

## **Post Distribution Monitoring Survey Report of Earthquake Response**



**Submitted to:**  
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Kathmandu, Nepal.

**Submitted by:**  
Quest for Development Initiatives Pvt. Ltd.,  
Lalitpur, Nepal.

**QUEST**  
for Development Initiatives

**May 2024.**

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### **Disclaimer:**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Post Distribution Monitoring Survey Report of Earthquake Response, produced by Q4D for International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) was developed through the sincere efforts of several people who genuinely worked together. We would like to express our thanks to Mr Santosh Neupane, Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) Coordinator- NRCS Headquarter; Sharmila Karmacharya, PMER Officer of NRCS; Mr. Khem Raj Bhattarai, CVA and Operation Focal- NRCS Bajura; Uddhav Kumar KC, CVA and Operation Focal- NRCS Bajhang, Surendra Khaitu, Finance Officer- NRCS Bajhang; Ms Manorama Gautam, Senior PMER & Communications Officer, IFRC Nepal Country Delegation and Prajwal Acharya, DRM Programme Manager, IFRC Nepal Country Delegation for assisting the study team in providing necessary documents, information and inputs in designing PDM Survey method and tools.

We are also thankful to all the NRCS Bajura and Bajhang district chapters, EOC team members, enumerators as well as all the informants of focus group discussion, interviews and survey for supporting field data gathering. We highly appreciate their information and thank them for their valuable time and support.

Mr. Sher Bahadur Chhetri, as the Team Leader led the study team. Mr. Chhetri led the overall study design with methods, tools and processes, assured quality in the field level, facilitated field interactions, enumerators' orientation, transcribed the qualitative data, and authored this report with the great contribution from the Programme Advisor. Dr. Dhruva Raj Ghimire, Programme Advisor, provided the overall study design with methods, data analysis, assured quality of the study report, and reviewed of the report. Mr. Pustak Raj Ojha, Livelihood Expert, contributed to tools designing, field interaction, transcribing the data and contributing in the section of timeline analysis. Ms. Rupa Basnet, GEDSI Specialist supported to translate questionnaire from English to Nepali language, provided feedback via GEDSI lens in the questionnaires and checklists and draft case stories.

Q4D hereby extends sincere thanks to Mr. Sher Bahadur Chhetri and the entire study team for their work.

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
CGI	Corrugated Galvanized Iron
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
DNH	Do No Harm
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Financial Service Provider
GEDSI	Gender Empowerment, Disability and Social Inclusion
HH	Household
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IIs	Informant Interviews
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
LG	Local Governments
LEOC	Local Emergency Operation Centre
MPCA	Multi-purpose Cash Assistance
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
NFRI	Non-Food Relief Items
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
PGI	Protection, Gender and Inclusion
RM/UM	Rural Municipality/ Urban Municipality (also called Palika)
ToR	Terms of References
TS	Transitional Shelter

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **BACKGROUND**

A 5.3 magnitude earthquake and its aftershock of 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit the far western part of Nepal on 3rd October 2023, the epicenter of which was in Bajhang district of Sudurpaschim province. To respond to the emergency situation, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) implemented the joint intervention (named Sudurpaschim Earthquake Response), by embracing the foundational objectives of saving lives, reducing suffering and maintaining human dignity, in partnership with Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) with the collaborative funding support from American Red Cross, British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross. The Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) was activated with aim to enable the earthquake-hit households to meet their essential needs, through distribution of (a) Non Food Relief Items: 1301 HHs, (b) Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance: 620 HHs; and (c) Cash for Transitional Shelter along with Toilet Construction & Water Tank Installation: 249 HHs; in two highly affected districts viz. Bajura and Bajhang from October 2023 to March 2024.

This report presents the result of Post Distribution Monitoring Survey of the Earthquake Response. The purpose of this Study was to capture the proof of support received by the affected families; to gauge the level of satisfaction; to assess the effectiveness and relevancy of the assistance provided; and to draw up lessons for future relief operation in Nepal and elsewhere.

The Study was conducted by capitalizing the mixed method: quantitative and qualitative. Household Survey was conducted using systematic sampling (with 95% confidence level, and 5% margin of error) in which 614 recipient households were surveyed in Bajura and Bajhang districts. In the qualitative strand, 7 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), 18 Interviews and 7 observations were conducted to complement and supplement the findings of the quantitative study, and acquire in-depth knowledge.

### **CONTEXT**

- Agriculture, wage labour, livestock and jobs in India are the major four occupation of the respondents found in two districts.
- With regards to the shelter, after the earthquake, 40 percent respondents spent at least their first nights in the tent, followed by 24 percent in open space, 12 percent in neighbors' houses, 11 percent in relatives' houses, and 2 percent own damaged houses. Now, the status has improved: 43 percent in transition shelter, 33 percent in own house. Besides, it is worth noting that the numbers of households living in partially or mildly damaged households has increased from 2 to 19 percent.
- Frequent changes of chief administration officer at local level especially in the Talkot Rural Municipality (RM), delayed in the decision-making process for beneficiary selection and finalization and lack of clear understanding about one door policy made delaying in relief distribution in Bajhang district
- Due to absence of roaster of NRCS volunteers in the local chapters, and inadequate capacity building and follow up with them, there was delay in selecting the volunteers, and also collecting the data online or offline, resulting into a slower operation than expected.

- All respondents mentioned that they received cash through their bank account of their nearest financial service providers for buying essential goods and items for transitional shelter with toilet construction and water tank installation. The amount they received was same as already had been informed about.
- A vast majority (87.1 %) had their account in the bank already, which means only 12.9 percent opened their new bank account to operate multi-purpose cash. Among the new account-holders, 7percent faced lengthy process to open the account.
- Nearly all (99.4%) of MPCA and transitional shelter beneficiaries have been using bank account after opening for relief purpose.
- Mainly two types of transitional shelters were made of CGI Sheet and Bamboo. The majority of transitional shelters with toilet construction and water tank installation completed within a month after receiving first installment cash from the bank.

## **RELEVANCE**

- For 83.9 percentage of the respondents, the transitional shelters have adequate capacity to accommodate the number of family members. But for rest 16.1 percent, the transitional shelters has limited capacity (i.e. 18' x 12' maximum size with two room including kitchen), as this was not deemed adequate for the larger family size, sex and age category.
- Integration of transitional shelter with toilet construction and water tank installation is highly relevant as well as appreciative task during the emergency period.
- For only one third of the respondents (30.8%) the relief assistance met their immediate needs quite well. On the other hand, 67.6 percent expressed that the assistance partially met their immediate needs. But for the rest 1.6 percent, the type of support reportedly didn't meet their immediate needs.
- Similarly, only one third (30.0%) reported that the quantity of the assistance was adequate to meet the need. One the other hand, 68.2 percent expressed that the quantity was partially able to meet the needs. But for the rest 1.8 percent, the quantity was reportedly too low to meet the need.
- Market Assessment was not conducted prior to the relief assistance, as a result, the response operation missed much information about the supply chain and financial service provider that could have enabled NRCS to make the relief operations more relevant.

## **COHERENCE**

- For the earthquake response, NRCS was single actor from humanitarian organizations who worked in shelter as well earthquake response in earthquake impacted locations of both districts, so their support was highly relevant.
- Following the urgent priority (need) and gap findings by Initial Rapid Assessment, the relief support was distributed to meet the essential needs of the affected households. After the earthquake, local market was operational despite having limited capacity and resources, the response programme primarily supported for local market strengthening and household' access to financial service providers through cash and voucher assistance programme was highly relevant.

## **TIMELINESS**

- Concerning the perception of respondents on timeliness, 43.3 percent mentioned that the type of support they received was on right time, and 54.9 percent mentioned that support was received somewhat late than expected but was not too late. However, 1.8 percent felt that the support arrived too late.
- Concerning the point of time of relief assistance, 4.7 percent received relief support within 24 hours, 23.8 percent within 2-4 days, 11.2 percent within a week, 45.6 percent within a month and 14.7 percent longer than a month of the disaster.
- Majority of the NFRI recipients (82.5%) reached the distribution point within an hour while 13.5 percent in between 1 and 3 hours, and 4 percent longer than 3 hours.
- With regards to distance to bank, for 46 percent households it took 1-2 hours for them to reach at financial service provider (bank). Likewise, for 14 percent it took 2-3 hours and for 12 percent, it took longer than 3 hours.

## **EFFECTIVENESS**

- The integration of transitional shelter, toilet construction and water tank installation's plan, design and module has been found effective.
- For 85.9 percent households, the cash transfer value of transitional shelter was adequate. On the other hand, for 14.1 percent, the amount was not adequate. Especially, the households who have people with disability, senior citizens, pregnant or lactating women, single women, and people living in remote places, the amount was not enough to cover their expenses.
- A significant proportion of the recipients had to spend money to travel to the financial service provider (FSP). Those who had a long distance, had to spend money between Rs. 500 and Rs. 1500, and at least half a day to reach at the FSP for a single time. In other words, means they had to spend NPR between 1,500 and Rs. 4,500 for visiting there to receive three installments. Need to invest or spend this much money in the period of emergency is considerable.
- The stocking of NFRI at NRCS district chapters has been found highly effective for life saving purpose. With the stock, both district chapters were able to distribute within first six hours after the earthquake, which was highly appreciated by everyone. Nonetheless, only 50 sets of stocks at district chapter is not adequate in such disasters.
- As a good practice, the response programme promoted usage of local resources, which is the prominent aspect of this programme. It was observed that majority of the households used local materials such as Timber while constructing transitional shelter. However, on the other hand, it resulted into increase in the deforestation at local level.
- A good majority (91.5%) responded that the technical support in shelter construction found either effective or mildly effective, which supported to accomplish the task on time.
- While for majority (84.0%) agreed that distribution was well organized, the rest 16 percent did not agree. Furthermore, 12 percent households reported of uncomfortable experiences like long waiting hours, bullying and pushing among beneficiaries during distribution, lack of special arrangement for people with medical conditions and no shadow at the distribution point.

