following discussions with the MTR task force, the following districts will be visited:

- Lalitpur
- Kavre
- Ramechhap
- Rasuwa
- Sindupalchok

It is recognised that the monsoon season may mean that the ability of the team to visit VDCs that are distant from the district headquarters may be limited, particularly in the case of Ramechhap (discussions with the MTR task force suggested that this might need to be replaced by Sindhuli, although this would be regrettable as it is understood that Ramechhap may offer interesting lessons learned related to integration). However, given the importance of being able to consult with affected communities and service users as part of this review, this aspect must be taken into consideration when determining which districts to visit and all efforts must be made to enable this beneficiary consultation to go ahead. The final choice of the districts remains with the task force; the issues that informed this choice will be documented within the review report, as well as identifying any potential selection bias.

As with district selection, VDC selection should be guided by the following criteria:

- Accessibility;
- Capacity of the VDC to receive and host the visit of the review team;
- Able to provide opportunities to review a number of different programmatic inputs from the 4+1 plan;

- Representative of the 'global' experience and thus likely to provide lessons learned that can be relevant to all 14 district chapters;
- Offering a range of experiences, both positive and more challenging; if two VDCs are visited in a district, these should offer contrasting experiences where possible.

6. **Key informant interview setup**

The need to triangulate perspectives and the learning nature of this review are two main determinants of the sample size. Triangulation requires several levels of staff perspectives as well as those of volunteers and beneficiaries. Including respondents from multiple levels will help to manage selection bias and contribute to internal validity, as will including perspectives of key external partners. The sampling method is purposive and respondents will be selected based on criteria of availability, knowledge and involvement in the programme. It is envisaged to include a fair number of volunteers and beneficiaries in the interview sample. This can be realised by conducting focus group discussions with these groups, along with some individual interviews.

7. **Focus group discussion setup**

Focus groups discussion will take place at a location and time that suits the individuals who are being interviewed. The usual rules for focus groups will be observed:

- The purpose of the discussion is clearly explained to the participants.
- It is also explained to them that their participation is not obligatory.
- Participants are asked their consent to participate.
- The setting is conducive to making people feel at ease as much as possible, in a comfortable space with some refreshments offered if available.
- The groups are not bigger than 10-15 individuals
- The composition of the groups is more or less homogenous in terms of position, age, gender or other characteristics that are relevant for the issues to be discussed during the focus group. This will be guided by cultural norms (to be advised by programme staff)
- Questions are open questions. The discussion leader asks clarification where needed.
- Discussions will be held in the language that the participants feel most at ease in, with an independent interpreter where required.
- Guidance will be sought from programme managers regarding appropriate methodologies for enabling effective focus group discussions, taking into account such issues as educational background and literacy levels.

8. **Review plan**

- Individual key informant interviews and focus group discussions will be recorded, either on paper or on a laptop. A digital recording of the interview may be taken with the consent of the informant to aid accurate data collection, but only with the permission of the informant.
- Notes will be analysed according to pre-defined categories corresponding to review questions; during data analysis, categories may be refined or adapted as necessary.
- Project documents will also be analysed, as much as possible using the same categories in order to triangulate the data, using appropriate software
- Recordings of key informant interviews (if used) will be used to verify quotes but will not be shared.
- Quotes will not be attributed to individuals.

9. Ethics and consent

- Each interview will begin with an explanation of the purpose and independence of the review to interviewees and consent will be sought to proceed on the basis of confidentiality. People will have the opportunity to opt out of the interview without further consequence.
- Individual key informant interviews will be recorded (either using a recording device or through notation directly into a laptop. Recordings of key informant interviews will be used to verify quotes but will not be shared.
- Permission will be requested before any photographs are taken and how photographs may be used will be clearly explained.
- Notes will be analysed according to pre-defined categories corresponding to review questions; during data analysis, categories may be refined or adapted as necessary.
- Project documents will also be analysed, as much as possible using the same categories in order to triangulate the data.
- Data entry will be carried out using regular Office software or using freely accessible software tools for qualitative data analysis.
- Any quotations used in the report will not be attributed to individuals in order to maintain confidentiality.

10. Organisation of the district visits

For organisational ease the first district visit, where the review team will pilot the review tools will be Lalitpur. The teams will then split up, with each team visiting two districts; the MTR task force organisers are requested to organise this taking into consideration logistical ease of access between districts.

The teams will split taking into consideration the need for interpretation; the team leader will travel with the team member from the Pakistan Red Crescent and an independent interpreter (it is important that the interpreter is entirely independent and is not connected to the Nepal Red Cross or its work in the districts), while the national consultant will travel with the NRCS representative (which team will go where will be decided once in Kathmandu).

For each district chapter, an itinerary of interviews and focus group discussions should be organised prior to the arrival of the team, taking into consideration the following:

- The first meeting on arrival in the district should be a briefing from the NRCS District Programme Coordinator (DPC), to introduce the recovery programme in the district and review the programme of interviews and visits to the VDCs. A minimum of two hours should be given for this meeting.
- A list of key informants should be put together by the DPC, together with partners and should include:
 - NRCS district chapter personnel (staff, governance, volunteers);
 - Government of Nepal counterparts (NRA, other authorities);
 - RC partners (delegates, key personnel);
 - Other partners or organisations that work alongside the Red Cross (for example NGO members of coordination committees).
- One hour meetings should be set up for these interviews to take place (with enough time in between to allow for travel); these can be focus group meetings where appropriate, for example with NRCS volunteers (maximum 10-15 people please) – see guidance regarding focus group meetings above.

- One or two VDCs should be identified for each district visited. In each visit, at least one and a half hours should be allocated to each focus group discussion, individual meetings with VDC leadership, key stakeholders etc and for observation (of works carried out for example).

11. Organisation of interviews in Kathmandu

As with the district level interviews, a list of key informants based in Kathmandu should be compiled. These interviews should be scheduled to take place between 17 – 19 July if possible, although if key informants are not available in this period then interviews can be scheduled for 4 July. Interviews can be double booked as they will be led by either the national consultant or the team leader (confirmation of who will carry out each interview will be agreed in July).

Informants should include:

- NRCS staff and governance, including members of the ERO steering committee
- Government of Nepal counterparts (NRA, DUDBC, Ministry of Health and other authorities);
- RC partners (country representatives);
- Other key interlocutors

Each interview should be scheduled to last one hour, with enough time allowed for travel between locations (and half an hour for lunch please!).

Interviews undertaken during inception visit

Nepal Red Cross Society

Chairman - Sanjiv Thapa

Secretary General - Dev Ratna Dhakwha

Head of the ERO - Umesh Dhakal

NRCS Head of Finance - Dharma Datta Bidari

ERO Finance Coordinator - Patrush Rai

OD Unit - Janardhan Pokharel

ERO Consultant - Kamal Niraula

Technical teams

Shelter - Dipak Giri (ERO), Priyanka Thapa (?), Laxman Chhetry (IFRC)

WASH - Birendra Sahi (ERO), Kaustubh Kukde (IFRC)

Health - Mausam Bohara (ERO), Bijay Bharati (IFRC)

Livelihood - Saroj Shrestha (ERO)

PMER - Tara Gurung (ERO), Dibakar Behere (IFRC)

IFRC

Head of Country Office - Max Santner

Programme Coordinator - Mike Higginson

Head of Finance & Management Services - Yadav Prasad Dahal

Logistics Coordinator - Tendai Chabvuta

Partners

Spanish Red Cross - Sergio Garcia (Country Representative)

Danish Red Cross - Anne-Sophie Petri (Programme Coordinator Recovery)

British Red Cross - Jill Clements (Country Representative), Hrushikesh Harichandan (Recovery Coordinator), Lucy Brearley (PMEAL)

Canadian Red Cross - Richard McCabe (Country Representative)

Australian Red Cross - Mukesh Singh (Country Representative)

Swiss Red Cross - Luigi Viscardi (Recovery Programme Coordinator)

Japanese Red Cross - Kazuyu Lgarashi (Acting Country Representative)

American Red Cross - Leela Mulukutla (Country Representative)

Norwegian Red Cross - Karyn Beattie (Country Representative)

Annex 3: Itinerary

2 July 2017	International consultant arrives in Kathmandu
3-4 July	Briefing with IFRC staff Team planning and orientation Briefing meeting with ERO director KII with CEA Officer

Kavre

5 July	Travel from Kathmandu to Banepa Kavre Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter & ERO team and DRC delegates/staff KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee members KII District Livestock Office, Veterinary Officer & Senior Livestock Officer
6 July	KII ERO Livelihood Officer and DRC Livelihood Delegate KII District Health Office KII Representative of Water and Sanitation Division Office Travel to Kharelthok 2 FGD Community Members Kharelthok KII Auxiliary Nurse, Kharelthok Health Post KII with Livelihood beneficiary KII with KIDRAK representative KII with Child Resilience Programme beneficiaries Travel back to Dhulikhel
7 July	KII Teacher involved in Child Resilience Programme KII Chief District Officer KII with NRA head, Kavre Travel to Dolalghat 9 Visit drinking water construction site - on the spot conversations with community members FGD Community members Dolalghat KII with Cash for work beneficiary KII with Bhumlu10 ward chairman KII DRC Programme Coordinator KII ERO DPC KII WASH Officer KII PMER Officer Feedback to ERO team
8 July	Team split - travel to Chautara, Sindhupalchok and Kathmandu

Lalitpur

9 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team Departure to Godawari KII with ward chair and secretary of ward no. 2 (previous ward No. 3 & 4) FGD with mixed program beneficiaries (4 men 13 women) FGD with Livelihood CCG of Ward No. 2 & CFW beneficiaries of Godawari Ward No. 1 (previous 1 & 2) FGD with sub-branch chair and a member Observation of Hygiene promotion session organized for senior citizen and observation of vocational training notice
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10 July	KII with district level line agencies - CDO - District Agriculture Office - District Health Office - District Livestock office FGD with District Chapter Steering Committee including chapter president FGD with volunteers FGD with sector officers
11 July	Departure to Mahalaxmi from DC Meeting with community leaders: Ward Chairman, Sub chapter President and other stakeholders of Ward No. 8 (previous Ward No. 6 & 7) Observation of water scheme project of Gomati Khanepani Yojana & FGD with the WUG, and the potential beneficiaries of the project Interaction with the Livelihood CCG beneficiaries from Lubhu Observation of completed water scheme: Sukunda ma puchha & FGD with WUG of Sukunda ma Pucha KII with NRA head KII with PMER, ERO, district branch KII with DPC, ERO, District branch

Sindhupalchok

9 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee (President, Member) KII Head, DUDBC KII DUDBC KII Staff from District Livestock Office	
10 July	Travel to Nawalpur FGD with people who had participated in Mason Training Workshops Visit/KII with family living in model house build during Mason Training Visit to school toilet block construction, Kunchok FGD with NRCS and female community health volunteers, Kunchok Travel back to Chautara KII with DPC KII with PMER Officer	
11 July	Travel to Sikharpur FGD with Community Members, Sikharpur Visit irrigation canal repair, KIIs with Cash-For-Work recipients Visits/KIIs to 2 households (focused on toilets, training and improved cooking stoves)	KII Admin & Finance Officer KII Deputy DPC KII Logistics Officer KII Senior ICB Assistant KII WASH Officer KII Health Officer
12 July	Feedback meeting to ERO Team Travel from Chautara to Manthali, Ramachhap	

Rasuwa

12 July	Travel from Kathmandu to Dhunche, Rasuwa
13 July	Visit to NRCS ERO office, briefing DPC FGD with ERO staff at the district chapter FGD with president (NRCS Rasuwa chapter president) and 2 other steering committee members. KII with NRA KII with CDO KII with DCC KII with Head, District Agriculture Office KII with UNHABITAT technical advisor

	Field observation- health post construction
14 July	Travel to Thulagaun VDC Field visit, Shelter and foot trail observation FGD with Shelter beneficiary FGD with foot trail beneficiary Individual meeting with VDC Leadership and key stakeholders Travel to Saramthali VDC FGD with water users' committee KII with newly elected ward chairman KII with livelihood beneficiary, goat raising KII with livelihood beneficiary, vegetable farming KII with Field Officer KII with DPC
15 July	Field visit, HHs latrine and water schemes observation FGD with water schemes beneficiary FGD with HHs latrine beneficiary Individual meeting with VDC Leadership and key stakeholders Travel to Kalikasthan for night stay Travel to Kathmandu from Kalikasthan

Ramechhap

12 July	Travel from Chautara, Sindhupalchok to Manthali, Ramechhap	
13 July	Introductory meeting with NRCS District Chapter and ERO team KII NRCS District Chapter Steering Committee (President, Treasurer, Secretary) KII Ramechhap CDO KII NRA District Coordinator KII Chief, District Water Supply and Sanitation Office KII Veterinary Officer, District Livestock Office	
14 July	Travel to Rampur FGD Community Members, Khanidanda, Rampur 5 FGD ERO Staff and Social Mobilisers, Rampur Travel back to Manthali	KII Health Officer KII PMER Officer KII Livelihood Officer KII Finance Officer
15 July	Travel to Rampur FGD Female Community Members, Chharghare, Rampur 2 FGD Male Community Members, Chharghare, Rampur 2 KII Health Post In Charge, Rampur Visits/short interviews with to 2 households, Rampur Travel back to Manthali Feedback session with NRCS SC member and ERO team	
16 July	Travel back to Kathmandu	

Kathmandu

17 July	KIIs with: NRCS Finance Director, NRCS Head of Humanitarian Values & Communications, NRCS ERO Finance Coordinator, NRCS Head of Finance Management Services Unit, IFRC Head of IFRC Country Office and IFRC Programme Coordinator
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18 July	KIIs with: Deputy Project Director, DUDBC Country Representative American Red Cross Country Representative Canadian Red Cross ERO Shelter Coordinator, NRCS ERO GESI Coordinator, NRCS ERO PMER Coordinator ERO WASH Coordinator, NRCS DM Director, NRCS ERO Logistics Coordinator, NRCS Deputy Director NRA
19 July	Representative Department of Health Country Representative Belgian Red Cross (Flanders) Country Representative Norwegian Red Cross Recovery Coordinator, Swiss Red Cross Heads of Cooperation and Protection, ICRC Director of ERO, NRCS FGD with ERO Steering Committee members, NRCS
20 July	Participation in Movement Coordination meeting Presentation of initial findings Team planning for write up phase
21 July	International Consultant departs KII with: HR coordinator, IFRC, Kathmandu Director, ERO, NRCS, Kathmandu Livelihood Coordinator, NRCS Institutional Capacity Building Coordinator, IFRC Technical Advisor, ERO, NRCS, Kathmandu
24 July	Health Coordinator, ERO, NRCS Country Representative, Spanish Red Cross Country Representative, Australian Red Cross Country Representative, Livelihood delegate, information/advocacy delegate, British Red Cross (through skype)