## **COORDINATION & COLLABORATION**

- NRCS coordinated very well during the distribution. Its role was highly appreciated by all stakeholders. NRCS was one of the team members who visited each damaged / partially affected households with police, technical person and representative from the local governments.

## **BENEFICIARY SATISFACTION**

- A good majority of households (92.6 %) recognized the quality of relief support they received met their expectation, while 3.1 percent households commented about the poor quality.
- As the survey shows, 89.3 percent are satisfied with the criteria of beneficiaries' selection, 81.4 percent are satisfied with pre-distribution information provided, 82.1 percent are satisfied with the timeliness of the support, 81. percent are satisfied with the quantity. A few respondents shared their experience of not meeting the quality standards or equal size of support given to the entire affected household despite the differences in size of family.

## **CROSS CUTTING ISSUES: Community Engagement & Accountability (CEA), Gender & Social Inclusion (GESI); and Do No Harm (DNH)**

- The humanitarian response upheld the humanitarian principles and placed its best effort to support disaster affected communities in an impartial basis. It also increased organizational presence and reputation in local level.
- Volunteers served as good asset of NRCS. The volunteer mobilization was effective throughout the response period in terms of data collection, household visit, and technical guidance for transitional shelter construction. These types of work have also enhanced the capacity of the volunteers.
- Cash transfer through individual bank account not only maintained transparency but also reduces fraud and connected beneficiaries with financial service providers and empowered them in a dignified manner.
- There was a lack of detailed data of disaster affected households, and no prioritization and ranking was made at household level.
- Concerning information provision, 82.4 percent households only received prior alert message regarding the cash transferred and rest of the households did not received it because some beneficiaries had not registered the mobile numbers in the banking system and some did not maintain the consistent cell numbers. Such cases were found comparatively higher in Bajura than Bajhang. Similarly, 90.9 percent households reported that they knew what kind of assistance they are receiving in detail before relief distribution. Of them, 60.2 percent households received this information 1-2 days prior of the distribution, followed by within 24 hours. Only 5.2 percent households received information in details prior 2 days. Furthermore, only 60.7 percent households responded that they had received instruction about the uses of relief materials / cash distributed.
- In general, Red Cross complied with do no harm principle of minimizing the tensions and promoting the harmony in the community. With regards to conflict, 30.8 percent households responded that

conflict arose due to dissatisfaction on the beneficiary list of the relief assistance, as those not included in the list of relief assistance were not satisfied in the initial stage.

- Face to Face, Going to Local NRCS office, NRCS hotline number 1130, radio, writing in a suggestion box, Social Media and SMS were found as the major preferred mechanism by beneficiaries to raise questions. Among them, face to face mechanism found the most effective method to raise the question, while going to local NRCS office and Hotline number 1130 found second and third effective feedback mechanism respectively adopted by the disaster affected communities.
- With regards to feedbacks, most of the respondents provided feedback asking questions about more support, which was followed by quantity of relief materials, appreciation, frequency and quality of support respectively.
- 13.1 percent households responded that transitional shelters were not suitable for vulnerable group of family members particularly to people with disability, children, elderly, pregnant and lactating women and sick individuals. Majority of the transitional shelters (95 percent) were made of CGI sheet in two districts, found to be cold in winter seasons and very hot in summer seasons.

## **USAGE OF THE RELIEF SUPPORT**

- The expenditure pattern shows that there are no misuses of cash for anti-social tasks. As per the expenditure pattern of households, the survey shows that food (33 percent) was the major sector where the highest amount of money was spent, followed by shelter (24percent), and clothes (14percent) in two districts.
- There is a stereotype that people use anti-social practices if we provide unconditional cash, but this unconditional cash (MPCA) support has broken such a stereotype. The expenditure pattern shows that there are no misuses of cash for anti-social tasks. Majority of the households spent money to meet their essentials needs: food, shelter, clothes, medicine and health
- A few households (5.3 percent) who received NFRI reported that NFRI items found less or no useful, so they have kept it at home to use later when they need it.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Efforts made in maintaining minimum stocking at district and province level, trained volunteers and the committed district chapters, and leadership direction from the NRCS HQ were the key enablers of the fruitful relief distribution.
- Cash modality is effective and one of the best practices.
- There is a stereotype that people use for anti-social practices if we provide unconditional cash, but Sudurpaschim earthquake response has challenges this type of myth. The expenditure pattern of recipient shows that there are no misuses of cash for anti-social tasks.
- Households that were far from the bank, had to pay high cost of transportation from NRs 500 to NRs. 1500 for a single time, it is huge amount for them, should be explored it via beneficiary perspective. On the other side, waiting in a distribution sites and difficulties to withdraw amount due to problems of bank, may hamper NRCS' trust among the beneficiaries so there is space of timely conversation and message sharing them about the delaying process.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Capacity building of volunteers and staff about the online and offline data collection including the knowledge building of them on disaster risk reduction and management
- Continuity of multi- purpose cash assistance and conditional cash to meet shelter outcomes in the future if pre-requirement exist for CVA
- Continuity of integration of transitional shelter with toilet construction and water tank installation
- Regular orientation to local stakeholders about humanitarian principles, government rules and regulation on DRR&M
- Support to establish and or capacity building of local emergency operation centres
- Roaster maintenance of volunteers and trained human resources at district/ local level
- Conduct Cash Top Up for specific vulnerable groups in the recovery phase
- Top up transportation cost to the transfer value provided to the beneficiaries in upcoming days while operating such kind of programme where the bank facilities are far
- Conduct financial service providers assessment at local and district level and do service contract at national level.
- Conduct the rapid local / district market assessment before operating such kind of cash and voucher assistance programme in the target location
- Regular coordination with FSP before, during and after the distribution at national and local level
- Increase the NFRI stock items at district level.
- There are aftershocks, which traumatize to the disaster affected population so increase the level of engagement with affected population at individual level, household level and community level
- Provide the NFRI at package in a standard form as per family size
- Disseminate the information related to feedback mechanism of NRCS and local level
- There is higher expectation received during the data collection on permanent shelter building and livelihood support so better to conduct such projects, which connect livelihood recovery with shelter construction.
- Consider designing of the transitional shelter size and models considering household size, cultural and vulnerability factors.
- Provide different shelter modality as per local context, which is feasible in the cold weather too.
- Assess the environment before supporting any kinds of relief items to the disaster affected population, in order to preserve the environmental resources.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Nepal, nestled in the Himalayas, has long grappled with a variety of natural disasters due to its rugged terrain and geographical vulnerabilities. The country is prone to earthquakes, landslides, floods, and avalanches, posing significant challenges to its population and infrastructure. The devastating earthquake in 2015, with a magnitude of 7.8, resulted in widespread destruction, claiming thousands of lives and displacing millions. Since then, the country has been engaged in ongoing efforts to rebuild and strengthen its resilience against future disasters. Additionally, seasonal monsoons bring floods and landslides, further exacerbating the vulnerability of communities, particularly in remote and mountainous regions. Nepal ranks 11<sup>th</sup> in terms of earthquake risk, and earthquakes have often occurred in the country.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023, 5.3 magnitude earthquake at 14:40 (GMT+5:45) and its aftershock of 6.3 magnitude earthquake at 15:06 (GMT+5:45) hit the far western part of Nepal. The epicenter was in Bajhang district of Sudurpaschim province and the tremors felt in six neighboring districts: Bajura, Achham, Doti, Baitadi, Darchula and Dadeldhura. This earthquake mostly damaged in Jayaprithvi municipality of Bajhang district and KhaptadChhededaha rural municipality, Gaumul rural municipality and Budhiganga municipality of Bajura district. According to the government report, one death along with 35 people was injured. The figure shows that the earthquake displaced 4,387 families and affected to 17,367 families, while the fully damaged houses were 4,021 and partial damaged households were 13,305.

To respond the emergency situation, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) launched the joint intervention (Sudurpaschim Earthquake Response), in partnership with Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) with the collaborative funding support from American Red Cross, British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross, in providing response for earthquake affected households and their communities. In this response, Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) was activated, conducted Sudurpaschim Earthquake Response Operation from October 2023 to March 2024. The response initiatives aimed at enabling the earthquake-hit households to meet their essential needs, by embracing the foundational objectives of saving lives, reducing suffering and maintaining human dignity. NRCS distributed relief items to the most affected population immediately after the earthquake, deployed its trained volunteers in the field from the first day of earthquake and provided essential supports as follows:

- Non-food relief items (NFRI) to 1301 households (covering 7,015 people)
- Conditional cash and voucher assistance (CVA) support for transitional shelter with toilet construction and water storage tank installation to 249 households.
- Multi- Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) support to 630 households
- Promotion of health and hygiene and protection, community engagement and accountability towards the affected population.

This response mainly concentrated within the highly impacted six RM/Ums of Bajhang and

Bajura districts however, NFRI was distributed in 11 RM/UMs of Bajhang districts to meet urgent needs of the affected population. Please, refer to the working districts and RM/Ums with number of supports in the annex 1.