Annex 4: Informants

Kathmandu

Key Informants	Position	Organisation
Indra Bahadur KC	Secretary, ERO Steering Committee & Acting Executive Director	NRCS
Karyn Beattie	Country Representative	Norwegian Red Cross
Dharma Dutta Bidari	Finance Director	NRCS
Dr Mausam Bohara	Health Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Dr Bhisma Bhusal	Deputy Director	NRA
Lucy Brealey	PMEAL Officer	British Red Cross
Jill Clements	Country Representative	British Red Cross
Yadav Dahal	Head of Finance Management Services Unit	IFRC Nepal
Umesh Dhakal	Director, ERO	NRCS
Dev Ratna Dhakhwa	Secretary General & ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Sarita Dhungana	Community Engagement and Accountability Officer, ERO	NRCS
Dipak Giri	Shelter Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Sergio González	Country Representative	Spanish Red Cross
Tara Gurung	PMER Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Sanjeev Hada	ICB Coordinator	IFRC
Hrusikesh Harichandan	Recovery Coordinator	British Red Cross
Mike Higginson	Programme Coordinator	IFRC
Kazuyo Igarashi	Acting Country Representative	Japanese Red Cross
Parikshit Kadariya	Deputy Project Director	DUDBC
Puja Koirala	GESI Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Richard McCabe	Country Representative	Canadian Red Cross
Leela Mulukutla	Country Representative	American Red Cross
Hari Prasad Neupane	ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Kamal Niraula	Advisor, ERO	NRCS
Dharma Raj Pandey	Disaster Management Director	NRCS
Prem Phaju	Head	DWSS
Dibya Raj Poudel	Head of Humanitarian Values and Communications	NRCS
Pramesh Poudel	Head of Cooperation	ICRC

Patrus Rai	ERO Finance Coordinator	NRCS
Ishwor Regmi	Logistics Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Max Santner	Head of Country Office	IFRC
Els Schapendonk	Country Representative	Belgian Red Cross (Flanders)
Birendra Shahi	WASH Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Abhinav Sharma	Human Resources Officer	IFRC
Ajeet Kumar Sharma	ERO Steering Committee member	NRCS
Dr Mahendra Shrestha	Director	District Public Health Officer
Saroj Shrestha	Livelihood Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Saurav Shrestha	Head of Protection	ICRCK
Mukesh Singh	Country Representative	Australian Red Cross
Priyanka Thapa	Shelter Officer, ERO	NRCS
Sanjiv Thapa	Chairman (governing board and ERO steering committee)	NRCS
Luigi Viscardi	Recovery Coordinator	Swiss Red Cross

Kavre

Key Informants	Position	Organisaion / Place
Narayan Shrestha	Head	District Livestock Development Office
Lucia Taboara	Livelihood Delegate	Danish Red Cross
Dr. Arjun Sapkota	District Health Officer	District Public Health Office
Prakash Aryal	Program Coordinator	Danish Red Cross, Kavre
Mohan Lal Jaishi	WASH Officer	District WASH Office
Radha Subedi	Program coordinator	KIDRAK
Dhurba Simkhada	Chief District Officer	CDO, Kavre
Ashok Adhikary	Engineer	DUBDC Kavre
Dhruba Gaında	Head	NRA, Kavre
Chitra Bahadur Tamang	Ward Chairman, former users' committee chairman	Dolalghat
Tika Jung Karki	PMER	NRCS, ERO, Kavre
Anita Tamang	Community member	Panchkhal
Anirudra Neupane	DPC	NRCS, REO, Kavre
Raghubir Chou Pradhan	District Chapter President	NRCS district chapter Kavre

Ananta Krishna Shrestha	Secretary	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Udhav Prasad Poudel	Treasurer	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Kumar Karki	Vice President	NRCs district chapter Kavre
Meera Joshi	Midwife	Health Post
Achut Sedhai	Member, CDMC	Kharelthok
Sharmila Sedhai	Member, CDMC	Kharelthok
Ramchandra Bhattarai	Teacher, Child Resilience Programme	School
Binda Panday	Community member	Kharelthok
Afsara Panday	Community member	Kharelthok
Focus Group Discussion		
Kharelthok, ward 2, Panchkhal	7 men, 5 women	Panchkhal
Kharelthok, different ward community members	10 men, 6 women	Panchkhal

Lalitpur

Key Informants	Position	Organisaion / Place
Devendra Basnet	Ward chairman	Mahalaxmi municipality, Godawari
Pradip Dhowj Karki	Ward secretary	Godawari VDC
Gore B.K	Mason training recipient	Godawari
Raj Kumar Shrestha	CDO	Lalitpur
Jhalak Sharma Poudel	DPHO	Lalitpur
Dr. Mogal Prasad Sah	Senior Livestock Development Officer	Lalitpur
Bharat Devkota	DAO	Lalitpur
Hari Dutta Poudel	WASH Officer	Lalitpur
Surya Bahadur Thapa	Friends Services Council (FSC), NGO	Lalitpur
Goma Devi Dhakal	District Coordinator	NRA
Suman Ghimire	Chiarwoman, Drinking Water users' committee	Lalitpur
Ram Sunar	Business man (Iron workshop)	Mahalaxmi
Chanchala Nepali	Business woman	Godawari

Basudev Sharma Goutam	Ward chairman, Mahalaxmi-9	Mahalaxmi
Sushmita KC	Business woman (colourful shoe-making)	Mahalaxmi
Nanda Bahadur Shrestha	Chairman, sub-banch	Godawari sub-branch
Kshitiz Acharya	DPC, Lalitpur	ERO, Lalitpur
Sharmila Karmacharya	PMER coordinator	ERO, Lalitput
Sabita	Social Mobiliser	Godawari
Bekha Man Byanjankar	President & Steering Committee Coordinator	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Baburaja Maharjan	Secretary & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Kalpit Kumar Tripathi	Treasurer & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Dinesh Karki	Member & Steering Committee Member	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Lila Kumari Limbu	Administrative & Finance Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Roshana Byanjankar	Senior Office Assistant	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Rushma Panta	Livelihood Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Poonum Adhikari	Program Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Chhoden Lama	WASH Officer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Biwash Thapa	Junior Engineer	NRCS, Lalitpur DC
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Godawari women group	Godawari	14 men, 5 women
Godawari sub-branch	Godawari	1 man, 1 woman
Volunteers (district chapter)	Lalitpur	4 women, 8 men

Rasuwa

ERO staff

S. No.	Key Informants	Position	Organisation / Place
1	Madhu Sudan Thapa	District Program Coordinator	NRCS, Rasuwa
2	Rajendra Koli	Finance and Adminstration Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
3	Agni sharma Timilsina	PMER Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
4	Surya Bikram Gole	Field Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
5	Pawan Pandey	Shelter Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
6	Bhola nath silwal	WASH Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
7	Suman Paudel	Livelihood Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa
8	Smita Thapa	Program Officer	NRCS, Rasuwa

District chapter: steering committee

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Babu Lal Tamang	President	Dhunche
2	Lama Renjan Ghale	Seceretary	Dhunche
3	Dinesh Tamang	Treasure	Dhunche
4	Balram Ghimere	Member	Dhunche

Line agencies/NRA

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Rajendra Dev Pandey	LDO	DCC
2	Chomendra Neupane	CDO	DAO, Office
3	Rabi Koirala	DE	DWSS, Office
4	Shiv Raj Neupane	Technical advisor	UN Habitat
5	Ramesh Humagain	SADO	DADO
6	Krishna kant Upadhaya	Head	NRA

Social mobiliser and volunteers

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Dev Bahadur BK	Social Mobilizer (Lead)	Thulogaaun
2	Kamala Adhikari	Social Mobilizer	Thulogaaun
3	Hiramaya Gurung	Social Mobilizer	Thulogaaun
4	Bal Kumari Gurung	Social Mobilizer (Shelter)	Thulogaaun
5	Nisha Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 1
6	Kopila Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 3
7	Prabina Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 4
8	Phulmaya Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 5
9	Nabika Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 6
10	Ishwori Neupane	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 7
11	Sarina Gurung	Volunteer	Thulogaaun 9

Beneficiary/Local Government Agencies

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Asha Bahadur Guruung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
2	Meen Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary/Ward member	Thulogaaun

Beneficiary

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Bishunu Bahadur Gurung	RAG President ward-9	Thulogaaun
2	Shant Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
3	Goma Gurungseni	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
4	Nir Bahadur Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun
5	Sita Maya Gurung	Beneficiary	Thulogaaun

Beneficiary/Users' committee members

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Dhurba Achrya	Chairman, water users committee	Laharepauwa
2	Sita Neuaane	Treasurer	Laharepauwa
3	Ramchandra Gajurel		

4	Dol Kumari Achrya		
5	Raju BK	Member	Laharepauwa
6	Keshar Bdr Bulun	Chairman (Ward)	Laharepauwa
7	Resham Tamang		
8	Thakur Prasad Gajurel		

Livelihood Beneficiary

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Meuka Nagarkoti	Goat Farmer	Laharepauwa
2	Chandra Man lo	Tomato (Veg) Farmer	Laharepauwa

Participants detail: Social Mobiliser

S. No.	Name	Position	Address
1	Ganesh Achrya	Social Mobiliser, Laharepauwa	Laharepauwa
2	Rajendra Prasad Gajurel	Social Mobiliser, Laharepauwa	Laharepauwa

Ramechhap

Key Informants	Position	Organisation / Place
Rishiaj Acharya	District Coordinator	NRA
Sundar Bartaula	Engineer	DUDBC Rampur
Jaya Ram Basnet	DPC	NRCS ERO
Lok Bahadur Chaulagai	Head	District WASH Office
Mahesh Deubajar	Veterinary Officer	District Livestock Office
Samihana Dhakal	Shelter Officer, ERO	NRCS
Bikram Raj Gryawali	Engineer	NRA
Partik Gurung	Health Officer, ERO	NRCS
Dinesh Kumar Karki	Treasurer	NRCS District Chapter
Shiva Kumar Karki	President	NRCS District Chapter
Suriya Bahadur Khatur	Chief District Officer	District Office
Prem Punthoki	Admin & Finance Officer, ERO	NRCS
Arun Rai	PMER Officer, ERO	NRCS
Indra Rana Magar	Administrative Officer	Rampur Ward Office
Sushant Raut	Livelihood Officer, ERO	NRCS
Suprabha Sharma	Junior Engineer	NRCS ERO
Dhana Bahadur Shrestha	Community member	Rampur
Taya Parakash Shrestha	Secretary	NRCS District Chapter
Ujjeli Shrestha	Community member	Rampur
Dan Bahadur Tamang	Community member	Rampur
Kamala Tamang	Community member	Rampur

Krishna Bahadur Tamang	Rampur Health Post In Charge	Department of Health
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Community members	Khanidanda, Rampur 5	4 women, 3 men
ERO Staff and Social Mobilisers	Rampur	5 women, 8 men
Female community members	Kolonjor, Rampur 2	14 women
Male community members	Kolonjor, Rampur 2	16 men

Sindhupalchok

Name	Position	Organisation / Place
Dipesh Acharya	Social Mobiliser	NRCS
Bimala Bhattarai	Community member	Nawalpur
Ram Krishna Bhandari	Steering Committee Member	NRCS District Chapter
Mukunda Bhatti	Logistics Officer, ERO	NRCS
Khem Kumari Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Ram Kumar Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Shyam Kumar Bhujel	Community member	Nawalpur
Bim Prasad Dahal	Executive Officer	Nuwapur Municipality
Arjun Khadka	Veterinary Officer	District Livestock Office
Gavinda Bahadur Kayastha	Community member	Badegaun
Sanjapa Lama	Sanitation Assistant	NRCS
Rudra Bahadur Malla	District Officer in Charge	NRA
Bishnu Maya Nakarni	Community member	Badegaun
Kaziman Nakarni	Community member	Badegaun
Srijana Nepal	Health Officer, ERO	NRCS
Prawesh Neupane	PMER Officer, ERO	NRCS
Youb Raj Paudyal	Division Chief	DUDBC
Thaneshor Pokhrel	Senior ICB Assistant, ERO	NRCS
Sujan Regmi	WASH Officer, ERO	NRCS
Ram Krishna Sapkate	Social Mobiliser	NRCS
Chandika Sapkota	Community member	Sikharpur
Dr Kalyan Kumar Shrestha	Senior Livestock Officer	District Livestock Office
Sanjib Shrestha	Admin & Finance Officer, ERO	NRCS
Hari Prasad Subedi	DPC, ERO	NRCS
Rajendra Man Talchabhadal	President	NRCS District Chapter
Bansha Lal Tamang	Chairperson	Nawapur Municipality

Name	Position	Organisation / Place
Srijana Tamang	Community member	Sikharpur
Subash Timilsina	Deputy District Programme Coordinator, ERO	NRCS
Focus Group Discussions	Location	# participants (M/F)
Community members	Sikharpur	3 women, 5 men
Participants of mason training	Nawalpur	1 woman, 8 men
NRCS & community volunteers	Kunchok	6 women, 1 man
ERO engineers and social mobilisers	Badegaun	4 female social mobilisers, 3 male engineers

Appendix 1: Kavre

Categories	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• In Kavre, recovery operations have two major interventions: first, integrated recovery and resilience (IRRP) programme supported by consortium partners led by Danish RC and second, reconstruction of health facilities supported by Korean Red Cross. The implementation of IRRP activities and budget delivery is going well. However, reconstruction of health facilities faced serious challenges due to issues with the contractor and the consultant. • Unlike other NRCS recovery operation districts, Kavre has adopted a systematic programme approach including vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA), developed community recovery plans and formed and/or strengthened community disaster management committees (CDMCs). The conducting of VCA at the start of the programme intervention has ensured the support reaching most vulnerable segments of the society and a high level of community engagement as evidenced by the FGDs. • The chapter has good coordination with line agencies including NRA district branch. Most of the line agency heads expressed that NRCS is the trusted partner in the district in times of emergency and recovery operations. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that it will complete all the planned activities by end of December 2018. Programme delivery so far has been around 60% in software and around 45% in hardware. • Overall, highly capable staff, committed governance and good coordination with the partners are contributing to making the recovery operations a success in the district.
Targeting/coverage	• Target groups such as most vulnerable, <i>janajati</i>, <i>dalit</i> and marginalized were well represented in the programme beneficiaries. Adoption of the VCA process at the start of the programme and selection of beneficiaries based on the assessments, formation and strengthening of CDMCs helped target the most vulnerable, marginalized, <i>Janajatis</i> and <i>dalit</i> community members. • RC did not have any plan to address the unmet needs of the communities. Usually the long-term recovery touches on many sectors including emergency management, public health, housing, mental health and the environment. The RC interventions are limited to health, livelihood and WASH, together with some soft components of shelter. • The VCA revealed inaccuracies of the needs assessment baselines process led from NHQ, eg it suggested that few families needed toilets, but the VCA revealed that many did not have functioning toilets and this was confirmed by the PHAST assessment.
Programmes (4+1)	100% stakeholders in the district believed that all the programme interventions are in line with the community needs. The 4+1 interventions were very much useful and accepted by the community members. Community members in FGDs were very much happy with the Red Cross support.