**1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

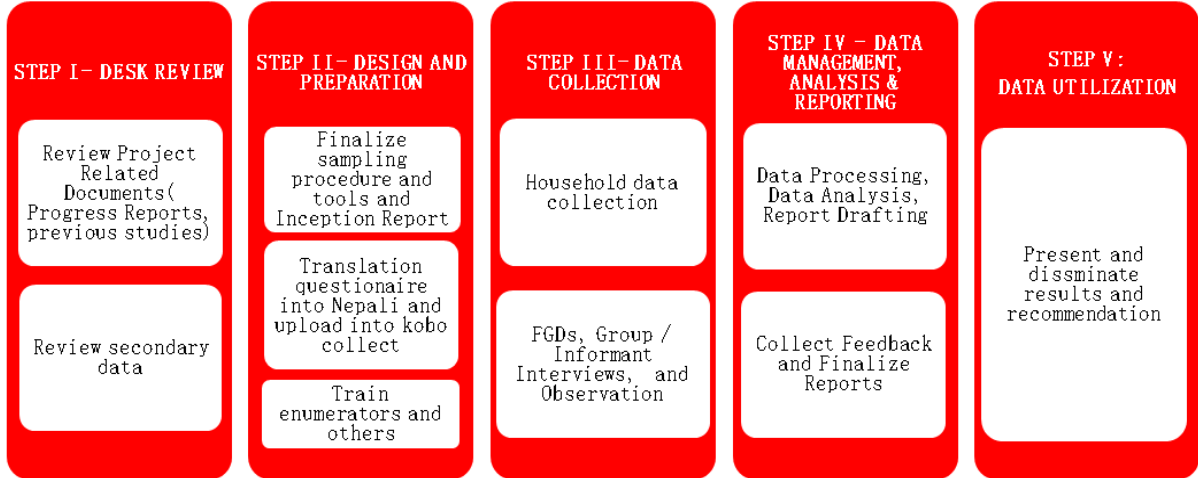
The entire objective of this assessment was to conduct post-distribution monitoring (PDM) of earthquake response efforts and document the support provided to affected families, gauge the level of their satisfaction of the response programme, assess the effectiveness of the distribution process, gather feedback from beneficiaries, and draw up recommendations for future relief operations in Nepal and other regions. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To collect qualitative and quantitative data related to items support and target group perception about the response program
- To conduct timeline analysis and analyze the collected quantitative and qualitative data from the beneficiaries and stakeholders
- To develop analytical PDM report of earthquake response

**2. METHODOLOGY**

Following the objectives of key research questions and scope of the PDM survey, this study adopted exploratory and descriptive methodology and classified it in various steps. Basically, it started from the desk review, followed by design and preparation of qualitative and quantitative tools and techniques, data collection, enumerators hiring and orientation about kobo collect for household survey, data analysis and management and PDM report writing, and sharing with IFRC/ NRCS. The whole process is presented in the figure:

*Figure 1: PDM Survey Methodology of Earthquake Response*



**2.1 APPROACH OF THE PDM SURVEY**

This study was conducted using a mixed method approach, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess the effectiveness of NRCS and partners concerning the

earthquake response. Specific techniques were:

- Survey with the sample recipients
- Focus group discussions (FGD)
- Semi-structured Interviews

The focus group discussion included PLA tools such as time-line exercises (for timeliness of the relief), venn diagram (stakeholder analysis) and rating tools (for recipients satisfaction). Furthermore, observation was embedded in all of the process.

The following table illustrates the approach of PDM survey with an overview of method, scope, stakeholders and number of interactions.

*Table 1 Key research questions and approach of study*

Scope of Evaluation	Key research questions	Source of Information	Methods
Relevance	~What is the proof of support received by beneficiaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipients</li> <li>• Distribution list</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Individual Interviews along with Observations</li> </ul>
	~ How well does the NRCS support address the needs of the affected people?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipients</li> <li>• Local governments</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
Coherence	~ How well does the response align with the priorities of local government? ~ How well does the response align with the NRCS priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local governments</li> <li>• Red Cross staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	~How well are the recipient satisfied with the relief assistance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> </ul>
	~What is the status of utilization and effectiveness of the community engagement process and the approach in response planning and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
	~How effective are different cash delivery mechanism used in response operation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
	~What approach was taken to mainstream GESI in the project, and how effective was the approach? Who are still	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipient</li> <li>• Red Cross staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>

	excluded, if any? ~ How well the selection approach, criteria and the actual support help the most vulnerable?		
Efficiency	~Were the relief items delivered in the time against the standard?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipients</li> <li>• Red Cross staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Review of the RC Response standards</li> </ul>
Immediate Outcome (Use of the relief support)	~ How well have the relief resources been used towards intended purpose?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• FGDs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
Lessons Learned	~ What are the best practices of the response?	Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis</li> </ul>
Recommendations	~ What were the key gaps in the project intervention against NRCS / IFRC manual standard? How can they be improved in the future design?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis</li> </ul>

## 2.2 STUDY AREA

The Study was carried out in Bajura and Bajhang districts of Sudurpaschim province of Nepal especially Eight rural/ municipalities of Bajura and Bajhang districts for household survey and Tribeni municipality and KhaptadChededaha rural municipality of Bajura district and Talkot and ChabbisPathivera rural municipalities of Bajhang district for FGDs, Group / Informant Interviews, Observation, timeline analysis and In- depth Interviews. Beneficiaries who received NFRI (blanket, tarpaulin, mattress, dignity kit), cash support for Transitional Shelter, toilet construction and water tank installation and MPCA were the population of the study. Local governments, beneficiaries and NRCS district chapters and NRCS central team were the major sources of information and key stakeholders of FGD, group / informant interviews, observation and timeline analysis.

## 2.3 SAMPLING DESIGN

### QUANTITATIVE STRAND

For the household survey, systematic sampling was leveraged in the study, where the sample was drawn by applying an interval from the list to reach to the estimated sample. A sample size of 614 was undertaken for the study. The required sample size was calculated for each type of support (NFRI, MPCA and Transitional Shelter with WASH support) considering 95 percent confidence level and 5 percent margin of error (Cochran equation of definite population).

$$S = \text{Def} \times \frac{\frac{Z^2 \cdot p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \left(\frac{Z^2 \cdot p(1-p)}{e^2 N}\right)}$$

Where,

S= required number of samples

p= Assumed prevalence for a given indicator (adopted 0.5, which gives maximum sample size)

Z= Z-score (adopted 1.96, which corresponds 95% confidence)

N= Population (total number of potential survey participants)

e= margin of error (adopted 0.05)

Deff= Design effect (adopted 1 for systematic sampling as the sampling procedure will use the interval from the given list to meet the sample size)

The required number of sample was selected from the name-list of the support for each category of support, using the required interval, as the sampling was designed as systematic sampling.

Table 2 Sample size

Type of support	Total Beneficiaries HH (with overlaps)	Requirement of sample size, as per calculation	Actual overlapping of the support)
NFRI	1,301	300	451
MPCA	630	237	333
Transitional Shelter (TS)	249	148	199

Net actual sample: 614

## QUALITATIVE STRAND

7 FGDs, and 18 semi-structured interviews including 4 observations were undertaken with the recipients, local government, NRCS and service providers. A total of 92 participants were involved in the qualitative strand. Out of the total, 50 % were female.

Table 3 Qualitative process participants

Stakeholders	Details	# people in survey	# FGDs with 6-9 people each (average 8)	# Semi structured Interviews	Observation	Evaluation Participants

Local Governments	Mayor / local emergency operation centre focal person / ward chairperson			12 (6 per district)	0	13 (Including 1 interview with local vendor)
Red Cross: Local / district chapter and HQ	Project field team / district chapter / central project team			13 (9 from the field and 4 from central)		13
Observation	Transitional shelter support beneficiaries				8 (4 per district)	8
Recipients		614	7	4		58
Total		614 HHs	7 FGDs [58 people]	[29 IIs]	8	92 people

## 2.4 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Household surveys collected quantitative information and FGD, IIs, observation and timeline analysis provided qualitative information about beneficiaries' perception and their experiences. Both qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated with each other. Table 1 presents the method of data analysis for each type of data collection techniques.

*Table 4 Data Collection and Analysis Methods*

Data Collection Techniques	Method of Tabulation and Analysis
FGD / II/ Observation	<p>Transcribed the collected information</p> <p>Regrouped / segregated the information under the thematic heading / research questions (relevancy, timeliness, effectiveness, satisfaction, cross cutting, short term impact etc.)</p> <p>The information obtained analysed as per the theme, using predefined themes</p> <p>Identified the strength, areas of improvement and interesting facts</p> <p>Cross validated information with the findings received from household questionnaire</p>

Household Survey	Used KOBO, Mobile based Apps for survey Found out consistencies and cleaned the data Database from KOBO was extracted to SPSS and variables were defined Descriptive tables were generated for each key research questions Cross validated information with the findings received from FGD/ IIs
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## 2.5 PROCESS OF THE STUDY

The table below provides the process of the study.

Table 5 Process of the Study

Steps	Timeframe											
	March				April				May			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1--Familiarity of programme (Induction meeting and literature review)	■											
2--Inception report preparation and submission to IFRC	■											
3-- Orientation the study team members by IFRC and Team Leader		■										
4-- Tools development and finalization			■									
5--Questionnaire designing into kobo collect and field planning			■									
6: Selection of enumerators by NRCS			■									
7--Orientation to enumerators (Virtual and Face- to- Face)			■	■								
8--Qualitative Data collection and Initial field sharing at field (Dadeldhura)			■	■	■	■						
9: Quantitative data collection				■	■	■	■					
10--Transcribing of qualitative data						■	■	■				
11--Data cleaning of survey data							■	■				
12--Data analysis: quantitative and qualitative							■	■				
13--Submission of first draft of Report									■			
14.PDM survey findings presentation to NRCS/ IFRC										■		
15--Feedback Collection from NRCS/ IFRC									■	■	■	
16--Finalize report incorporating feedback received from IFRC / NRCS												■
17--Submission of final PDM survey report and other as per ToR												■

## 2.6 ETHICAL STANDARD AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Ethical standards were considered in both qualitative and quantitative strands. While collecting data from beneficiaries and other stakeholders, the study team transparently communicated the study's objectives and participants' prior informed consent, confidentiality and privacy was maintained with the highest integrity and honesty.