	Shelter - Construction of shelter was not the part of the recovery operations. Soft components such as PASSA trainings and roll out sessions, masons and carpenter trainings, IEC production and distribution were the key activities under this component. Around 42% of the programme target in PASSA was achieved at the time of this assessment. WASH - Construction/rehabilitation of drinking water schemes, planning of PHAST and its roll out, latrine and other sanitary unit construction and behaviour change and hygiene promotion are the key interventions under this component. - Eight drinking water schemes have been completed, reaching around 30% target beneficiaries. - RC has also played a key role in helping government achieve the ODF declaration. - District line agency is happy with the work RC is doing in the WASH sector in both the response and recovery operations. Health - Key health interventions include first aid and CBHFA trainings, services and health awareness sessions. 35 volunteers have received health refresher training, 67 community members have received first aid training, 499 people received training on first aid injury training, and 38 people received first aid services. Apart from this, acute respiratory infection sessions and nutrition awareness sessions were conducted. - Feedback from local health staff suggested that while the training was good and DHO staff were involved, it should have been more interactive and involve more demonstration to make it less theoretical. - The winterisation programme was appreciated and met a palpable need. Health post reconstruction Health post construction is a major activity in 12 VDCs, which is supported by Korean Red Cross. This activity has been seriously delayed and concerned line agency are not happy with the progress. The reason of the delay was negligence of consultant and contractor. The contractor has now been replaced and NRCS is confident that the work will be completed by end of 2018. The progress of the work so far is as follows: - Foundation work on process 4 HP. (Sanobanthali, Walting, Chandenimandan, Banakhu) - Foundation work completed 2 HP. (Jyamdi, Gothpani) - Metal and Truss work ongoing 2 HP. (Kharelthok, Rayale) - Prefab Board Installation ongoing 1 HP. (Rabiopi)
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- Roofing / CGI sheet installation 1 HP. (Mahendrajyoti)

Health office doesn't use email and doesn't ask for reports. It was reported that RC shares documents on a monthly basis with WASH office. WASH office provides template for this information.

Livelihoods

- There are three interventions in the livelihood programme i.e. income generation support through Conditional Cash Grant (CCG) to individuals and groups, technical and vocational trainings and cash for work. 398 community people gained temporary employment through cash for work (303 male and 95 female), total 4611 person days worked for drinking water schemes, irrigation channels and ponds and mitigation schemes. In the conditional cash grant, community members have formulated household business plans and are implementing livelihoods activities, the most common is goat raising. Some families have started to generate some income from the sale of goats. Two levels of CCG depending upon levels of vulnerability, defined through VCA by the community – 40,000 and 30,000 rupees. Some confusion regarding the differences expressed in some FGDs. Feedback suggests that Rs 10, 000 allocated for livestock shelter construction is generally felt to be insufficient.
- RC is part of District Livestock Development Technical Committee and a member of the Livestock Development Working Group.
- District livestock office (DLO) has received support from RC to assist milk cooperatives, livestock insurance, getting loan from bank. RC has also helped communities in income generation. RC has supported DLO to organize trainings for communities. DLO is happy and impressed with the support received from the RC and appreciates the role played by RC during emergency and recovery operations.

Institutional Capacity Building

Capacity building interventions included the three tiers of the local level – RC chapter, community and the CDMCs. *CDMC / Community*

- Trainings, equipment, formation and strengthening of CDMCs are the key activities. The key activities of ICB included the following:
 - Capacity building of community on disaster preparedness and response
 - 79 CDMC board members including 29 female members trained on DRR
 - 27 Community volunteers provided CBDRR Training
 - Office establishment of CDMC
 - Emergency fund collection at CDMCs total of about NPR 500,000 (except NPR 10,000 supported by NRCS)
- Construction of Flood Mitigation Scheme completed at Dolalghat (90 HHs)

	• Plantation (2000 plants) for landslide mitigation (J8-1300, J6700). However, it was not clear why this activity was part of the institutional capacity building. • Level A training to 67 people • Response kit (Pre-positioning 24 wards) • Evacuation material preposition (15 points) • Emergency funds have been established in the communities. • Strengthening of CDMCs has helped resolve local issues and sustain the existing activities in future. In Kharelthok, local issues and some of the community complaint are resolved through the CDMC. • Conducting VCAs at the start of the programme helped not only identify the community needs but set the ground for developing local recovery plans. • CDMCs are committed to use their own fund - 1 lakh in the account for electricity, road construction, maintenance of water scheme. RC was also supported giving extra 10,000 extra money - those that haven't received training will get it in the next phase. Also, previously very happy given the skills training and equipment, so really happy. <i>District Chapter</i> • Capacity building of District Chapter in Disaster Preparedness and response • OD and DDRT training to DC volunteers • The planned office building construction for the district chapter seems ambitious in terms of budget and the timeline. Needs to review plan on time. • It seems that the ICB approach related to the chapter is more of a top down approach focusing on training and building and needs to be more bottom up. Overall, the ICB intervention is seen more focused on the training, equipping the communities and CDMCs. There was less focus on formulation or adaptation of policies, strategies, development of operational framework, tools, guidelines and capacity development of district branch, communities and individuals especially for the skills and knowledge building.
Other issues	• Complaint and feedback handling mechanisms are strong. Complaints and feedback are received through social mobilisers, hotline, suggestion box, monthly and quarterly reviews and personal meetings. The role of volunteers and social mobilisers has been effective and crucial in the collection and handling of many issues. Some issues could be resolved through socialisation of the criteria and decisions at the right time. • Integration of GESI in all activities, PWD focused interventions and child protection-related activities integrated into the Child Resilience Programme being delivered both through schools and with parents – interesting strategy that according to KIIs with participants is leading to some behaviour change related to child rights. Feedback suggests that the IEC materials are needed for the children and the parents. Also one

	KII suggested that it should not be providing what he termed junk food to students during the training sessions, suggested other incentives such as a certificate, first aid materials etc and also suggested that more monitoring of the programme was required. Some of the teachers involved in the CRP have reviewed and contextualised the material, it is understood that this will be published with a view to sharing with other districts. • The level of sectoral integration could be strengthened. Sectoral integration has been understood as having all 4 programme interventions in one location. Synergies among the sectors/interventions have not sufficiently ensured, in terms of joint planning, joint implementation, joint reviews/monitoring and dealing with issues together. True integration should provide a comprehensive package in a holistic manner and should reduce the cost and provide all-sector support to the communities. It was observed during the field visit and interviews that sectors programs were implemented standalone.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS district chapter has strong coordination and relationship with the line agencies and almost all line agencies mentioned that NRCS is the closest and a trusted partner in both the response as well as recovery operations, although one line agency expressed its disappointment with NRCS chapter and ERO office for not handling the health post construction issues seriously (noting that the relationship had declined from the excellent relationship maintained during the emergency). • There was an issue of per diem with one line agency. NRCS provides per diems for government officers for facilitation of trainings following NRCS rules, whereas government per diem rate (Rs 1,200 per day) is higher than NRCS's (Rs 700). This has created some misunderstanding, although NRCS suggested that their payments were sufficient given that the facilitation session was generally only for only one or two hours. • NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. • NRCS has mobilized district level resources especially technical experts from line agencies for facilitation of skill development trainings. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies including the Chief District Officer. • RC has helped line agencies to support EQ affected families through trainings and income generation activities. • Line agencies have the impression that the presence of delegates has helped support communities better (due to monitoring role).
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the programme interventions have increased the resilience capability of communities. • The programmes have helped connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), build skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increase livelihoods options and improve local leadership.

Management issues	• The relationship between Chapter and NHQ has increased after the recovery operations. However, chapter believes that it should be given more authority especially related to issues such as staff recruitment, budget approval ceiling and procurement. • There are gaps in beneficiary communications. Some community members believed that some HHs are excluded from the programme support especially livelihood/cash grant programming. They think that the criteria do not truly reflect their situation. The issue could be resolved through further socialization of the criteria, selection finding and increased beneficiary communication. • Coordination with NGOs working at the community level is normal. There is room for improvement (such as with KIDRAK). One NGO representative based in the RC project community complained about the duplication of the RC activities. S/he also mentioned that the relationship between the NGO and RC was even worse in the past and now it is improving due to frequent coordination meetings at the community level. It was reported that in the livelihood component some beneficiaries did receive the grant but did not use the money for the intended purpose. For instance, some families prepared sheds but did not buy goats and some families even showed the existing goats and did not buy new ones. It was reported that CDMC was instructed to ask the concerned families to return the money and put the amount in the DRR fund at the local level. CDMCs are playing a crucial role in this regard. • It was reported that technical coordinators at ERO should visit to the district more and orientate the field staff time to time. • It was reported that procurement approach is now ok (RED contract) but suppliers make delays for • different reason in health construction work.
Actions to be taken	1. Trainings should be more gender inclusive. In one FGD, women members opined that there is very little interest of women in masons training. There should be some skill development trainings that help raise income generation and employment opportunities for women. 2. Sector integration has not been well practiced. Joint planning, one set of work plans, joint monitoring, synchronization in the technical support and joint review should be carried out. 3. Sectoral guidelines are more long-term development focused. Recovery focused guidelines are necessary. 4. Need to link CDMCs to LDRRMC and local government units for sustainability of local infrastructures. CDMCs have formed O&M funds, however it should be further strengthened and made operational with proper bank account and rules, regulations and procedures. 5. By sharing the progress reports on a regular basis and having frequent consultative meetings, the relationships with line agencies could be further improved.

Appendix 2: Lalitpur

Issue	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• The implementation of the program activities in the district is going well. Committed staff and volunteers, good coordination with the line agencies, appropriate program interventions and effective community mobilization have made the overall recovery program so far a success. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that they will complete all the planned activities by end of December 2018. Program delivery is reportedly around 60% in software and around 45% in hardware. • Program interventions especially livelihood component has shown some initial impacts on the improvement in the local household level economy. Some examples of successful ventures include mobile street shop, iron works, colourful shoe-making, and goat raising. • Some resentment among community members could be observed regarding the exclusion from the beneficiary list of conditional cash grant, cash for work (CfW) and trainings appropriate for women. It was observed that such issues could have been resolved through appropriate assessment tool at the beginning of the project such as VCA and deeper socialization of selection criteria and validation from the community members and groups. Strengthening of the CDMCs and linking them to LDRMC was clearly noticed. • Relation between chapter steering committee and ERO staff could be improved. The root causes of lack of sound relationships lie in the recruitment processes, differences in salary between chapter core staff and ERO staff and roles and responsibilities of the steering committee. More clarity on these issues could help smooth the relationship. • Sector integration, recovery focused guidelines and urban specific tools were felt necessary. The sectoral integration is understood as the activities of various sectors implemented in one locality without sufficient synergies. Joint planning, joint implementation including monitoring and use of integrated tools appears not to have been practiced in the communities. • Overall, community members who have received support from NRCS are happy despite some areas for improvement especially in identification of the most vulnerable households. Line agencies regard NRCS as the most trusted emergency and recovery partner in the district. The recovery operations have also helped build the image of RC.
Targeting/coverage	• Some RCM partners and stakeholders raised concerns regarding initial area selection for both the districts and communities. It was suggested that NRCS should have negotiated with the government to allocate the most affected districts for the RCM partners. A suggestion from district line agencies was that RC should go to more remote areas of the district and should cover more communities.

	• District selection should have been carried out in consultation with the local chapter and their priorities. Community selection should have been based on vulnerability and capacity assessment or other assessments so that the most vulnerable communities could have been identified for the program interventions under RCM. However, the selection of most vulnerable families in the communities appears to have been ensured in the livelihoods program through Focus Group Discussions, wellbeing analysis and data from secondary sources. This has not been the case in all program interventions. • The cash for work (CfW) scheme has been provided to the poorest families. One of the criteria for selection of the most vulnerable families for CfW scheme is those families who have not removed debris of their houses yet. For the cash grant provision under livelihoods program, a set of selection criteria has been developed and applied. • Lack of a standard tool for the categorization of vulnerabilities at the community level such as VCA and the absence of Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs) were two areas that could help target the most vulnerable families, identify the neediest households and resolve local development issues through active participation. • Local elected authorities and line agencies believed that NRCS should have covered more VDCs. Some stakeholders suggested that NRCS should have also targeted the more remote VDCs of the district. • NRCS does not have any plan to address unmet needs of the communities.
Programs (4+1)	100% respondents in the district opined that all the program interventions are in line with the community needs. The 4+1 interventions and general activities were designed by the NHQ whereas specific activities of each component such as livelihoods were designed by the local chapter in consultation with local stakeholders such as Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), political parties and ward secretaries. Livelihoods • Seed and toolkit support, conditional cash grant (CCG) in agriculture, livestock and small businesses, and vocational trainings for youth were some of the key activities implemented under the livelihood component in the district. Among them CCG with a cash grant of Rs 20,000 to each family has shown some visible impacts in the lives and livelihoods of some the poor families. Some successful small businesses include iron workshops, mobile shop, and ladies shoe-making. Although the amount allocated for Kathmandu valley districts is half of the amount given to other districts, which is not clearly justifiable, the study (interviews and field observations) shows that the lesser the amount the higher the chance of the poorest of the poor families to be selected for the scheme. • The selection of beneficiaries for CCG and CfW has sparked controversies and resentment among some community members who were excluded from the benefit. Some families have blamed the social

	mobiliser or community representatives who took part in the selection process for having excluded them intentionally. - Community resentment may have been avoided had a standard tool such as VCA applied and the outcomes socialized at the beginning of the program interventions. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) - Key activities implemented under this component include the training of trainers (ToT), school sanitation program, maintenance of water resources, water quality training, toilet construction and support to the declaration of ODF. - A significance progress has been achieved in this as was shared in a Powerpoint presentation to the MTR team. Some activities such as assessment for rainwater harvesting, school toilet construction, drinking water schemes are ongoing. - The concerned line agency in the district opined that the RC is quite ahead of other NGOs in terms of service delivery and package. However, it was reported that RC chose the closest communities for its interventions. No joint monitoring visits have been held in WASH sector. Health - RC has helped develop health contingency plan. RC is very active in DDRC and DLA in the district. - The concerned line agencies in the district believe that the completion of the immunization was a major challenge. NRCS' support in this regard was highly commendable. - RC also helped District Public Health Office in tackling diarrhoea outbreak last year and this year. RC has also helped in winterization. - Joint monitoring visits together with the concerned line agencies in the districts are also held. Shelter - Construction of shelter was not part of the program in the district. However, software components such as Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) training and community awareness raising, mason and carpenter trainings and community mobilization activities were implemented in the project communities. - Support for the debris clearance through cash for work scheme was also provided. - The community members who have received technical skill development trainings especially masons and carpentry are active in supporting to building earthquake resistant houses. This has helped build resilient houses as well as supported their own livelihoods. Institutional Capacity Building - Increased relationship between district and NHQ
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	• Increased capacity of governance (<i>Shesh, on what basis do you observe this?</i>) • DRR fund is present at the community level. • Coordination meetings are held on a regular basis; BRC also participates • Staff members are recruited by NHQ. • One door policy in the procurement has tied hands of the district. NHQ spends budget on behalf of the district. District chapter believes that the financial and procurement guidelines should be different for recovery operation from the normal development operation. • No exchange visit for learning from other districts had been made.
Relationships with line agencies	• NRCS district chapter has extremely good relationship with the line agencies and almost all line agencies mentioned that NRCS is the closest, most trusted partner in both the response as well as recovery operations. However, they observed that the support provided by NRCS chapter during the response was higher than that of recovery operations in terms of coverage, timeliness and package. • NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. • NRCS is the District Lead Agency (DLA) in the district. One line agency mentioned that as a DLA in the district NRCS chapter could play more active role in coordination with NGOs than it does now. • NRCS has mobilized district level resources especially technical experts from line agencies for facilitation of skill development trainings. • Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies. Most of the line agencies did not make monitoring visits to the RC supported communities.
Community resilience	• Most of the respondents believed that the program interventions have increased the resilience capabilities of communities. They believe that awareness raising, technical trainings, linking communities to the district level resources, strengthening the household level livelihood options, and improving local leadership have made the communities safer and more resilient. • The programs have helped connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), build skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increase livelihoods options, improve local leadership, and so.
Management issues	• Chapter steering committee has worked as a bridge between communities and line agencies. Almost all line agencies interviewed believed that RC is the trusted partner in times of response and recovery operations in the district. However, some respondents believed that RC chapter management is a bit weak, needs improvement especially in beneficiary selection and cash disbursement system. Programs are more top-down and could be made bottom up through the adopting standard tools such as VCA and other assessment and planning tools and by involving local level stakeholders. So far assessments are done only for certain sector such as livelihoods.

	• There are gaps in the beneficiary communication. Socialisation of beneficiary selection criteria and findings in a participatory manner could help resolve many issues and grievances of community members. • DRR structure and funds exist at local level. RC should take some initiatives to be active part of it. • Volunteer mobilization could be made more inclusive especially in planning and community meetings. They are usually mobilized in the implementation without involving them in the planning and community meetings. They are involved in street drama, livelihoods business planning, data entry, PMER/CEA, PSS in school, PASSA. • Volunteers feel that the visibility of volunteers in the district is lacking. Some sorts of visibility items such as t-shirts, caps with RC logos could be provided. • The relationship between chapter steering committee and the ERO chapter staff members could be improved. Complaints from staff members regarding the attitude of steering committee members towards them were raised. Similarly, steering committee members were not happy about the difference in salary scales between the core staff and ERO staff. Clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the steering committee should be made on time. Also, the grievance handling mechanism for staff members should be in place.
Other issues	• District line agencies are impressed with the complaint handling mechanisms adopted by NRCS in the district. • Sectoral integration at community level, recovery focused guidelines and urban specific tools were felt necessary. Understanding of the sectoral integration needs clarity. The study shows that implementing various sector activities in one location but in silos has been understood as an integration. Joint planning, adoption of joint tools, sectoral coordination at all phases of the operation and joint monitoring and reporting are some of the key elements of an integrated approach. • Majority of the respondents from the community and line agencies suggested that NRCS should expand its program areas to the wider community (vulnerable people).
Actions to be taken	6. Trainings should be more gender inclusive. 7. Clarifications to beneficiaries needed on the daily rate for workers under the Cash for Work scheme. 8. Need to strengthen local level institutions such as LDRRMC/CDMCs for sustainability of local infrastructures. 9. District sub-branch should be in the loop for community level intervention...sub-chapter should be empowered and mobilized. 10. Sector integration needs further clarity and applications (see: description in 'other issues' section above for details).

Appendix 3: Ramechhap

Issue	Key issues, observations and any suggested actions
Overall	• There is a sharp distinction between the work in Rampur and Manthali; work is now in full flow in Rampur but is slower to progress in Manthali, with recognition that working in urban environment has been further complicated by the recent constitutional changes. • An integrated approach is being achieved in Rampur; generic social mobilisers and volunteers are supporting the programme across the sectors. The integrated approach evident through interviews and FGDs – having generic volunteers and SMs who are able to combine different issues when visiting homes makes sense and there is evident cross-team support, for example between the engineers regarding toilet construction, etc. Recognition that working in a neglected VDC where other organisations are not working makes it easier for RC to deliver a more integrated programme. • FGDs reveal community members generally very pleased with the RC interventions which are clearly meeting perceived need and filling gap not being filled by government in many cases. FGDs suggest that the recovery operation will mean that vulnerable people's quality of life will be better in some respects than before the earthquake (particularly related to access to water). • Good and meaningful involvement of community in determining individual eligibility for programme, eg determining who will be priority beneficiaries; missed opportunity not to have used VCA as the basis for community level planning and engagement. • The operation is maintaining a strong relationship with most key line agencies; RC activities are enabling government to far exceed its own targets in Rampur.
Coverage, targeting etc	• While following the government beneficiary lists for shelter, in the other three sectors ERO is focusing on lower caste and marginalised people, in what was characterised by interviewees as a “forgotten place by government”. KIIs and FGDs confirm that communities are actively participating in the definition of priority beneficiary selection criteria and FGDs were strongly in favour of the approach being taken. • RC is taking on an advocacy role when cases of people being mistakenly left off the shelter list are known to them, with reported successes, although FGDs suggest that there are still some vulnerable people (eg elderly women living on their own) who are not on the lists. • A key issue for Ramechhap district authorities is the inequality of response between the different VDCs, given that there are very few partners working in this district compared to some of the other priority districts (CDO reported that there is only one other partner (MedAir) working in 1 VDC, despite there being 49 VDCs in total, with 20 badly affected). Concern was expressed at the large number of RC staff and volunteers working in Rampur compared to neighbouring VDCs with only very limited staffing, meaning that results are much more limited. Informants believed that RC should be trying to support more of the badly affected VDCs through technical training and support, particularly related to shelter construction.
4+1: WASH	• Water activities estimated to be 30% complete, finishing first large drinking water scheme before starting second. Impact of RC water schemes will dramatically improve access to water to marginalised communities – FGDs confirmed the impact of limited access of water particularly on women who currently have to travel long distances during the night to collect water.

	• Water scheme involves community contribution through labour, being calculated as a rupee contribution. The user committee decided on the daily rate equivalent for senior and junior labourer – all HHs are contributing one person on a turn by turn basis, user committee also agreed those who do not need to contribute (elderly, PWD, etc). • General view that work on the water scheme should have started earlier in order to provide water for shelter construction (see below) and to ensure that there is not too much overloading of community contribution of labour. It was suggested that this would have enabled better shelter progress to have been achieved. • Government counterparts pleased with the RC work on water schemes and the close working relationship (ERO is providing monthly progress reports and attends monthly meetings), although suggested that more monitoring of WASH activities generally would be beneficial (eg to pick up some quality issues related to construction, although it was noted that when this was raised with RC, it responded positively). All suggested that RC should try to expand work in water to other VDCs given the dryness of the district. • Toilet construction seen to be effective by community members and government counterparts, with the provision of materials constituting a top-up for most vulnerable households. • FGDs suggest that more communication with women in communities regarding water systems could be useful; it was noticeable that women were unaware of the details of the Aitabar drinking water scheme compared to men. • Good examples of accessible construction (eg school toilets with ramps, water taps for children). Will be encouraging rain water harvesting, building plastic ponds shared between 4-5 houses through cash for work.
4+1: Shelter	• Strong, positive contribution by RC to ramping up the capacity of government to deliver EQ resistant housing to affected VDC; all government informants confirmed how happy they were with progress which is way ahead of target and progress in other VDCs (DUDBC target in Rampur is 10% of houses completed; Rampur is at 60% - 1st instalment completed, over 50% of 2nd instalment disbursed). • Shelter activities slow in Manthali (20-30 houses complete) – engineers believe that they will need another 12-15 months to finish. Given complications related to land ownership, lack of space etc, may have been better for RC to have focused on another isolated VDC instead. • DUDBC/ward/NRA all feel they are part of a team; they plan together and RC provides weekly update reports. All confirmed that the work is well coordinated. • RC is taking a positive advocacy role for people who have been missed off the government lists. • The financial incentive that was offered in April for households that had completed to DPC level by the anniversary of EQ (25,000 rupees) was very successful, but as 285 rather than the 100 HHs reached this target, the payments have not been made and this is resulting in complaints being received, by DUDBC as well as RC. Understood that decision is pending HQ approval (requested the budget in March). • An important RC contribution is tracking the processing of approvals for the payment tranches so that it takes on average 15 days (compared to a reported 2-3 months in other VDCs due to lack of personnel), although it is suggested that limited NRA capacity to sign off on approvals for each tranche of funding is still delaying progress. • Lack of water is also delaying construction rates, with families spending a reported 25-30,000 rupees on buying water per house.

	• Mason training generally seen to be good, although engineers recognise that they would have benefited from more hands-on training as most had not had practical education regarding building with stone. • General view from staff and FGDs that the programme needs to focus on retrofitting for category 2 houses and those that were rebuilt before the building codes were published. Requires retrofitting training to be held for engineers. FGDs revealed confusion around what is going to happen to people whose houses were defined as partially damaged, suggests that more communication around this required. • Informants all suggested that 3 lakhs was insufficient to build a house, with concern raised in some FGDs that some vulnerable people would not be able to raise additional money, even if they took on the labour, suggesting that people need access to loans. It was suggested that the only way that people are managing to build within the 3 lakhs budget is by reusing materials from the old house, which is against the guideline. • Good examples of accessible construction (eg school toilets with ramps, water taps for children, locks on doors and windows of houses suitable for old people and children) • Some views among engineers that it would have been better to have purchased materials for owners rather than giving money as would have resulted in better quality materials; may be useful to research this (may also have achieved better economy of scale?). • A number of informants (both government and RC) believe that the RC funds would have had more impact if they had been channelled into technical training and support, ramping up the NRA/DUDBC capacity to deliver the 3 lakhs and focusing on most vulnerable people for cash top ups (as reportedly done by MedAir, although has not been independently verified).
4+1: Health	• Reportedly on track to finish the health activities by March 2018, at about 75% for health training, 60% of the budget spent to date (had been over-budgeted so additional activities have been implemented it is understood). • In the view of district health personnel, the health awareness activities carried out by NRCS and other local NGOs has resulted in fewer than anticipated cases of people affected by diarrhoea and no outbreaks of epidemics. FGDs also confirmed that illness had decreased. • Baby kits (winterisation) were seen to be a good thing, providing the right clothing and of good quality. The distribution of solar lights to female health volunteers was said to be motivational. • Provision of additional rooms for the health post will enable it to accommodate women to give birth, welcomed by HP and all FGDs who raised this as a need. General view expressed that RC should stay longer to support the health post to reach more marginalised people. • Health activities have been implemented through existing groups and structures (such as mothers' groups, FCHVs, HP etc). • Volunteers/SMs felt they should have had more extensive first aid training in order to have more impact at community level.
4+1: Livelihood	• Of the four sectors, livelihood seems to be the one that has most still to achieve. It was also noticeable that most FGDs seemed confused about the plans for livelihoods. It is understood that there has been about 40-50% progress with goat sheds, 40% of the budget spent. • The focus on agricultural practices was welcomed by the Agriculture Office, which noted that "many people have stopped rearing animals since the EQ as they are focusing on housebuilding". The construction of goat sheds, purchase of animals, skill enhancement through training, provision of animal insurance etc were all supported by the office, although it was noted that the level of coordination was weaker than with other sectors (with some examples of duplications of effort shared). the Agriculture Office requested that

	monthly and quarterly reports be provided and that RC should meet regularly. It also suggested that RC should include vaccination and parasite control as part of the intervention and that social mobilisers could be used to pass on key agricultural messages • The provision of livestock insurance is a good sustainability mechanism. • A number of other interventions are being planned including rehabilitation of irrigation canals and construction of water harvesting ponds, to be carried out through cash for work (not a sustainable recovery strategy, caution must be exercised to ensure that CFW interventions do not undermine the strong community engagement that is underlying the integrated operation).
4+1: ICB	• ICB has not really started yet (10%), strategy needs to be developed • The steering committee believes that this should have been integrated from the start of the operation in order to draw in sub-chapters etc. It recommended that the plan needs to include support for the blood bank (particularly provision of solar panels so can maintain freezers). • Regrettable that more long term chapter volunteers have not been involved to date in the operation. It is suggested that more may be available when activities ramp up in Manthali, but this represents a lost opportunity for the chapter to have more hands-on involvement in delivering a community-focused programme.
DRR / resilience	• The next phase of the operation will be strengthened by integrating DRR across the programme. Should be a key part of the transition/exit strategy. • Missed opportunity not to have used some sort of VCA approach at the start of the operation to build relationship with community and help identify key vulnerabilities and capacities from the community perspective. A focused VCA approach could be useful for identifying the appropriate approach here.
Timing of activities	• Concern raised by line agencies, FGDs and staff/volunteers about the fact that many activities are currently happening at the same time, all drawing on the same community members to participate through provision of labour etc. This risks over-burdening community members (and SMs) and may result in a loss of the goodwill between communities and RC that was very evident in the FGDs. It is strongly recommended that activities need to re-scheduled to give more breathing space. • All sectors believe that more time is needed in order to ensure a good quality finalisation of activities. All feel under too much pressure to finalise all activities by end of 2017. It will be important to plan activities sector by sector and community by community to ensure that adequate time is given for a quality and timely completion of activities, with time dedicated to ensuring sustainability.
Relationships with line agencies	• As mentioned before, RC is seen to be a supportive and active partner by all government partners; a number highlighted additionally how the RC was responsive to issues raised, which they appreciated. All agencies view the relationship with RC as a strong partnership; building local capacity of these institutions. • The integrated approach is well appreciated and feedback was positive for all the interventions. Having all the political parties, agencies and NGOs/INGOs in the DDRC ensures that RC activities are well-coordinated and there was little evidence in FGDs of perceptions of political influences on the operation. • ERO is clearly coordinating its work well through achieved strong working relationships with activities/locations identified through D-WASH-CC and DDRC, involvement of VDC and stakeholders.
Management issues	• Budget expenditure currently estimated to be only 20% so far, although as mentioned before there is good progress on second instalment of funds, so this will begin to show through on the budget.