Do No Harm principles were adequately considered while designing the questionnaire. Discussion and interview guidelines were prepared to avoid any possible tensions or conflicts between different groups such as gender, ethnic groups and the category of recipients. All the participants were treated fairly and equitably. Furthermore, to understand the situation of the most vulnerable population, the PDM team intentionally met with some single women and low status households during field visits and vulnerable communities and households were selected for interaction.

In ensuring the quality of the data collected for the post-distribution survey and qualitative study, rigorous measures were implemented for data quality assurance. This included meticulous planning and design of the survey instruments and interview protocols, ensuring clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness. Furthermore, proper orientations were made for both the study team and enumerators. Further, the study team also trained enumerators about kobo collect application for data collection virtually first and then face - to - face in the field, while a pilot test and modification was made in the household questionnaire as per field observation and enumerators' feedback.

Enumerators were provided regular guidance and support from the study team to maintain data quality and ethical standards of the survey and maintained audio records where participants allowed us for recording. The study team transcribed the entire qualitative data collected from the field and daily reviewed in the field about key issues, findings and observation. The secondary information, survey and qualitative process cross validated the information for this study. The study team scrutinized the whole response activities by keeping the affected population at the centre of humanitarian action.

## **2.7 CONSIDERATION**

Based on the programming approach, Protection, gender and inclusion (PGI), Community Engagement, and Accountability (CEA) have been taken as a major consideration in the study. CEA is the integral part of core humanitarian standard (CHS). Moreover, Do No Harm (DNH) principle important aspect of the relief supports. The study has put lenses in these three approaches.

## **2.8 LIMITATION**

The study has been focused on the NCRS relief areas within the two districts. The results of the study are based on the views expressed by the respondents. Possible biasness (desirability bias) were tried to reduce by clarifying the objective to the participants.

## **3. FINDINGS**

### **3.1 RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS**

Total of 614 recipients were met during the quantitative process and 92 during the qualitative process.

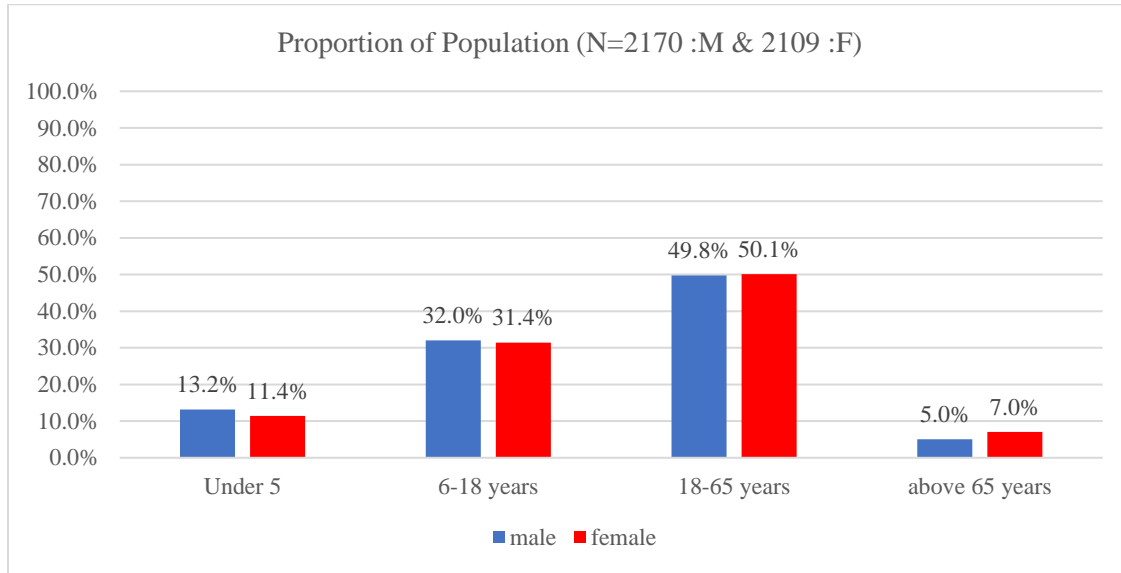
The characteristics of the respondents have been tabulated to understand the context of the informants. The information of respondents of qualitative survey has already been discussed under “Methodology”. Total 614 household members (Male-56% and Female-44%) from 8 rural / municipalities from Bajura and Bajhang districts were involved in this survey. Bajura district covers 48.4 percent (N=297) and Bajhang district covers 51.6 percent (N=314) of total sampled households. Of them, Khaptad Chededaha Rural Municipality (RM) covers the highest percentage 28.7 percent (N=176), followed by Chhabis Pathivera RM (N=130, 21.7%), Tribeni municipality (N=91, 14.7%), Talkot RM (N=84, 13.7%) and Jaya Prithvi municipality (N=78, 12.7%). Of the total surveyed households, 83.9 percent were head of the households and 8 percent (N=49) were people with disability. Please refer to the Table below for detailed information.

Table 6 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic Characteristics		Number	Percentage (%)
Name of District	Bajhang	317	51.6%
	Bajura	297	48.4%
Name of Municipality	Khaptad Chhededaha RM	176	28.7%
	Triveni Municipality	91	14.8%
	Budiganga municipality	30	4.9%
	Chhabis Pathivera RM	130	21.2%
	Jay Prithvi Municipality	78	12.7%
	Talkot RM	84	13.7%
	Masta RM	13	2.1%
	Saipal RM	12	2.0%
Respondent's Sex	Female	270	44.0%
	Male	344	56.0%
Do you have any disabilities?	No	565	92.0%
	Yes	49	8.0%
Are you head of the household?	No	99	16.1%
	Yes	515	83.9%
Ethnicity of respondent	Brahmin / Chhetri/Thakuri	452	73.6%
	Dalit	112	18.2%
	Others	48	7.9%
	Janajati/Indigenous	2	0.3%

The total population of surveyed households was 4279, where 6.96 was the average household size. The figure below presents more detailed information.

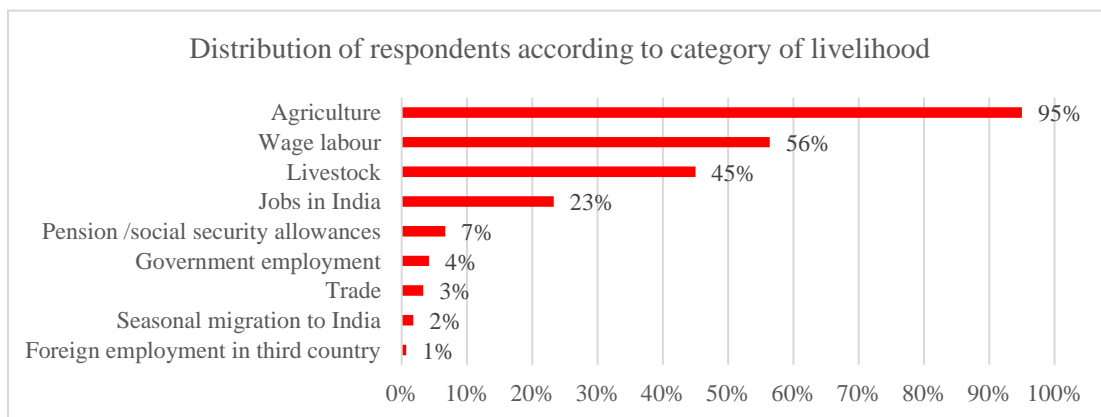
Figure 2 Proportion of age group and gender



Regarding the presence of vulnerable groups, 23.9 percent (N=165) respondents reported they have at least one following vulnerable category of member in their family. The vulnerable category of members means those households who have pregnant and lactating women, single women, chronic illness and people with disabilities in their family. Of them, the majority of the households (N=134) have one vulnerable category of family members, 28 households have two categories of family members and 3 households have 3 vulnerable categories of members in the family.

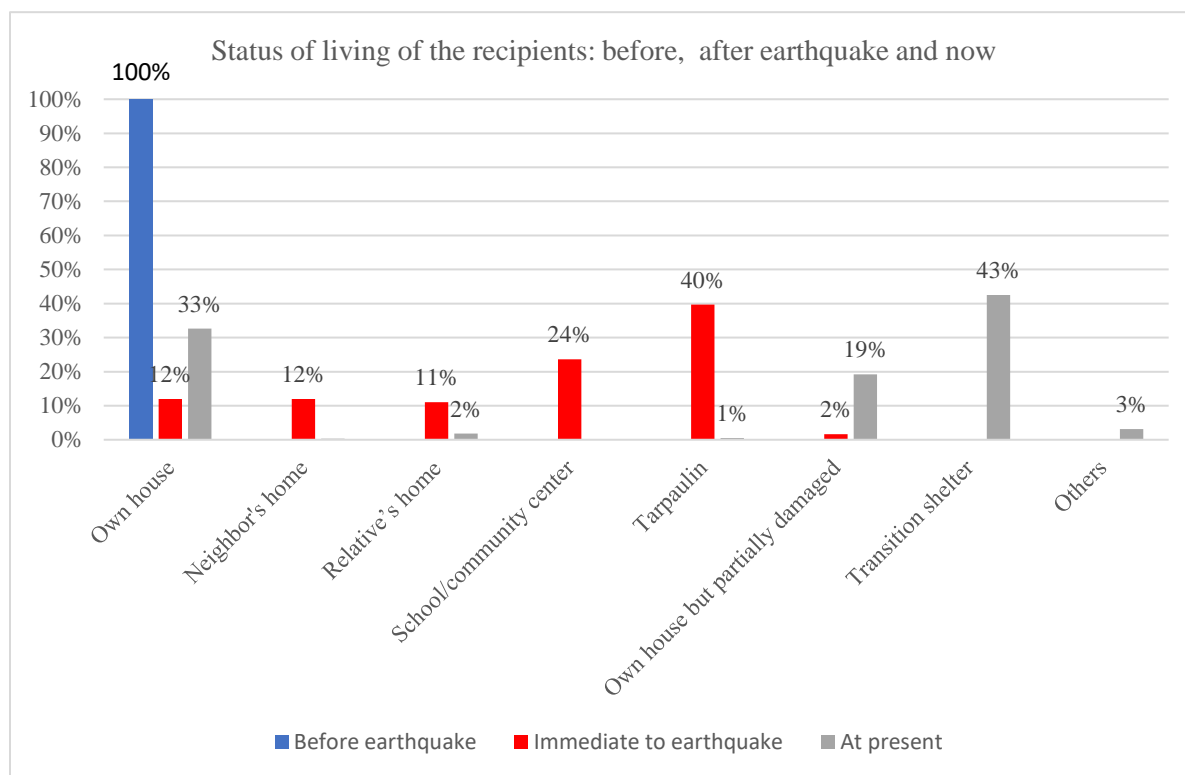
With regards to livelihood, majority of the households adopted more than one occupation as a source of income. Majority of the households follow agriculture as the major source of income, followed by wage labour, livestock and jobs in India. In contrast, the least number of households who have remittance from foreign employment in third countries adopt it as the source of income for their livelihood. The details livelihood sources of the respondents presented in diagram below.

Figure 3 Source of income of the respondents



Before the earthquake, all respondents had their own household shelter for livelihood, but it was drastically changed when the earthquake struck. The earthquake damaged shelter partially of 46.7 percent (N=287) respondents, followed by fully damaged shelters of 43.8 percent (N=269) respondents and mildly damaged of 9.4 percent (N=58). The situation of staying of the respondents before, immediately after earthquake and at the time of survey has been displayed in the diagram below.

Figure 4 Status of living of the recipients



## 3.2 RELEVANCE

### 3.2.1. Relief Support and Mode of Support

All the respondents said they received support for what NRCS had intended for them earlier about the relief items. During the field visit, the study team tried to explore whether there are any discrepancies in the support, but none of the complaints or feedback received about it. Mainly, three kinds of relief support they received and the majority of the respondents received more than one relief support. The major three kinds of relief support are: i. Non Food Relief Items (NFRI) ii. Multi- Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) and iii. Cash Support for Transitional Shelter with Toilet Construction and Water Tank Installation.

#### 3.2.1.i. Non-food Relief Items (NFRI)

With the purpose of saving lives, NRCS distributed NFRI as early support to the earthquake affected households of Bajura and Bajhang districts in the early phase of response. It included 1 tarpaulin, 2 blankets, ropes and mattress in the early days of earthquake response. Some

beneficiaries also received dignity kits, kishori kits, hygiene kits and solar lamps as an NFRI. The quantity of NFRI items is different and additionally some NFRI was topped up in the winter season. A 73.4 percent (614 out of 451) respondents reported they have received NFRI from NRCS, where 384 respondents were provided one kind of NFRI, 37 beneficiaries received two kinds of NFRI, 23 respondents and 6 respondents received three and four kinds of NFRI respectively.

### 3.2.1. ii. Multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA)

After distributing NFRI, MPCA was distributed to the targeted households. This was unconditional cash support, provided to the households through financial service providers (FSP) using recipients or his / her family members' bank account with the objectives of meeting the essential needs such as food purchase, loan payment etc. The amount of MPCA was NPR 15,000. Based on the survey, 54.2 percent (333 out of 614) respondents reported they have received MPCA from NRCS, amounting as aforementioned.

The following facts and figures are noted from the survey:

- Nearly all (99.6%) (N= 331) received cash from his / her bank account of the HH head.
- 87.1 percent (290 out of 333) had have bank account for MPCA Cash Assistance. Among the HH head, the proportion is : women: 86.4% and Men: 88.1%.
- Out of new account holders, 55.8 percent (24 out of 43) experienced that the bank account opening procedure was lengthy.
- 37.2 percent (16 out of 43) experienced that the banking process was easy
- 53.8 percent (23 out of 43) had to deposit money (ranging from NPR 100 to 1,000) to open bank account.
- 76.7 percent (33 out of 43) expressed that it took more than one day to open their bank account due to document or procedural issue.
- A vast majority of the account holders (99.4%) have been using the same account for their regular banking purpose. Among the HH head, the proportion is: women: 99.6%, men: 99.3%.

Recipients had spent hoursreaching the Financial Support Provider (FSP) (bank). The highest number of respondents reported they took 1 to 2 hours to reach the bank in both districts, while the lowest number of respondents answered 2 to 3 hours in Bajhang and more than three hours in Bajura. Taking more than two hours to reach FSP can cause other losses in their daily lives during an emergency period. The details are illustrated in the table below.

Table 7 Distance to reach to the Financial Support Provider (MPCA)

Particular	Time taken	Bajhang		Bajura		Total	
		N	N %	N	N%	N	N%
How long did it take to reach the bank from	More than 3 hours	4	2.3%	36	22.6%	40	12.0%
	2-3 hours	19	10.9%	26	16.4%	45	13.5%
	1-2 hours	98	56.3%	54	34.0%	152	45.6%

where you collected cash?	Less than 1 hour	53	30.5%	43	27.0%	96	28.8%
	Total	174	100.0%	159	100.0%	333	100.0%

### 3.2.1. iii. Transitional shelter with WASH facility

NRCS provided relief support for Transitional shelter with WASH facility. The WASH includes installation of toilet and water storage tank. Based on the survey, 32.4 percent (199 out of 614) were those who had received the transitional shelter support. After distributing NFRI and MPCA, the conditional cash support was provided to meet the sectoral objectives of shelter outcomes with the objectives of constructing transitional shelter, toilet and water tank installation at household level through financial service providers (FSP). The total amount of Transitional Shelter, Toilet Construction and Water Tank Installation was NPR 71,500, which was distributed in two tranches using recipients or his / her family members' bank account. 199 respondents reported they had received transitional shelter support from NRCS and the amount was exactly the same as informed. The district wise respondents' numbers and detailed cash delivery mechanism are as follows as illustrated in the table.

Table 8 Status of receiving transitional shelter support

Particulars		Name of District					
		Bajhang		Bajura		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Have you received Transitional shelter with toilet construction and water storage tanks?	No	218	68.8%	197	66.3%	415	67.6%
	Yes	99	31.2%	100	33.7%	199	32.4%
	Total	317	100.0%	297	100.0%	614	100.0%
What was the mode of cash transfer?	Bank account (HH head)	99	100.0%	99	99.0%	198	99.5%
	Bank transfer-family member's account	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	1	0.5%
	Total	99	100.0%	100	100.0%	199	100.0%

85.4 percent (170 out of 199) said they already had a bank account where the cash was disbursed by NRCS. The district wise bank account details and their experiences are presented in table below.

- Nearly all(99.5%)(198 out of 199) received cash from his / her bank account of the HH head.
- 85.4 percent (170 out of 199) had have bank account for Cash Assistance.
- Out of new account holders, 62.1 percent (18 out of 29) experienced that the bank account opening procedure was lengthy.
- 48.3 percent (14 out of 29) had to deposit money (ranging from NPR 300 to 1,000) to open bank account.
- 79.3 percent (23 out of 29) expressed that it took more than one day to open their bank account due to document or procedural issue. All the account holders have been using the same account for their regular banking purpose.

As explained above, recipients had spent hours to reach to the Financial Support Provider (FSP) (bank). A 15.6 percent (31 out of 199) of the recipient had to spend more than 3 hours in reaching the FSP. Comparatively, Bajhang working areas were accessible to the bank, where maximum numbers of respondents took 1 to 2 hours, which is completely different in the case of Bajura, where the majority of the population (N=30%) took either more than 3 hours or 1 to 2 hours to reach the bank where the cash was deposited. Hence, beneficiaries have to pay off the whole day to go back to home. The district wise FSP distances are illustrated in the table below.

Table 9 Distance to reach to the Financial Support Provider (TS)

Particulars		Name of District					
		Bajhang		Bajura		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
How long did it take to reach the bank from where you collected cash?	More than 3 hours	1	1.0%	30	30.0%	31	15.6%
	2-3 hours	11	11.1%	17	17.0%	28	14.1%
	1-2 hours	74	74.7%	30	30.0%	104	52.2%
	Less than 1 hour	13	13.2%	23	23.0%	36	18.1%
	Total	99	100%	100	100%	199	100%

### **TYPES OF TRANSITIONAL SHELTER**

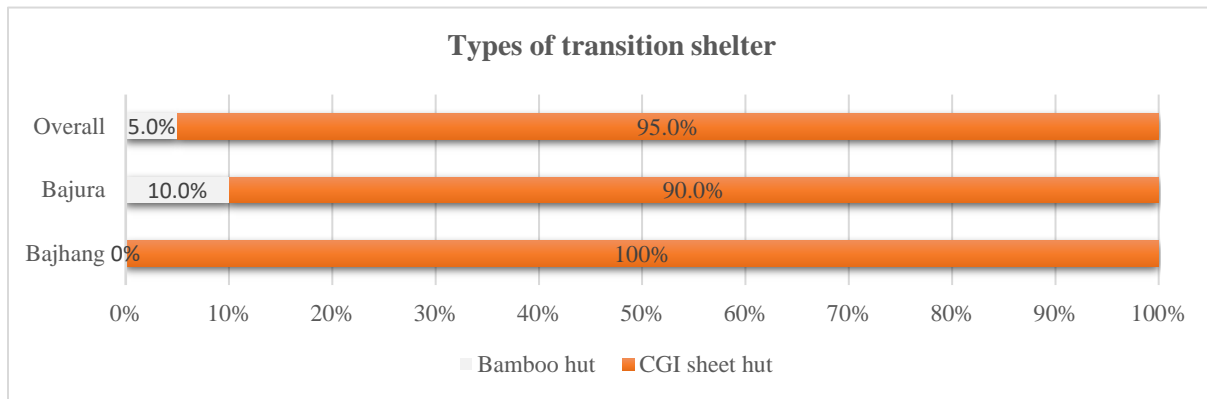
Mainly two types of transitional shelter made by CGI sheets and Bamboo were found in the study area. Additionally, all the toilets' roofs were made by CGI sheet and five hundreds liters of water tank was found. The local materials such as uses of timber have been massively used while designing transitional shelters. 95 percent (189 out of 199) respondents reported they had built transitional shelters with CGI sheets, followed by bamboo (5.0%) Types of transitional shelter from NRCS support in two districts are shown in diagram below.