	• Evidently a strong and supportive team which takes a multi-disciplinary approach with a number of examples shared of how different teams support each other (eg health doing injury awareness sessions for shelter training, shelter engineers supporting on toilet construction). In view of this, may be over-staffed; opportunities to streamline staffing going forward, some staff have the capacity to deliver across several sectors. • The Steering Committee is clearly supportive and enabling, although being only three people, there are times when they are not available which can hamper field activities.
Community Engagement and Accountability	• Line agencies satisfied with the complaints mechanisms in place, which are streamlined with their own (toll-free numbers, suggestion boxes, FaceBook page, etc) but believe that public meetings and one-to-one meetings are the most important. FGDs suggest that women don't know about the toll-free number or the suggestion boxes. However, it is clear that the main conduits of concerns are the local volunteers and SMs in each ward. FGDs also highlighted positive use of SMSs. • FGDs demonstrated that communities are clear about the financial contribution of RC to different activities, for example the Aitabar water scheme. • Used community meetings to share information and plan, using local committee members, volunteers checking to ensure that the information reaches the household level. Also sharing information on budget and expenditure on notice boards, which FGDs value.
Relationship with key RC partner	• Seems that there is a strong relationship between ERO and IFRC. Good support, although ERO believes it should have opportunities to meet and share strategies & solutions with Sindhuli and Okladunga (and the other priority districts). • Logframe for Ramechhap was developed by IFRC, still in draft form, needs to be finalised and better ways of measuring certain outputs developed in the view of PMER. Should have been developed with closer district involvement.
Suggested actions to be taken:	1. RC should consider whether/how it can support neighbouring VDCs in order to achieve a more equitable response for vulnerable communities. This could involve inviting participants for mason training from neighbouring VDCs, offering engineering support and technical site visits, for example. RC should also explore whether RC engineers could be authorised by NRA to approve constructions in order to speed up the processes. 2. Prioritise the payment of incentive funds for reaching DPC level in order not to sour good RC-community relationships. 3. May be useful for RC to carry out another round of communication to pick up any remaining cases of people left off government housing list. 4. Determine RC strategy related to retrofitting, including provision of retrofitting training to engineers. 5. Increase communication efforts regarding operational plans particularly with women at community level. 6. Increase the level of coordination with the Agricultural Office, including providing monthly progress reports. 7. Re-plan integrated community level activities with community involvement to ensure that community members are not over-burdened with too many conflicting priorities for community engagement. 8. Put in place a programme of weekly meetings between ERO and steering committee with a nominee identified who can take decisions in the event that the president is unavailable.

Appendix 4: Rasuwa

Categories	Key issues, observations and suggested actions
Overall	• The implementation of the program activities in the district has mixed results. Social mobilization, livelihoods, cash for work (CfW), drinking water and WASH activities are going well, whereas construction of shelter and toilets has been seriously delayed. • Construction of private shelter and toilets was implemented only in <i>Thulogaun</i> VDC. The quality of the houses, foot trails and toilets are of high quality. District line agencies including CDO and NRA district head highly appreciated the quality of the construction. Community members who have received the support are extremely happy despite the delay and the higher investment of the construction. • Drinking water scheme in Vorle is going well and the team estimate that it will be finished in one or two months. The water users' committee (WUC) and beneficiary households are extremely happy with the scheme. However, they have a grave concern related to the protection of the source point which is prone to landslides. • Based on the progress made so far, the district chapter team is confident that they will complete all the planned activities (related to livelihood, drinking water and WASH), apart from shelter construction, by end of December 2018. Program delivery so far is reported to be around 50% in software and around 40% in hardware. • The relationship between the district chapter and line agencies, especially the Drinking Water Office and District Coordination Committee (former DDC) has not been smooth. • The construction of the district hospital is in the final stage of completion. It was reported that it will be completed by October this year although the target of completion was June 2017. Our observation shows that the quality has been well maintained and supervision by engineers is being carried out. • Program interventions especially livelihood component have yet to show some initial impacts on the improvement in the local household level economy. Some examples of successful ventures include vegetable farming and goat raising. • The need for strengthening of the CDMCs and linking them to LDRMC was clearly noticed. • Relation between chapter steering committee and ERO staff was normal. However, the steering committee wanted to hire the staff locally or through their active involvement. Steering committee has strong disagreement on the centralized procurement system of ERO. They believe that the procurement authority should be delegated to the chapter. This is one of the delays of construction works in the district.

	• The rate for CfW is too low compared to the market rate. It should be discussed prior to the implementation of this modality. It was learned that the market rate is more than Rs 1000/person/day, whereas the RC provides Rs 500 per person per day. • Community members who have received support from NRCS are happy despite identifying some areas for improvement, especially in identification of the most vulnerable households. • Sector integration could have been improved especially through joint need assessment and planning, synergies in program implementation including monitoring.
Targeting/coverage	• The district chapter had implemented the RIMA project in Thulogaun <i>and</i> Vorle VDCs supported by American Red Cross prior to the earthquakes. Emergency operations were carried out in 10 VDCs. For the recovery operations, 7 VDCs were selected situated around the RIMA project area. The district chapter steering committee members were not happy regarding the project selection. They believe that the project team at NHQ insisted in the selection for the ERO activities in the lower part of Rasuwa district. The upper part of the district has been excluded from the benefit. Assessments were done only in the lower part of the district and selected 7 VDCs out of 10 emergency support VDCs. • Chapter steering committee members opined that the selection of communities was based on the prior work experience i.e. nearby VDCs of RIMA project areas, and they seemed not happy with this decision. All of these VDCs lie in the lower part of the district and no VDC from the upper part is included in the recovery operations. However, beneficiaries within the VDC were selected based on pre-VCA⁴¹ through Recovery Action Group (RAG). RAG-facilitated village recovery plans were developed. District selection should have been done in consultation with the local chapter and their priorities. It seems it was imposed from the centre based on the interest of the previous project (RINA) • No CDMC formed or strengthened, but followed RAG approach. It would have been more appropriate and sustainable if the project could have strengthened LDRMC or CDMC instead of RAG, which will be dissolved after the recovery operation is over. • Community selection should have been carried out based on the vulnerability and capacity assessment or based on certain assessments so that the most vulnerable communities in the district could have been identified for the RCM program interventions. • NRCS did not have any plan to address the unmet needs of the communities. Apart from the new schemes beyond 4+1 program areas, additional drinking water schemes, cash grant for business for more families and trainings for women were reported as the unmet needs.

⁴¹ Some participatory tools were used to select the communities such as wellbeing ranking. This is called pre-VCA. However, detailed VCA was not conducted.

	- Newly elected local authority ward chairman who was former WUC member is very happy with the work done in the community with support from the Red Cross. He insisted the need for the expansion and continuation of such support. - Beneficiaries are inclusive, selection criteria have been followed, <i>janajati</i>, <i>dalits</i>, women, PWDs are included.
Programs (4+1)	Program activities generally seen to be realistic, appropriate and relevant. The steering committee members and staff believe that overall program is on track. “<i>Thulagaun</i> shelter has 40% progress, but in fact it is the progress of 6-7 months. It will be sped up after rainy season”. Shelter - Thuloagaun is the only shelter VDC. Households were selected based on the Red Card recipients from the Government. PASSA was not carried out; however, beneficiary communication was conducted. - The government rate of Rs 300,000 per house is not enough and the total cost has reached from Rs 800,000 to 1.2 million. The ‘<i>arma parma</i>’ method of labor support has slightly delayed the completion of the construction; however, this traditional way of supporting neighbors has strengthened the cohesiveness and unity among community members. - Cash grant support has been provided by RC. In total, 433 HH have received 1st installment, 153 HHs have received second installment and 123 have received the third installment. - The quality of private shelter and toilets is very high. Community members, local elected authorities and line agencies have all appreciated the quality of construction support provided by RC. - District steering committee and the staff members are not fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of the Build Change. - Rs 3 lakh is not enough for building a house. Communities have spent as much as 1.2 million Rs. They have added more than double of the Government allocated fund. RC has followed the government rule, however provided additional support for plantation, construction of trails and toilet construction. - Two shelter social mobilisers (RC) are currently working at the community level. - Informants suggest that it will take a minimum of 1.5 years more to construct the total target of 433 houses. Might go beyond Dec 2018. - RC has provided mason training to 96 community workers; the number is not enough for the construction of houses at the same time. Some of them have gone abroad or are not active. Additional mason trainings are being conducted. - Community participation in the shelter is reported to have excellent. Shelter beneficiaries seemed happy, despite the delay in house construction. They say the delay is due to the <i>arma parma</i> approach and their engagement in paddy cropping at the time of the field visit.

	Livelihoods • Livelihoods- social mobilization, VCA (criteria based format), beneficiary selection, training, first installment Rs 15,000, after initial work 25,000. Total provided 40,000/HH. No impact seen yet. • Livelihood activities have been completed in 2 VDCs, ongoing in one VDC, and in 1 VDC has not been started yet. • More focus has been given to shelter and WASH than livelihoods. • Overall, 50% work has been completed. Institutional latrine, irrigation, foot trails are activities under livelihood component through cash for work. • Generally, beneficiaries appear happy with their involvement in the livelihood activities. However, the schemes were not so impressive, which could have been done with their own. For instance, just to raise 2-3 goats and do vegetable farming of low scale, it seems no external support is needed and it won't have much impact on their livelihood. WASH • Five drinking water schemes in 3 VDC have been completed, rest ongoing, school sanitation and hygiene education (8 target schemes in 2 VDCs). Household latrine in 4 VDCs (Saranthali, Vorle, Yarsa, Thulagaun) are ongoing. Yarsa VDC was already ODF, but after EQ it was damaged. One more month needed to complete toilets in Saranthali. Line agencies are blaming RC saying RC did not support their plan of declaring ODF in the mid 2017 • The overall progress is 55% in terms of budget. • Lengthy procurement process, election time and rainy season caused delay to complete the toilet construction. • <i>Pariwartan Patra</i> works in 3 VDCs- especially in wash sector. RC is a co-lead together with DWSSCC. • Blanket approach in toilet construction could have been avoided – would have been better to have focused only on the poorest families. (Shesh, on what basis do you say this?) Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) • The steering committee and chapter staff believed that the institutional capacity has been improved after the ERO interventions. The capacity of district chapter has increased through the increased financial management, mobilization of human resources, receiving training and orientations, exposure visits to other program districts. • District chapter has formulated its 5 year strategic plan in line with the NRCS NHQ strategic plan. • Institutional memory might be lost as there is not a single core staff member at the chapter at present, and majority of ERO staff are from other districts.
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	Staff members lack knowledge and skills on disaster risk reduction, recovery operations and facilitation skills and need more training in these areas.
Relationships with line agencies	- NRCS has been active in the district level forums such as DDRC and clusters. However, update of the progress at the forums, and playing active role in coordination as a District Lead Agency (DLA) was found lacking. - The concerned line agencies including the Chief District Officer (CDO) mentioned that the target of declaring ODF in the district could not be achieved due to RC's failure to complete toilet construction in one of the communities. They also believed that the blanket approach taken by RC is against the Government policy. Some line agencies believe that as the District Lead Agency (DLA) the Red Cross has not played a sufficiently active role in coordination with NGOs and other development partners in the district. - Coordination between Chapter staff and Line agencies especially District Agriculture Office, Disaster Coordination Office (former DDC) and District Administration Office is not smooth. It was told to the MTR team that the RC did not support their plan of declaring ODF by not completing the toilet construction work in the RC-led VDCs. This must be improved through clarifying the issues and causes of the delay and updating the plans and progress at the district level forums such as DDRC and cluster meetings for effective program delivery in the district. The relationship could be improved through clarifying the issues and updating the plan and progress, etc. - Joint monitoring visits of the recovery operations have happened together with some line agencies, although most of the line agencies did not make monitoring visits to the RC supported communities. - The relationship between district chapter and line agencies should be significantly improved in order to effectively implement the program activities in the district. This should be both at Steering committee as well as staff level. Problems were observed at both levels. Three line agencies criticized RC for the delay of the toilet construction in the RC-led VDCs that affected the plan of declaring ODF. They were also not happy with the RC chapter branch in their updating the progress at DDRC meetings. However, NRA was very positive towards the quality of houses that RC is supporting in the communities.
Community resilience	- Most of the respondents believed that the program interventions have increased the resilience capabilities of communities by helping connect communities to line agencies and district level resource organizations (connectedness), building skills and knowledge on safer shelter, increasing livelihoods options and improving local leadership. - Disaster risk reduction component is not well reflected at the community level. More activities on disaster risk reduction, capacity building of communities and linking recovery operations to the long term development should be ensured in the next phase of the operation.
Management issues	Relationship between district chapter and ERO MHQ needs improvement especially in the issues related to procurement, staff recruitment and budget ceiling of the chapter.

	• DRR structure and funds do not exist at local level. But water users' committees are planning to raise the tariff and establish O&M funds. RC should take some initiatives to be an active part of it. • Visibility of volunteers is lacking - need to provide visibility items such as caps and t-shirts with Red Cross logos and ID cards, etc. • The relationship between chapter steering committee and the ERO chapter staff members could be improved. SC members are not happy with the recruitment process.
Other issues	• NRCS procurement policy and guidelines need to be improved. SC and staff are of the opinion that there is a need for a recovery friendly policy as the current policy is more development-friendly. Chapters should be allowed to be involved in the procurement process for more than Rs 500,000. • Monitoring from NHQ is OK, although no monitoring plan exists at present.
Actions to be taken	• Better coordination with district stakeholders (line agencies, NGOs) should be maintained through regular participation in the meetings, regular update about the progress of recovery operations at the district level mechanism. • Speed up the shelter and toilet construction as planned. • The quality of the shelters constructed under the RC support is extremely high compared to the shelter constructed by other agencies. However, cost effectiveness should also be taken into account. • Need to strengthen local level institutions such as LDRRMC/CDMCs for sustainability of local infrastructures • The rate for CfW is too low compared to the market rate. It should be discussed and agreed with the communities prior to the implementation of this modality. • More activities on disaster risk reduction, capacity building of communities and linking recovery operations to the long-term development should be ensured in the next phase of the operation.

Appendix 5: Sindhupalchok

Issue	Observations and any suggested actions
Overall	• Unlike other districts, the chapter is being supported by two PNSs running separate operations. with very different time frames; as the JRC-supported operation very delayed compared to that supported by NRC, the MTR mainly focused on activities in VDCs supported by NRC and field visits were conducted only in these VDCs. • FGDs with communities showed that the majority of the activities being delivered as part of the operation are meeting priority needs of affected people. FGDs revealed concerning perception of political bias influencing the implementation of the operation. • Concern raised by ERO staff that insufficient time to finish all the activities before end of 2017. Need to do bottom-up planning activity by activity to ensure sufficient time is given to finishing the various activities and ensuring that sustainability actions are in place.
Coverage, targeting etc	• Baseline assessments were carried out from April to June 2016 by the district team, survey through sampling, carried out by social mobilisers and volunteers. • The ERO worked initially through Ward Citizen Forums and created a Recovery Action Groups (RAG) in each ward, which is involved in targeting of activities such as health trainings together with volunteers. • For each activity, a set of criteria for participation was developed within the team, then volunteers collected data through surveys which are then verified with appropriate line agency, for example with the support of FCHVs for the winterisation programme. Not clear to what extent community members themselves were involved in developing and verifying these criteria, although FGDs revealed that they were aware of them and broadly agreed with them, although there were concerns that the application of these criteria may have been politically manipulation in some cases.
4+1: WASH activities	• Estimated to be at about 70% completion/rehabilitation of drinking water schemes, 90% of school latrine construction, 45% completion of HH toilets, carrying out large number of hygiene promotion awareness sessions, including in schools. Planning to include more district water schemes in the coming period. • Community feedback regarding the work on water schemes and canals positive. Using cash for work approach, providing insurance and volunteer with FA skills, both appreciated. • One FGD revealed some confusion regarding toilet construction, with some participants saying that materials had been provided twice to each HH so there were now more toilets than houses and one man whose land is adjacent to a road; the government has requisitioned his land so he won't be able to build back his house on the land but he is moving ahead with constructing the toilet. • Engineers have very high work load; one engineer who participated in FGD said that he was responsible for 2 water schemes and more than 200 toilet constructions. • Although government pleased with the progress achieved by RC, there is concern regarding the overall limited impact of the work - RC is targeting 14 District Water Supply Schemes (DWSS) in the district but there are more than 600 damaged DWSSs and few other organisations that are supporting. • Some issues highlighted with the distribution of toilet materials – some people constructed without having received instructions about how to construct (ie using bands and rods); some people constructed incorrectly – these will need to be corrected. May have been in part because only one engineer responsible for overseeing the construction of 200+ toilets.

4+1: Shelter activities	• Trained volunteers and social mobilisers in PASSA facilitation in all VDCs supported by NRC, following which PASSA sessions held at ward level. • Large number of masons trained, but has experienced a high level of mason attrition which had not been expected. It was suggested that only half of the 800 masons trained are currently active in the district, with 200 working outside the district and 200 not working, so this is negatively impacting progress. (Construction was paused in Sindhupalchok at the time of the MTR visit due to community members focusing on planting crops.) • The ERO has piloted a 50 day on-the-job mason training together with TRACE Nepal for those who have not previously worked as masons, resulted in 2 houses being built for highly vulnerable households. Not clear whether it is the intention to carry on with these trainings but will be important to monitor the 12 participants to see whether they use their skills and the quality of their work. • The on-the-job training included several female participants who are now working on their own houses it is understood, although unclear how realistic it is for women to be employed in house construction (even the women were sceptical that they would be employed by men). • Men who had gone through the 7 day mason training also said that they needed support to get hired as masons, although it is understood from ERO that banners advertising names of those trained have been placed in each VDC. FGDs with people who had gone through the mason training suggested that the training was good and the RC was receptive to their suggestions about how to improve the training. They also suggested that model houses should be built in all wards to encourage more people to construct; it is understood that there are currently only two per VDC. • Reports from the ERO show that engineers are carrying out large numbers of household visits to provide technical advice, with volunteers and social mobilisers passing on IEC materials and messages regarding building back safer. However, there is clearly a high work load for both DUDBC and RC – in Badegaun for example there are a reported 1,362 households and 7 engineers in total (4 RC and 3 from DUDBC) – suggests that more are needed. Feedback suggests that wards such as Nawapur are currently at 10% completion, due to lack of manpower. • There is a good working relationship with DUDBC; it highly rates the NRCS, particularly in comparison with some other organisations, although disappointed that it has not yet supported the creation of a technical resource centre in the VDC. • DUDBC suggests that the RC needs to support the government plan which has another two years to go (first instalment has taken one year to disburse). Needs concerted effort to continue training masons, particularly master masons who can work in a mobile way to support house construction – KII feedback that massive focus on this needed if the level of construction is to be raised. • Not clear how relevant/useful the shelter volunteer training on temporary housing construction will be; the FGD with volunteers suggested that they had received it only in June 2017. • FGD suggests that engineers need training/orientation in the NRA corrections manual (retrofitting?) that has recently come out; referred to the fact that other organisations are organising this for their staff. • View of most informants that 3 lakhs is insufficient for house construction. • The delays in provision of cash grants for housing construction in the JRC-support VDCs is leading to criticism of the RC. • Lack of water has held up the shelter programme in some places.
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4+1: Health activities	• Most health training activities completed – estimated that around 60% of activities completed, with trainings due to be finished by end September 2017, although it is noted that KII suggest that most volunteers and community volunteers have yet to start health activities at the community level. • Community volunteers are to be trained in first aid and first aid boxes to be distributed. Informants believe that these activities could/should have started much earlier. It will be important to closely monitor these sessions and provide feedback to the volunteers in the coming months. • Winterisation (nano jhola) project was seen to be useful and relevant to the community needs.
4+1: Livelihood activities	• Livelihood activities to date have focused mostly on cash for work activities (reconstruction of roads, foot trails and irrigation canals) and support to agricultural activities, including running livestock health camps and two kitchen garden trainings. • Livestock camps highly appreciated by livestock office and FGDs, as is focus on supporting goat shed construction. • Good level of coordination achieved with livestock office. Livestock office suggests that it needs to be in control of the purchase of animals to ensure that good quality and healthy animals are purchased and imported into the district; this needs to be discussed and agreed with the livestock office. Would like the RC programme to include training regarding vaccination and parasite control. • The next phase of the livelihood programme is in process and aims to support community members in activities that they identify, either directly or through directing them to other organisations who can help. FGD participants shared some potentially interesting ideas that could be supported through the livelihood programme, such as coffee processing and lychee farming. • The ERO is concerned that despite the baseline data identifying 467 most vulnerable HHs to be supported by the programme (reportedly within budget), NRC now wants to reduce beneficiary number to 400. The ERO unclear why this decision has been made and how they will go about reducing the numbers in a fair way.
4+1: ICB activities	• A number of RC volunteers have participated in a range of training courses. • The ERO strategy is to require the active involvement of the chapter in leading the activities (as beneficiaries), for example securing land for the new building. However, it appears from KIIs that the chapter governance is not participating as actively as it could be in realising the planned-for activities. The ERO has hired an experienced staff member to support the ICB activities with the chapter but the planned activities are delayed.
DRR / resilience	• A key limitation for the chapter was not being able to work directly with the formation of the LDRMCs in the VDCs where they are working, as this activity had been ‘allocated’ to other organisations. However, this should not prevent the RC supporting these organisations through offering its expertise in core RC competence, for example the provision of first aid training, VCA etc and it is understood that there are reportedly some funds available in the budget for this and some support to CDMCs at the VDC level has been provided.
Other activities	• KIIs with beneficiaries who had received the small one-pot metal cooking stoves (supplied by the district chapter through a collaboration with Alternative Energy Promotion Corporation) suggested that these stoves are not being used; those that were observed were clean and had clearly not been used. It is understood that this was an initiative led by the chapter and the ERO has no information regarding this activity

Integration	- Although the district is implementing activities in the all four sectoral areas defined in the 4+1 plan, it is a limited version of integration and it is not clear how integrated the programme is at the community level. This is partly due to the large number of other organisations working in the VDCs where RC is working. - Sectors are supporting each other where they can, for example including first aid trained volunteers are present in the mason trainings, but this does not constitute integration. - The fact that volunteers and social mobilisers work in only one sector means that the opportunities for integration are diminished and may result in duplication at the community level (as well as giving the impression of large staff numbers to communities).
Relationships with line agencies	- KIIs show that government counterparts are generally pleased with the supportive relationships they maintain with the NRCS. - The RC participates actively in the various district coordination committees, but notes difficulties with some NGOs/INGOs that are not coordinating, resulting in cases of duplication (eg Oxfam distributing materials for toilet construction in the VDCs allocated to RC).
Management issues	- The ERO is largely maintaining two parallel structures for the NRC and JRC-funded target areas; staffing, budgeting, reporting are all separate. Budget information provided was different between the two funders, which makes it difficult to compare. - KIIs with staff reveal a concern that operational plans are rigid, making it difficult to shift the operation in line with changing requirements on the ground. Informants suggest that the rigidity comes both from the PNS and the ERO at NHQ. ERO staff believe that the plan and budget need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is responding to the priority needs of people which can change. - Internal and external delays are having a negative impact on the operation. Internal delays include very slow decision-making both at the district level and NHQ levels. - Concern that recruitment decisions at the district level are not involving the sector coordinators and is resulting in poor decisions being made in some cases, with people not having the appropriate technical skills required. - General view that the district is over-staffed in certain areas and that there is room for a more integrated work force. This should include looking for opportunities to transition social mobilisers and volunteers into more generic roles that can support a range of sectoral activities at the community level. - KIIs also suggest that decision-making should be decentralised, with more authority given to the district level ERO, eg for local level recruitment, procurement etc. A number of examples were shared where small, local level requests from line agencies for support could not be provided as they required a long approval process from NHQ, meaning that RC loses out to other small NGOs that are more agile.
Governance	- Widespread frustration with delays due to unavailability of steering committee for decision-making. SC sees itself responsible for low-level managerial decisions such as staff movement, recruitment, finance etc and concern that personal interests may be seen to influence decision-making in some instances. There is a tense relationship between the chapter steering committee and the ERO; the ERO does not feel supported by the SC. - KIIs revealed a high level of concern that the steering committee is influencing the recovery operation for political purposes. FGD participants spoke openly of the RC operation not being neutral and shared feelings that they were not chosen for particular activities (such as cash for work or particular trainings) because they came from “the wrong political party”. This was heard repeatedly. - FGDs suggested that the RC needed to make programmatic decisions with an increased involvement of the entire ward, not giving responsibility to only one or two people who might manipulate the process. Participants in these FGDs were aware of the selection

	criteria for these trainings/activities and were in agreement with them but believed that in a number of cases they were not being followed.
Community Engagement and Accountability and GESI	• Recovery Action Teams (RAG) were formed in each community for the duration of the operation, although it was noticeable that FGD participants did not talk about these. These structures are not sustainable. • FGDs suggest that RC needs to organise much more regular meetings to which all the community are invited, to ensure that effective monitoring of activities is undertaken and that information is regularly posted around the ward regarding activities. FGD participants felt that the operation was not being implemented transparently, reported that community meetings only invite people from one political party and that staff are always too busy when they come to the field so cannot be interrupted. • Just completing a data collection exercise regarding PWD, using that data to ensure to ensure that toilets are disabled friendly, providing additional support to widows. It should be noted however that feedback from FGD suggested that at least in some cases, a disabled person was registered for cash for work but the work was carried out by another person who benefited from the pay. Measures should be put in place to ensure that this does not happen. • Good use of banners within VDCs to share information regarding complaints mechanisms, cash for work activities (including the allocated budget - although budgets for other activities are not shared it is understood), lists of trained masons etc. FGDs revealed however that participants are not always aware of these banners, suggesting that other forms of communication should complement. • Regarding suggestion boxes and toll free number, community members suggested that they had had poor experiences of these in the past so don't have confidence in them and experience to date suggests that suggestions boxes are not being used frequently. • ERO staff are strongly recommended to ensure that they spend time in the communities when they are available to meet with community members; this could be communicated (perhaps through SMS).
Relationship with key RC partner	• Some frustrations expressed with programmatic interference from PNSs – for example the decision regarding the reduction of livelihoods beneficiaries, overriding what the ERO sees as programmatic needs coming from the community level. Reported confusion in the minds of some staff as to whether responsibility for budget adjustment lies with NHQ or PNSs. • ERO found the involvement of NRC delegates useful at the planning stage of the operation but now believe they are not adding much value and are sometimes a distraction, “making us write documents rather than work in the field”.
Suggested actions to be taken:	1. The ERO requires the intervention and support of the RCM (through the MMC) to resolve this situation regarding allegations of political bias; the fact that FGD and KII participants shared their views that the RC is not acting politically impartially is highly concerning. 2. As part of transition planning, ERO should review staffing plan and look for opportunities to combine responsibilities where possible, particularly related to social mobilisers and volunteers, so that they are able to provide integrated support at community level where possible. Efforts should be made to amalgamate the two parallel structures associated with two different donors. 3. ERO and steering committee to put together a clear ICB plan with clear dates and responsibilities in order to ensure that progress can be made in the ICB plan. 4. ERO should look to see opportunities for integrating RAGs into other permanent community structures such as CDMCs/LDRMCs. NRCS should also aim to build connections with these groups, for example through DRR and first aid activities. 5. Review workload of WASH engineers, particularly related to oversight of toilet construction. Will need to put in place a programme to support retrofitting/correction in cases where toilet block incorrectly constructed.