Table 10 Time taken to complete of transition shelter

Particulars		Name of District					
		Bajhang		Bajura		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
How long did it take to build the transitional shelter with WASH facility installation?	1 – 2 months	5	5.1%	46	46.0%	51	25.6%
	Less than 1 week	8	8.1%	0	0.0%	8	4.0%
	More than 2 months	0	0.0%	6	6.0%	6	3.0%
	1-2 weeks	86	86.9%	5	5.0%	91	45.7%
	2weeks – 1 month	0	0.0%	43	43.0%	43	21.6%

	Total	99	100%	100	100%	199	100%
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Figure 5 Types of transition shelter



### **TIME PERIOD TO BUILD THE TRANSITIONAL SHELTER WITH TOILET CONSTRUCTION**

A proportion of 45.7 percent (91 out of 199) respondents shared that they had constructed transitional shelters within one to two weeks of time period, followed by 1 to 2 months (25.6%) and 2 weeks to 1 months (21.6%) in the two districts. The district wise data shows that the majority of the households (95%, N= 94) had constructed transitional shelters within two weeks, which is found reversed in the case of Bajura district, where only 5 percent households completed the transitional shelters within two weeks after receiving cash from NRCS. In Bajura, 48 percent completed the transitional shelters within a first month. The detailed district wise figure is in the table below.

### **ALERT PRIOR MESSAGE / SMS**

82.4 percent (164 out of 199) respondents reported that they had received alert messages priory about the cash deposit in the bank account. In Bajhang it was slightly higher (93.9%) compared to Bajura (71.0%).

### **ADEQUACY FOR ACCOMMODATION AND SANITATION FACILITIES**

A 83.9 percent (167 out of 199) respondents reported that transitional shelter's have adequate capacity to accommodate the numbers of individuals. But for the rest 16.1 percent the transitional shelter had limited capacity to accommodate all the family members. Those families who have big numbers of family size, which means more than five family members and different age and sex categories, responded that the accommodation was not enough for them. Similarly, 85.9 percent(171 out of 199) households shared that sanitation facilities are sufficient. District wise details are as follows in table below.

Table 11 Adequacy for accommodation and sanitation facilities

Particulars	Name of District					
	Bajhang		Bajura		Total	
	N=99	%	N=100	%	N=199	%
Does the shelter have adequate capacity to accommodate the number of individuals in your family?	91	91.9%	76	76%	167	83.9%
Are sanitation facilities sufficient and properly maintained in the shelter ?	86	86.9%	85	85%	171	85.9%

### APPLICABILITY TO VULNERABLE FAMILY MEMBERS

There are mixed versions found at household level regarding the safe shelter to the household members particularly to women, children, elderly and sick people. Majority of the households (86.9 percent, i.e. 173 out of 199) responded that the transitional shelters are safe and very safe to the household members in two districts, while the rest of the responders commented that transitional shelters are unsafe. Particularly, 3 percent (N=6) of total respondents commented that transitional shelters are completely very unsafe and 2.5 percent (N=5) said the transitional shelters are unsafe to those groups who are women, children, elderly and sick people. Similarly, the majority of the households agreed that the transitional shelters are safe in both districts, while the numbers of responders in Bajura are comparatively more in numbers who believe that households are unsafe. The district wise responses are as follows in table below.

Table 12 Perceived safety of TS

Particulars		Name of District					
		Bajhang		Bajura		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
To what extent do you agree that the shelter is safe for your family members -particularly to women, children, elderly and sick?	Very unsafe	1	1%	5	5%	6	3%
	Unsafe	0	1%	5	5%	5	2.5%
	Neutral	2	2.0%	12	12%	14	7%
	Safe	93	93.9%	72	72%	165	82.9%
	Very safe	2	2%	6	6%	8	4%
	Total	99	100%	100	100%	199	100%

### 3.2.2. Status of addressing the needs of the recipients

As per the Initial Rapid Assessment, the most urgent priority (need) of the earthquake affected population was Shelter, NFRI, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and Protection, Gender and

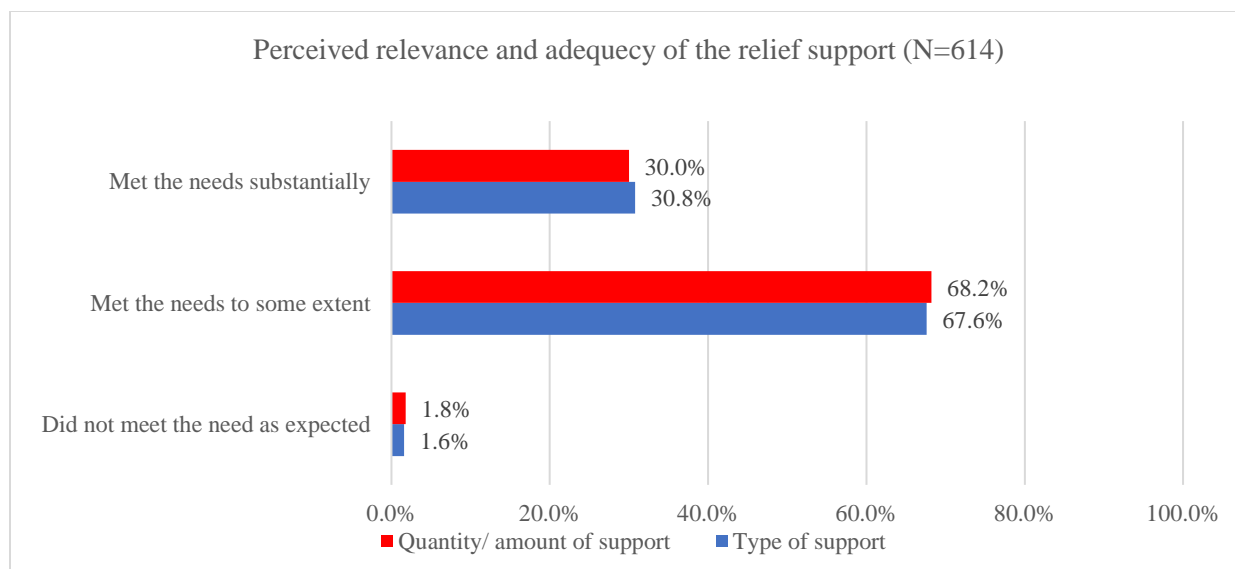
Inclusion. To address these gaps, NRCS distributed NFRI support immediately after the earthquake followed by MPCA within 45 days and Transitional Shelter with Toilet Construction and Water Tank Installation after completing MPCA respectively.

The transitional shelter was integrated with toilet construction and water tank installation. After the earthquake, the market of Chainpur of Bajhang district was blocked due to landslides for a couple of days. Other nearby markets of working RM/UMs didn't have such capacities to sell in big size. Additionally, the beneficiaries had their own priorities and limitations, so NRCS provided in-kind NFRI items, which was found to be an excellent approach in the emergency phase. Later, the local market became viable and strengthened and the road was opened. In these conditions, NRCS provided MPCA and cash support for Transitional Shelter, Toilet Construction and Water Tank Installation, found effective for local market strengthening and infrastructure development.

In general, the qualitative findings affirm that relief items were integrated, relevant and impartial, which addressed the most urgent needs of the beneficiaries, supporting saving lives, reducing sufferings and maintaining human dignity. For example, FGD participant, female, 50 years, Khaptad Chededaha RM says, *“Firstly, we received a mattress, blanket, and ropes. Secondly, we received Rs. 15,000 to buy essential items and goods. Then, we received Rs. 71,500 for transitional shelter with WASH support and toilet construction. All the items and support received from the NRCS is very relevant for us and able to survive in our hard time.”*. Likewise, FGD female participant, 22 years, Khaptad Chededaha RM, Bajura district stated : *“I received blankets, ropes, tents and mats, which are the most needed supports for me. I am using these items regularly till the moment.”*

Based on the survey, the type and time of relief support helped to meet the immediate needs substantially (30.8%) or somewhat (67.6%). Furthermore, the quantity helped to meet the immediate needs substantially (30.0%) or somewhat (68.2%). Table below depicts the state of the respondents' perception.

*Figure 6 Status of meeting the needs of the recipients*



Based on the impressions brought out by survey, the relief items especially NFRI weren't in a proper quantity. The FGD participants reported the NFRI was not in the package and not adequate as per family size and some FGD participants in Tribeni municipality of Bajura district and Chabbis Pathivera RM reported the transfer value of transitional shelter with WASH support was insufficient. Despite the same transfer value provided to the transitional shelter's recipients as per the government guidelines, the logistic cost associated with remoteness and inadequate technical capacity (human resources) was another challenge for shelter construction.

When observed, the maximum size of transitional shelter was 18' x 12'. It has two rooms, and has been used for accommodation and kitchen purposes. In the context of study areas, people are mostly living in a joint family and have more than five members in a family therefore, this space is not adequate for those families having more than five members.