	6. Develop a strategy to encourage people to hire female trained masons. 7. Develop a retrofitting strategy and provide training to engineers. 8. NRCS and NRC to agree livelihood approach to support those highly vulnerable families who have been identified through the assessment process, if possible to avoid reducing the numbers of people to be targeted. 9. Review livestock livelihoods interventions with the livestock office with a view to incorporating their ideas regarding parasite control, vaccination, etc. 10. NRCS should carry out monitoring visits to families who have received stoves to gather feedback (this should involve viewing the stoves to see if they are being regularly used as well as asking for feedback). This information should be shared with AEPC.
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NRCS-IFRC Management Response to Recommendations for the Nepal Earthquake Response Operation Mid-Term Review (MTR)

Background information:

- **Date and duration of evaluation:** 28 May to 15 August 2017
- **Evaluator/s:** Anna Dobai, international consultant and Shesh Kanta Kafle, national consultant
- **Evaluation Management Response Team members:** Dev Ratna Dhakuwa, Umesh Dhakal, Kamal Nirula from the Nepal Red Cross Society, Jill Clements from the British Red Cross, Leela Mulukutla from the American Red Cross, Richard McCabe from the Canadian Red Cross, Juja Kim, Klaus Palkovits and Dibakar Behera from the IFRC.
- **Background Information:** On 25 April 2015, the catastrophic earthquake, a 7.8 magnitude followed by many fearful aftershocks hit the country left the thousands of people homeless and displaced. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement immediately activated to support the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) to deliver emergency reliefs to three million earthquake survivors. To support the affected communities and the government in their recovery efforts, NRCS has been prominently engaged in helping people with recovery activities. Aligned to and supporting the broader recovery plan of the Government of Nepal (GoN), NRCS' initiatives have focused on the 14 districts identified as the worst affected areas.

The discussion for conducting a joint review was initiated and agreed amongst the NRCS, IFRC and PNSs in late 2016. To guide and manage MTR exercise, a joint task force of NRCS senior management, in country PNS representatives and IFRC was formulated at the country level with the technical support from the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) team. In May 2017, the IFRC APRO, Deputy Director, on behalf of the Movement partners in close collaboration with the NRCS commissioned a Mid-Term Review (MTR) to assess the progress of earthquake recovery efforts, including structure, system, procedure and performance through the lens of thematic sectors and the NRCS chapters. An independent review team leader (international consultant) drawn from the IFRC membership, supported by a national (Nepali speaking) consultant, one NRCS staff, and one member from sister National Societies (Pakistan Red Crescent) were engaged. The review was carried out in two phases: 1) inception and, 2) field work separately between June to August 2017. A final report was made available that provided an opportunity to share and discuss the key findings and recommendations amongst the earthquake recovery operation (ERO) management and programme staff, in-country partners, IFRC, ICRC and other PNSs (who are involved in recovery works, but do not have in country presence) during the Way-Forward Meeting held from 24 to 25 October 2017.

Summary of Management Response:

For NRCS, this is the first experience of managing mega disaster and implementing such a large-scale recovery programme with the involvement of multi-stakeholders and partners. Having worked with the new structure put in place within the Movement, but the overall reconstruction policies, procedures and strategies have been driven by the Government of Nepal, represented by the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) resulting in number of operational challenges for NRCS and its partners. The MTR encompassed a large number of respondents from national headquarters to District Chapters and target



communities. Hence, multiple responses were received based on facts, perceptions and specific issues at different levels. Furthermore, data triangulation to substantiate findings could have been done by the review team. Clarity provided on findings was not responded in the final report as expected. NRCS, though in principle, owns this report. However, it is the opinion of the NRCS that the findings were not well incorporated. This, still remain as the strong concerns of NRCS. NRCS is always willing and prepared for further improvement.

- There is very little explanation of the successes/achievements. Gaps have been highlighted elaborated significantly, but they are not adequately substantiated.
- Recommendations at various levels seem appropriate. Further work is needed to act together to implement findings and recommendations. Prioritisation of the findings and recommendations is needed to own and implement these in a more holistic and practical manner.
- Collective work among the partners is needed to implement findings and recommendations. This is the review of the Response Operation as a whole. Therefore, partners should still get away from the mindset of “*My*” and think broadly from the perspective of “*we*” and “*Ours*”. Our combined results are our common achievements.

NRCS owned the MTR recommendations which will be an opportunity and those recommendations will be useful for further coordination and it will be implemented as collective responsibility. As part of the process individual responses were collected from the NRCS, IFRC and PNSs prospective. After having a series of meetings amongst the MTR task force members, consolidated management responses from the NRCS been presented below. Inputs and comments received from the partners will be kept as living document for further workout during the transitional process. However, recommendations marked as ‘partially accepted’ can be implemented by NRCS with the support of IFRC, PNSs and other partners as part of their longer-term country plan. A detailed plan of action will be developed by NRCS in consultations with IFRC and in country PNSs and this will be monitored by the proposed consultative body or next mechanisms for the transition process.

There are a total of 19 recommendations and 7 reflection points for the wider RCRC Movement. While providing management response, attempts were made to highlight some the inputs received from PNSs. NRCS accepted and partially accepted most of the recommendations, and also provided rationales for those rejected.

6.1.1. Recovery operation planning

Recommendation 6.1.1.1: Districts should carry out activity by activity, community by community reviews to plan the next phase of the recovery operations. These plans should then inform a review of the staffing requirements and the gradual reduction of staff, both at district and central levels.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	NRCS has already started discussion at HQ and district level as well as with IFRC and PNSs	For each technical component: • Review of work plans • Mapping out completed and yet to be completed activities • Develop a gnatt chart for remaining activities • District meetings will be held with all technical sectors, DPOs CDMCs and LDRMCs to establish progress, remaining works, risks, resources and timeline. This will be followed by central level meetings consolidating the district level plans and process of handing over to relevant partner, communities and local structure. • Coordination and finalise transition plan (which have already been drafted). • Partners should also engage in this process and required to develop their staff reduction plan.	November and December	Head of ERO, Technical coordinators, district chapters of NRCS, and concerned staff with IFRC and PNSs

Comments: All One Plan partners are committed to working with NRCS to strengthen transition and exit planning as a key outcome of the Way Forward Meeting.

Recommendation 6.1.1.2: NRCS and partners should put together a Movement-wide staffing plan for the coming period, aiming to reduce overall staffing numbers in line with district implementation plans, together with bringing partners' technical delegates inside the ERO to provide support across districts (including to place certain delegates within districts where appropriate) and thus reduce the duplication that exists.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	As the EQ recovery plan is moving in the frame of One Plan - avoiding duplication is equally important. However, putting all staff together should be decided upon availability of space within the ERO and practicality as well.	- Discuss with partners and agree on principle, - Refer to transition plan and decide what type of staff and how many of them should be relocated to ERO	November 2017	Head of ERO, IFRC coordination and Representatives from partner National Societies

Comments: At this point given the ERO transition plan, it would not be appropriate to put in place a Movement-Wide staffing plan within the ERO. Planning together should focus to complete the remaining commitments since a large part of the work still need to be done. However, the existing technical staff can continue to exchange expertise to support Movement wide plan through participation in working groups and specific, planned consultations related to other districts, with increased focus on capacity building of the National Society.

Recommendation 6.1.1.3: NRCS and partners are recommended to develop a common approach to budgeting across all districts, so that the big picture of budgets versus expenditure can be explored and understood. Ensuring that a district-level budget is in place will provide an important management tool for the DPC and the steering committee to oversee progress in the district.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	As budgeting has been done in line with individual partner's requirement as per their commitment to back donors. Also challenge arises from IFRC/NSs having different financial supporting system. This needs to be discussed and agreed upon by partners as well.	- Held discussion with partners - Discuss with finance team to explore possibility of aligning all budgets to a standard budget format so that all of them would be comparable	November 2017	ERO Advisor and Finance Director

Comments: As per discussions held during the Way-Forward Meeting and other meetings, recommendation regarding common approach to budgeting across all districts is also relevant but at this stage of the operation it is already late to consider. Taking into consideration that all partners use different templates for budgets and pace implementation is at different stage of completion in each district hence it will be very time consuming and long process. It could also lead to unrealistic budgets being mainstreamed rather than at least having some more accurate ones in some contexts/areas.

Recommendation 6.1.1.4: The RCM should explore with NRA ways to extent support in districts where many VDCs are not supported by external assistance, for example, including trainees from neighbouring VDCs in future training courses, extending technical guidance.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	Where possible, training has been extended beyond current operation VDCs/Districts. However, the proposed recommendation will have resource implications. General technical assistance as needed and appropriate may be thought of but, total support is quite challenging in realistic sense.	- This may be continued. - As there will be resource implication, this needs to be discussed with partners as well.	To continue from November 2017	NRCS Partners concerned

Comments: nothing to comment.

Recommendation 1.1.1.5: NRCS could play a useful role in gathering data regarding whether highly vulnerable families being excluded from safely building back their houses due to not having access to funds to supplement the three lakhs grant. This data could provide evidence on which NRCS could advocate for the provision of additional support for these households.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	For shelter cash grant, it's a blanket approach. In terms of 3 lakhs, new decisions have been made by the government of Nepal so the issue of 3 lakhs may not be the case further. The decision about 3 Lakhs was done earlier based on assessments and owner driven approach.	- Have further discussion with the government - Advocacy on the implementation of the recent decisions - Monitoring and follow up	Continue from November 2017	Construction Coordinator (ERO)/ Shelter working group IFRC can coordinate and provide technical supports in cooperation with

	Government has been coordinating to support most vulnerable households with additional support. Once confirmed and list of vulnerable families is available, NRCS will discuss with partners to explore possibility of support to such families where shelter cash grant has been provided.			partners, where necessary
Comments: GoN has developed its own criteria and NRCS is looking forward to receiving them. If the additional support to be provided, then it should be based on the government's beneficiary list in case of shelter construction support. As NRCS is under discussion with NRA to amend its Plan of action, NRCS can review and reflect this into it, where necessary.				
Recommendation 1.1.1.6: Disaster Risk Reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation Disaster risk reduction should be at the heart of the next phase of the recovery operation leading into the transition and exit planning. It will be important to find ways to engage with the local structures (CDMCs, LDRMCs). For those districts such as Sindhupalchok where direct DRR responsibilities are allocated to other organisations, there is still room for NRCS as an important national volunteer organisation to engage and these should be actively pursued.				
Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	This is a part of recovery framework already. But, activities are not planned in all districts.	- Continue discussion with partners - NRA also emphasizes on DRR, therefore, further discussions to be carried out with NRA. - Support to and from local government in strengthening DRR advocacy roles to be promoted - Further discussion with DM department of NRCS to be started - IFRC coordinate NRCS and partners to capture lessons from DRR perspectives to be connected to the transitional.	Continue from November 2017	ERO Advisor and Head of DM Department together with Movement partners
Comments: The biggest components of NRCS in the recovery is in shelter. So how skills and learning from the big part can be linked to DRR and resilience components and to identify vision for integration into DM department during transition – reshaping DM department is needed in terms of function, structure and strategy to mainstream DRR.				

Involvement and expectations of CDMCs and LDMCs must be measured and contextualised within an experience in Nepal where these structures are not always active and / or sustainable themselves. But particularly with local government restructuring the role of these committees is not yet clear.

Recommendation 1.1.1.7: The plan for NRCS institutional capacity building as part of the recovery operation should be reviewed to ensure that it is offering maximum opportunities to the entire organisation to strengthen through the process of implementing the operation, beyond the 14* priority districts to all chapters. The ICB strategy needs to be built upon the foundation of an objective capacity assessment and gap analysis and could be designed at all three levels: the policy and strategic level, institutional and operational level and individual level focusing on skill and knowledge development.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted by NRCS	NRCS capacity building is included in One-plan (4 + 1), due to the limited capacity and resource and focusing on various operations, it has not been monitored separately as planned such but rather see them in an integrated approach and part of all interventions.	• Coordination with OD department and carry out capacity and gap analysis • Develop action plan in reference to OCAC findings and DRCE recommendations • Explore possibilities with partners on shared leadership • Mapping out funding opportunities/components already included in PNSs plan	November 2017	Advisor ERO and Head of OD department and Head of DM department as well as all partners

Comments: It needs to be reviewed in feasible way what has been strengthened and contributed to NRCS capacity building.

6.1.2: ERO structure and processes

Recommendation 6.1.2.1 NRCS and partners need to consider integrating PNS technical staff and structures into the ERO in order to downscale the number of staff in an effort to reduce indirect costs.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	Maximising efficiency of the resources is necessary. This will avoid existing duplication as well.	• To discuss further with partners • Reconsider logistics management issues as well • Work out a plan for staff management	Start discussion from November 2017	• Head of ERO and Advisor ERO • Head of IFRC and PNSs

Comments: The consolidation of partner HR was foreseen in the initial One Plan from the beginning. Although not perfectly implemented so far, is a critical part of the transition phase as is the adaptation of authorization levels in view of achieving objectives within timelines of funding available.



Recommendation 6.1.2.2: Given that the shelter programme not only supports activities related to individual owner-driven housing, but also all the other building-related activities, it may be useful to review the work plans for the unit to ensure that it has the appropriate workforce in place to be able to support these infrastructure projects going forward in a timely manner.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	Going outside the target area should be thoroughly discussed with NRA and all partners. It will have resource implications as well. Therefore, a thorough planning will be necessary.	• Discuss with each technical working group about pros and cons of this concept • Work out detail plan if feasible to implement the plan • Discuss the plan with all partners • If agreed, implement it	January 2018	Technical Coordinators/ Delegates

Comments: Nothing to comment.

Recommendation 6.1.2.3: Budget authorisation levels needs to be reviewed and increased in order that the recovery operation at the district level can take the timely decisions it needs to take.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	• Appropriate level of authority has already been provided • Authority has been delegated based on case by case • Ensuring compliances of the financial rules and procedures is equally important. Capacity of districts/ district chapters is limited.	• Further analysis to be done • Needful decision will be taken • Risks and efficiency need to be assessed carefully.	December 2017	Finance Director, NRCS Movement partners and IFRC to work with NRCS but requires NRCS leadership buy-in.

Comments:

- To be discussed further as it has high level of sensitivity.
- We need to review capacity of DC before the decision is made.
- NRCS, at times, based on needs and capacity, and during its financial policy revision process, has been reviewing the authorization level.

6.1.3 Rebuilding relations

Recommendation 6.1.3.1: Using the findings of this report as a starting point, NRCS and its partners need to undertake a mediated dialogue to understand the views and opinions of all parties, to confront some of the barriers that may be impacting negatively upon effective ways of working together and to construct an approach for working together during the remainder of the recovery operation implementation and transition period that builds on the strengths of all parties.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Rejected	A good understanding is necessary amongst all partners. However, the relationship should be looked from the strategic and long-standing viewpoints rather than sticking to operational issues. Organisational decisions and approaches, rules and procedures need to be respected by all the concerned.	• Explore issues • Call for extended coordination meetings • Strengthen movement coordination • Facilitate for common understanding on major contentious issues • Further promote bi-lateral discussion	Ongoing and to further continue	NRCS, IFRC, PNSs (all concerned)

Comments: NRCS believe that everyone should be ready for an open and honest communication to develop common understanding. All partners need to think positively and demonstrate strong will to improve it further by correcting fundamental causes that triggered the mistrust.