### 3.3. COHERENCE

#### 3.3.1. Coherence to the priorities of local government

As per the international humanitarian law (IHL), international human rights law (IHRL) and refugee law, the state is the ultimate duty bearer, which has legal and ethical responsibilities and a mandate to save their citizens from any kinds of disasters or conflict. On the other side, the citizen has also the right to live with dignity, the right to receive humanitarian assistance and the right to protection and security. Nepal is one of the signatories of IHL, IHRL and Sendai Framework (2015-2030) commits to fulfill the role driven by IHL, IHRL, Sendai Framework and other rules and regulations, promoting the action to reducing morbidity, mortality and damage from any kinds of disasters. After a month of Bajhang Earthquake, the latest earthquake happened in Jajarkot, which had massive destruction and highest numbers of human loss and property, compared to the Bajhang earthquake. The literature review shows the Bajhang

earthquake is taken as a *forgotten crisis*, where very few humanitarian actors were involved in supporting the disaster affected population and their communities. In this context, NRCS response for the Bajhang earthquake was found crucial from the perspective of the government.

As an auxiliary organization of the government of Nepal, NRCS directly supported the resource sharing and contributed to promoting the commitment done by the government of Nepal in national and international forums, ensuring the rights to live with dignity and rights to receive humanitarian assistance of the disaster affected population. Additionally, this response showed that preparedness action for effective disaster risk reduction and management done by the local governments, which allowed the local government to check the ground reality and capacity gaps of the stakeholders and provides a context to developing resilient communities in upcoming days.

*As per the humanitarian law and human rights law, support to the disaster affected families and their communities is the prime responsibilities of the state, but we had resource constraints and limited preparedness action to support all the affected population. In this context, NRCS support from the first date to the moment is appreciative. NRCS has supported NFRI, MPCA, transitional shelter support including awareness message sharing via local radio to create awareness about the preparedness before, during and after the disasters. I really appreciate the hard work of RC to make this success. They are always with us on the ground and they have participated with us at all stages of relief distribution. Their positive attitude and efforts for saving lives, reducing sufferings and maintaining dignity is precious, which we have to learn from them.*

*Executive Chief Administrative Officer, ChabbisPathivera RM, Bajhang*

### **3.3.2. Coherence to NRCS strategy**

Sudurpaschim Earthquake Response has been aligned with the NRCS / IFRC objectives, which kept people's safety and dignity at the centre of the humanitarian action, avoided exposing beneficiaries to further harm without discrimination on grounds of religion, race, sex, class, caste, tribe, nationality or political belief, and provided emergency relief services. Additionally, NRCS strengthened the capacity of district chapters via capacity building activities and provided an opportunity for district chapters to operate such kinds of disaster management locally, which is part of the NRCS strategy. This allowed NRCS to test their newly revised disaster operational manual and other documents and tried to execute it. Hence, this response is highly relevant to NRCS strategy.

### **3.4. EFFECTIVENESS**

In this section, effectiveness of distribution; designing & module of TS, transfer of values, effectiveness of cash delivery mechanism, quality of support & satisfaction, cross cutting (GESI, CEA, DNH), coordination & collaboration have been discussed.

### 3.4.1 Effectiveness of Distribution

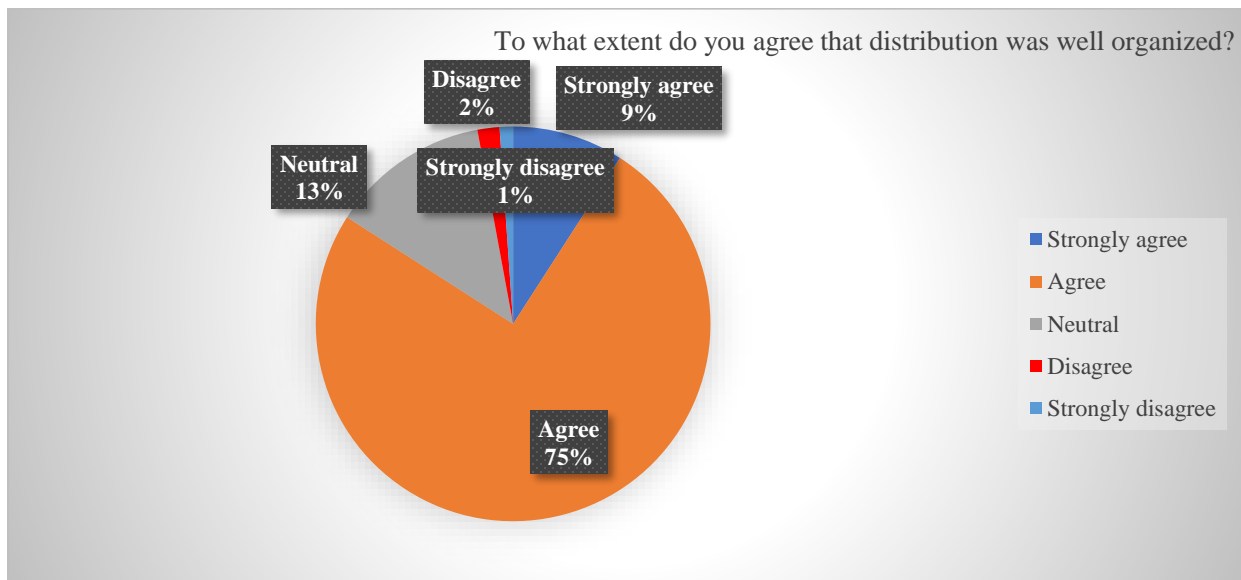
#### 3.4.1.2. Effectiveness of Pre-distribution

Prior to the distribution, there were a lot of task completed as a primary activity. For instance, beneficiary selection and finalization was one of the core tasks, which should be done prior distribution. To do that, NRCS played significant role in order to identify and assess the situation as a one of the members of household visit. Later, the local governments finalized the name list and the role of NRCS found effective for household registration and relief support distribution. In the case of NFRI, the NRCS provided support in an impartial basis, which didn't follow the systematic registration process. Despite sharing message at least 2 days prior of the distribution to the recipients as a NRCS' standard of disaster operation, it is not followed well.

#### 3.4.1.2. Effectiveness of Distribution Set up

A remarkable number of respondents (84%: i.e. 516 out of 614) opined that distribution was well managed during the distribution. On the other hand, 2.9% respondents disagreed about this. The detailed response about perceived management of distribution set up is depicted in the diagram below.

Figure 7 Perception about management of the distribution



Similarly, there was flexibility to use any kinds of shelter modality excluding the size of transitional shelter, which made the process easier and faster but beneficiaries due to their multiple priorities undermined quality in some cases.

#### 3.4.1.3. Safety issues at the relief distribution sites

A 87.8 percent (539 out of 614) respondents reported that they didn't face any problems or safety issues at the relief distribution sites, while 12.2% respondents answered that they encountered problems or safety issues at the relief distribution sites. The highest numbers of

responders commented that long waiting time, bullying, and pushing among beneficiaries during distribution were the major issue / problem found at the relief distribution sites. The table below shows the major issues / problems found at the relief distribution sites.

Table 13 Safety issues faced by a few respondents

Problems (multiple responses)	% (N=96)
Lack of special arrangement for people with medical conditions (pregnant, sick, elderly)	9.3%
Bullying and pushing among beneficiaries during distribution	41.3%
Long waiting time	69.3%
No shadow at the distribution site	5.3%
Other	2.7%

### 3.4.2. Designing, and Module of transitional shelter

Based on the survey, the majority of the shelter respondents (85.73%, 170 out of 199) acknowledged that the plan, design and construction module of the transitional shelter was effective for them. Majority of the households including key informant stakeholders also appreciated the integration of Transitional Shelter with Toilet Construction and Water Tank, found quite helpful to manage the issues of water, sanitation and hygiene problems along with shelter problems.

*NRCS provided a water tank along with toilet construction and shelter, which we have used for water storage. We had previously faced the issues of water shortage in this season, now this water tank has really helped us to store water there and we use it when we need it, helping us to maintain the issues related to water, sanitation and hygiene.*  
 - An FGD participant, male, Chabbis Pathivera RM, Bajhang

Regarding the distribution point, most of the distribution was managed in an open, plain, public and centre location. FGD participant, female, 62, Khaptad Chededaha RM, Bajura stated: “Distribution site was in the plain areas, which was accessible to all members. It was near my home and in the middle of villages.”

However, in contrast, 14.3% respondents reported that plan, designing and construction modules of transitional shelter were not appropriate for them. Basically, those families who have more than five members and or families that have people with disability members, sick people, old aged members and pregnant and lactating women are unsatisfied with the transitional shelter module. Similarly, the maximum size is 18’ x 12’, made by CGI sheet in most of the cases, which is not applicable to those households who have big family sizes. Bajhang itself is a

mountainous district and Bajura is also located in hilly mountainous regions, so such a module made by CGI sheet may be irrelevant.

### **3.4.3. Transfer value of transitional shelter, MPCA and NFRI**

A 85.9% (171 out of 199) respondents expressed that grant / support was enough for transitional shelter completion. On the other hand, 14.1% experience that the grant was not enough for transitional shelter completion. Those families who have old-aged members, single women, pregnant and lactating women are households who have reported that the transfer value of transitional shelter is not sufficient for transitional shelter construction. Similarly, the transfer value was set up as per the minimum expenditure basket provided by the cash coordination group (CCG). This MEB is a monetary threshold, which calculates based on what a household requires to meet their basic needs – on a regular or season basis. There is no feedback received about the MPCA size, but participants had spent a half day minimum including NPR 1,500 travel cost to withdraw cash grant from the bank account.

Efforts in stocking some quantity of NFRI at NRCS district chapters has been recognized as a good practice by NRCS staff and local government, based on the interactions with them. As a result, NRCS district chapters started responses within the first six hours of the earthquake response. However, the minimum quantity of NFRI stock was not maintained.