Recommendation 6.1.3.2: A peer review process could be considered to allow an objective assessment of the plans and working methodologies of each partner in order to identify good practices and areas where adjustments may need to be made in order to help construct a more collegiate and shared working relationship between partners and NRCS.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	Developing a common understanding amongst members is necessary.	• Explore readiness of partners • Develop a working paper defining methodology and issues • Follow an open discussion on all issues of mutual interests	Continue from January 2018	ERO coordinator and partner delegates



		• Agree upon a common plan and methodologies		
Comments: To introduce a mechanism and methodologies at this time is challenging. The mid-term review could have detailed the different working methodologies that have been adopted, compare and contrast but despite coming under the scope of the ToR, this does not seem to have been undertaken.				

6.1.4 ERO governance

Recommendation 6.1.4.1: The current terms of reference of the ERO steering committee should be shared with all partners immediately.				
Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	It has already shared with partners through the Federation. Again, it will be shared. Federation and PNs present at districts have also participated in few steering committee meetings.	• Re-send the steering committee ToR • Organise a joint meeting between Steering Committee and partners to further clarify any issue as needed	November	Head, ERO to facilitate, Steering Committee member secretary to act upon.
Comments: Good practice would include the development of standard practice for similar occasions to be used in future.				
Recommendation 6.1.4.2: The SC terms of reference should be jointly reviewed, adjusted and shared so that it builds on the experience of the last two years and helps contribute to a spirit of joint endeavour, while ensuring that NRCS, as the leading RC partner in Nepal, retains its leadership role. This should include a definition of appropriate timelines for different decision-making processes and it is suggested that all decisions submitted for decision to the SC are tracked to ensure that the timelines are respected. It is recommended that the terms of reference should make explicit the obligations that come with being a member of the SC.				
Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted by NRCS	It is a new initiative for NRCS as well. Adequate level of communication has been maintained.	Steering Committee is the constitutional body of NRCS. However, partners may be invited for consultation as a useful process.	December 2017	IFRC in coordination with ERO to facilitate



	ToR can be reviewed and needful action may be taken as recommended. It will be a consultative process.	Partners are advised for the engagement of NRCS in their collective decision-making process as appropriate for the spirit of partnership.		
Comments: This is the responsibility of member Secretary of the Steering Committee. As a Movement secretariat and invitee to the steering committee meeting, IFRC should also be coordinating and communicating with the PNSs as necessary.				
Recommendation 6.1.4.3: It is strongly recommended that the SC be reconfigured to include representation of the partners in a way that it is acceptable to all; this could be IFRC and one or two partners. This reconfiguration will contribute to rebuilding a strong and positive partnership between NRCS and partners over time.				
Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	It is important to note that Steering Committee is a procedural process of the Central Executive Committee of the NRCS. As such, representatives from Federation and PNS could be invited for consultation purpose, but not for decision making purpose. SC meets several times in between scheduled meetings. Therefore, it may not be feasible to invite anybody in such informal settings. Federation representative was invited in some steering committee meetings in the past.	Extend invitation to IFRC in all future steering committee meetings.	To continue	Member secretary of Steering committee
Comments: NRCS needs to make SC meetings regular with clear agendas. Taking meeting minutes by a designated person (not by one of SC members) needs to be prepared. Then, it can be more accessible to the Movement partners.				



Recommendation 6.1.4.4: Both the agendas and minutes of future SC meetings should be made publically available.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	It is shared with the IFRC and IFRC to communicate with other partners.	Prepare summary report in English incorporating relevant issues and share with partners. Agenda to be shared with the Federation in advance and Federation to coordinate with other partners.	Started already and will continue	Member Secretary, ERO

Comments: Steering committee convenes scheduled meetings. In addition, adhoc meetings are also held when necessary. Summary of SC minute was shared with the Federation and this will be continued.

Recommendation 6.1.4.5: It is recommended that the senior management of the NRCS facilitate a review of the policies, procedures and governance structures that influence the recovery operation (e.g. the recruitment and procurement committees), with a view to developing a set of recovery policies and procedures that can be used to guide and support the current operation and could be activated in the future if required.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	This is a continuous process. Procurement rules were amended after the earthquake based on lessons learnt. As being a dynamic organisation, this is a continuous process. As recommended, review will be done based on NRCs established rules, procedures and practices.	Steering committee to discuss this and develop plans and strategies taking into consideration National society's position, its accountability, participatory decision-making process, ownership and its implications; both positive and negative.	February 2018	Member Secretary of ERO Steering committee to facilitate.

Comments: It is clearly seen an overarching mechanism that ERO is intertwined with each department at HQ in term of infusing its learning and experiences to current structure of HQ. A more realistic recommendation may be to take learning from this experience to look into how Movement partners (IFRC & PNS) can support NRCS to adapt existing policies when shifting from response to recovery and enable scale-up and scale-down - analysing different models and tools that can be used.

Recommendation 6.1.4.6: An investigation into the allegations of political bias that have been levelled against the Sindhupalchok steering committee needs to be undertaken (see appendix for more details), bringing together members of the SC, IFRC and the head of the ERO. DPC and his team need to be closely supported through this process.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	Needs further discussion and clarity needs to be developed.	- Steering committee to discuss - Review the information received - Study and act on practical ways to minimise this kind of situation in future	December 2017	Secretary General

Comments: NRCS shares the cases with IFRC. Political biasness is tackled by steering committee through its strategy and policies.

6.1.5: Movement-wide reflection

Recommendation 6.1.5.1: A full investigation into the cost effectiveness of the Nepal operation needs to be agreed between all the partners and should be led by IFRC Geneva and/or Kuala Lumpur given the global implications of such an exercise. This will require reaching agreement of what constitutes direct and indirect costs and the scope of this cost effectiveness exercise – i.e. is it looking only at the funds that come into the country or will it look at the use of all funds collected by the partners from the point at which it is received.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	It increases transparency and accountability of all the concerned, therefore, this is worth trying.	Hold discussion during way forward meeting and develop a work plan for this process	January 2018	IFRC APRO (As a commissioner of MTR)

Comments: As several assessments and reviews on Nepal EQ have done at global level including real time evaluation, operational excellences review, audit report and MTR this time. Those reports should be analysed and identified what are core issues to consider in terms of operation and budget.

6.2 Reflections from Nepal Recovery Operation to the wider RCM

Recommendation 6.2.1: The RCM needs to be able to call upon longer-term recovery expertise early on in a largescale relief operation. This position should be embedded into the relief operation at an early stage to research and understand the context and capacities and help connect the Movement to learning from past recovery operations so that the recovery plans can be built upon realistic foundations. This recovery expert should be engaged for a period of six months.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	A specialised support for longer-term is major underpinning factor for managing an operation in a systematic way without harming the host NS and affected people in the ground as well. Experiences and lessons learned from other contexts contribute significantly to properly plan and implement operation.	- Federation prepare a roster of recovery experts - PNs support this process offering expert services - NS participate in this process to contribute to this global tool - IFRC with partner NSs looks into what elements in mobilizing its HR have missed in developing the recovery program	April onwards/ Operation specific	Federation Secretariat and regional offices

Comments: Looking into the nature of mega disasters which unfold different interventions and responses in line with needs and challenges in each country context. Having said, IFRC had fully outstretched to place the best available experts dealing with the situation arose. The process of developing the recovery plan “One Plan” was engaged in collective and intellectual inputs from all partners including the NRCS.

IFRC should consider creating capacity in Recovery in the early stage of the response to major disasters like the position of HEOPs. Such Senior Recovery advisor should be deployed as early as possible after a major disaster studying thoroughly the country context and developing a recovery strategy in close cooperation with the relevant authorities of the country, the NS and PNS partners, thereby ensuring adequate coordination prioritisation and integrated joint planning, both inside and outside the Movement. Like the HEOPs, a small number of Recovery Advisors should be identified, kept on contract and continuously deployed which would ensure their capacity and the respect for their position and input.

Recommendation 6.2.2: Recovery plans must always be accompanied by a scale-up strategy, involving a review of systems, procedures and policies of the NS and the Movement. While this process is being followed through (it may take six months), at the affected community level, a relief/early recovery strategy should be delivered.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	Depending upon the size and scale of the disaster, scale up strategy is deemed necessary. However, operation does not mean the organisational review as well as review of policies, systems and procedures. Therefore, organisational commitments, procedures for review and its impacts at different levels should be considered as capacities vary and absorption capacity is limited in many cases. However, strategies may be discussed to strengthen organisational effectiveness of the host NS.	- Stock taking of the experiences from operations in different contexts - Develop practical tools to support the host NS to review their policies, systems and procedures in case scale-up strategy needs to put in place - Building ownership of NS support the host NS in this process	Continued process	Federation/ PNs/ NS (IFRC to coordinate/ facilitate)

Comments: The time frame of six months may have to be considered on a contextual basis (in the case of Nepal it was much longer than this in practice). Resourcing in order to deliver the relief/early recovery whilst also scaling up should be considered. This pragmatically also has to consider the pressures emanating from back donors and headquarters, as well as target communities, and government. For Nepal this was badly hampered also by the wider political context for the initial post-relief period (September - February) with a secondary crisis largely not formally acknowledged (blockade and fuel crisis). But in principle, supporting NSs to develop scale up strategies, protocols and tools as part of organisational preparedness is important and will hopefully be part of the Way Forward meeting.

Recommendation 6.2.3: It is recommended that contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems (human resources, finance, procurement, logistics, etc) of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the event of needing to be scaled up to deliver a largescale recovery programme. These pre-checks (against a set of globally set benchmarks) could lead to pre-agreements being put in place that spell out how the NS/Movement will enable a rapid upscaling of capacity if required.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	Contingency planning processes include pre-checks on the key systems of a NS to ensure that they are fit for purpose. This facilitates to design a realistic operation.	- Review contingency plan if exits. - Incorporate necessary inputs that include HR, procurement, logistics etc. for realistic planning and delivery	From Q1 2018	NRCS and supported by IFRC

Comments: IFRC is willing to review NRCS' contingency plan to incorporate what they learned from EQ Operation into amending it where necessary, IFRC drafted Office Readiness Plan which will be aligned with NRCS plan.



Recommendation 6.2.4: As well as developing a recovery plan that defines what the Movement's recovery response will be, time must be devoted to building a common approach to *how* this will be delivered. This should include definition of common methodologies and tools to be used by all partners working together with the NS of the affected country to avoid a proliferation of different approaches.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	A focused and common approach yields better results. A guideline defining <i>how</i> is deemed necessary to translate <i>what</i> into reality.	- Recovery framework to be reviewed - Step by step <i>how to</i> guidelines/ methodologies to be considered for future operation - A strong buy-in to be ensured from all partners concerned - Capacity building plan of all the concerned about new approach should be put in place - Benchmarks should be developed to measure the collective results - All partners work on a common approach to implement this.	Continued process	IFRC Geneva and Movement Partners

Comments: This can only be assured by creating additional recovery expertise/ capacity and structure at Zone/Global Level that is focussing on recovery in major disasters. This will include a team of IFRC senior recovery Advisors like HEOPs as mentioned above.

Recommendation 6.2.5: The experience in Nepal suggests that RCM could have reached many more affected people if it had pursued a complementary support role to the GoN, focusing on training and technical oversight, rather than providing cash grants for comparatively small numbers of families.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Rejected	Decision was made based on specific context (commitments made by the NS based on partners support to the government, district chapters and the beneficiaries) and also the interest of the host NS and the partners supporting. Construction support is also related with people's emotion, visibility of the movement and it is more tangible.	Proper analysis of the contexts, partner's approval and effective monitoring need to be put in place to really measure the contribution of the movement in a more tangible way towards National recovery/ reconstruction efforts.	Context specific	All stakeholders concerned

Comments: The report has not presented RCM or external evidence to support the assertion that provision of technical support alone would be as/more effective in getting in quality homes built, without the distribution of tranches. The Movement is working already across 14 districts and 4 complex sectors.

How do number of houses built in VDCs where there is only technical support compare to VDCs where there is comprehensive shelter support including tranche distribution? In fact, giving out the tranches in addition to intensive household monitoring and support mitigates the delays from the NRA engineers, provides leverage for field staff to motivate NRA engineers to certify householder progress, and a measure of control over timelines. In addition, training of masons has its limit. More trainings does not necessarily correspond to increased availability to skilled masons in program areas.

Recommendation 6.2.6: The more extensive use of participative methodologies such as VCA could have helped to ensure that the most vulnerable people in each community were prioritised at the needs assessment stage and that communities better understood these decisions because they had actively participated in them. This approach also emphasises the importance of strengthening existing structures rather than creating new ones and creates the foundation for DRR as a cross-cutting theme across the operation.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Partially accepted	All the partners were encouraged to use VCA as a tool during planning phase. There was no buy-in by majority of partners. Therefore, where it was not owned, other needs assessment tools were used.	IFRC to work further with PNSs to ensure buy-in and ownership of this tool by all concerned	Continue process	IFRC to facilitate

Comments: The VCA is not the only participatory approach to needs assessment, and because it is long and cumbersome, may be difficult to effectively implement at community level in a large-scale program scattered over a wide geographic area. In addition, the VCA does not include a beneficiary selection process as seems to be implied in the findings and the recommendation.

Recommendation 6.2.7: Given that partners seem to be increasingly choosing to work through consortia, reflection on past experiences of working through consortia should be undertaken. This should offer reflection on how to best facilitate successful consortia approaches, the roles and responsibilities of leader and participants, the appropriate behaviours for consortia work and how breakdowns consortia relationships might be handled.

Management Response	Decision Rationale	Action/s to be taken	Timeframe	Responsibility
Accepted	It was the first experience for NRCS. It has both advantages and limitations as well. Lessons learned could be used for future as recommended.	This needs to be spelled out clearly in the recovery framework including that in <i>how to</i> guidelines. Roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities need to be clearly defined.	At the beginning of the operation (before consortia to put in place)	IFRC, PNSs concerned and the host NS to work together.

Comments: The problem could best be addressed through capacitating a small number of Recovery Experts within the Movement and allocating them with the resources and authority that allows them to timely take on leadership in recovery needs and local environment analysis and planning and implementation of recovery programs following large scale emergencies.