### **3.4.4. Effectiveness of cash delivery mechanisms used in response operation**

Regarding the cash delivery mechanism, NRCS adopted cash transfer mechanism through bank accounts throughout the response. As per FGD findings, it is transparent and found effective in terms of delivery process and timeliness from the organizational part, but there are mixed beneficiary perceptions about the delivery mechanism in the ground. Especially those who are far from the bank and elderly people said that point distribution delivery mechanism is better and vice versa. In terms of accuracy, privacy, flexibility and uses of this mechanism, beneficiaries have positive opinions, but those who are far from the financial service provider (FSP) have different perceptions, spending more than one thousand and five hundred rupees travel cost and almost a half day to reach out to the FSP in each time. Some old aged beneficiaries, people with disability are having difficulties reaching out to the bank due to distance and geographical remoteness. Additionally, based on the FGDs, beneficiaries have visited more than two times and waited hour and hour to withdraw cash from the bank due to the FSP's limited capacity and internal banking problems in the case of Tribeni Municipality.

The respondents have appreciated cash modality. A representative expression has been cited in the box below.

*I found cash modality as an effective modality for me. Previously, I had to go to the specific time and date in the distribution point for shelter materials, but it was a totally different experience for me this time because of a new modality- CVA adopted in the response. I didn't go in at the specific time and date. As per my time availability, I went to the bank to withdraw the money.*

*-A FGD Participant, male, 35, Tribeni Municipality.*

Likewise, FGD participant, female, 32 years, said, " I received cash via Rastriya Banijya Bank, which is 15 km away from my house. It took Rs. 500 for a two way trip and it took more than a half day when I went to the bank."

Red Cross also perceived that cash modality was suitable in this context. An representative expression has been cited in the box below.

*The cash transfer modality is suitable in terms of transparency but in some contexts such as Chabbis Pathivera RM and other remote areas of project RM/UM, beneficiaries have to travel long distances and take hours and hours to reach the bank location (distribution point). The transportation cost is also super expensive and they have to pay extra money for food and transportation. Unfortunately, we didn't manage transportation cost.*

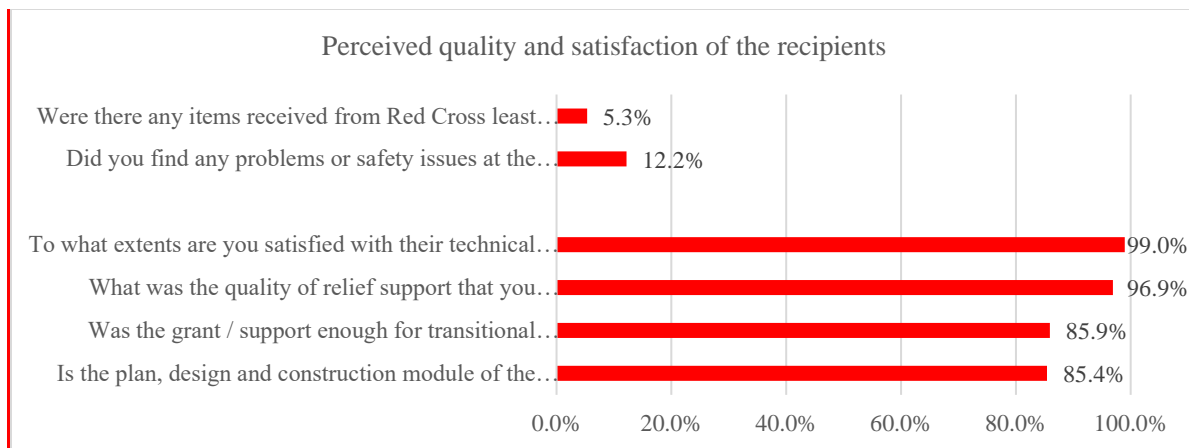
*-Mantri (District Secretary), male, Bajhang District Chapter, NRCS.*

### **3.4.5. Quality of the support and satisfaction**

Households (92.6%) recognized the quality of relief support they received met their expectation, while 3.1% households commented of the poor quality. 89.3% are satisfied with the criteria of beneficiaries' selection, 81.4 percent are satisfied with pre-distribution information provided, 82.1% are satisfied with the timeliness of the support, 81.0% are satisfied with the quantity

With regards to quality, there is a mixed response: good, average and poor received from the beneficiaries, where the majority of the respondents reported that they received good quality of relief items and the least numbers of respondents reported that they received the poor quality of relief items. The figure below presents the respondents feedback about the quality of relief support. A 99.0 percent are happy with the technical support, 96.9 percent are happy about the quality. However, 5.3 percent did not find the relief useful. As already discussed, 12.2 percent found some safety issues.

*Figure 8 Satisfaction of the relief work*



The qualitative findings were found convergent with the quantitative findings. A FGD Participant, 22, female, Khaptad Chededaha RM of Bajura district expressed *“I found the good quality of items from NRCS. I am still using the mattress, tarpaulin and other items for multiple uses.”*

Some participants also commented on quality. One of the participants from FGD Participant, 22, female, Khaptad Chededaha RM of Bajura district said *“NRCS provided us blankets and other items on an interval basis. I found the first time the blanket's quality was better than the second time. The second one was "DallaParne / Bhuwaudne" (i.e. clumping feathers/ cottons or fraying).*

Some beneficiaries of Khaptad Chededaha RM also complained about the NFRI quantity as per the family size. Some of the beneficiaries especially who have more family members were dissatisfied with the size of transitional shelter. There were many models for transitional shelter suggested by National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) but the study team found only a model (sloppy model) adopted by NRCS shelter beneficiaries. It was not attractive as compared to the next model.

Based on the field observation, it was also found that NRCS adopted three sizes for transitional shelter. The maximum size of the transitional shelter with attached kitchen was 18’X 12’. This space was not fit for a big family and space will not be available as per SPHERE standard. All the transitional shelters made by CGI sheet including the wall of shelter in both districts, which were not environment friendly and appropriate for old aged and sick people especially in the winter season.

### 3.4.4. Cross Cutting Issues

This section deals with the effectiveness on overall approaches on GESI, DNH and CEA.

#### 3.4.4.i. Gender Empowerment and Social Inclusion (GESI)

GESI was integrated throughout the process of the response programme. In the designing phase, the programme team ensured women, single women and vulnerable groups such as people with

disability within the beneficiary selection criteria. Then, discussion with women and vulnerable groups of the community was made to understand the GEDSI issues and prioritized them to support within the response programme. In reality, Dalit households and those fully and or partially affected households who have vulnerable groups of family members, was prioritized for the relief support especially in the case of transitional shelter and further psycho-counseling services and regular home visit made throughout the process. Additionally, the response also provided Dignity Kit, *Kishori* Kit, Hygiene Kit and Solar Kit to the women, girls, vulnerable families, and wheelchair support targeting to the people with disability of targeted areas. The household survey shows that at least 199 vulnerable groups of persons benefited from the relief services.

*Table 14 Vulnerable People among the Respondents*

Particulars	Vulnerability Criteria	Number
Does your family have any of the following members?	Pregnant and Lactating Women	74
	Single women	80
	Chronic illness	5
	People with disability	40
	Total	199

*We found that they have prioritized vulnerable groups while selecting the beneficiaries for support. In some places, they also distributed dignity kits, adolescent kits, kishori kits and Solar kits for women, adolescent girls and vulnerable households, but it was very less as per the family size and sex category. One family received 1 tarpaulin and 1 blanket under NFRI, which is not adequate as per family size.*

*- An FGD Participant, female, 21 years, Khaptad Chededaha RM.*

### **3.4.4.ii. Community engagement and accountability**

Not all people have equal control of power and resources. Individuals and groups within a population have different capacities, needs and vulnerabilities, which change over time. Individual factors such as age, sex, disability and legal or health status can limit access to assistance. These and other factors may also be the basis of intentional discrimination. To remove all the barriers of discrimination, NRCS has been engaging with the community from the first date of the earthquake response, putting the community / affected population at the centre of humanitarian action. NRCS has ensured the systematic dialogue with women, men, boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds through community consultation and promoting home visit and regular monitoring at household level throughout the process. It has established a hotline number-1130, message sharing through radio and regular monitoring throughout the process to ensure the voices of everyone is heard. Additionally, the IFRC/ NRCS has ensured the lesson learnt workshop with the participation of major stakeholders of the response programme at the end of the response. This means sharing information with communities and stakeholders is a regular and integrated phenomenon of NRCS.

Participants during the interview shared their experiences on how they communicated with NRCS in any confusion. An example is in the box below.

*I came to know that I was selected for multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) as a beneficiary. Then, I visited the bank, but didn't receive cash. I directly phoned the hotline numbers of NRCS and informed them about my situation. Later, I was informed that my cash had been deposited into my account after 3 days. When I visited the bank, I received the cash from the bank. Thanks RC for listening to me..*

*-An FGD participant, male, 26, Khaptad Chededaha RM.*

Despite having such a practice at organizational level, it is inadequate yet. 9 of 12 FGD participants of Khaptad Chededaha RM of Bajura district and more than half of the FGD participants of Chabbis Pathivera RM of Bajhang district couldn't share the feedback mechanism adopted by NRCS and not aware about the entire process of beneficiary selection.

### **PRE-DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION**

It was found that information sharing was an integral part of the response process. IFRC/NRCS staff, NRCS district chapter, volunteers and the local governments also provided the pre-distribution information. Based on the household survey, 90.9 percent households received information prior to the distribution, but the timeliness of the information sharing is question marks. As per the Disaster Response Manual of NRCS, the distribution message should be shared at least 2 days prior of the distribution, but only 5.2 percent households received information 2 days prior of the distribution. Regarding the message, beneficiaries lacked detailed information. An example is in the box below.

*I am not sure about the entire process of beneficiaries' selection and finalization but what I know is that some volunteers came into my house and asked some questions. Later, some representatives from the local governments, Red Cross and police came into my house and observed the earthquake destruction. After a few days of household observation, I came to know that I was selected as a transitional shelter beneficiary*

*-An FGD participant, female, 57, Khaptad Chededaha RM, Bajura district.*

### **POST DISTRIBUTION MONITORING**

As per the response documents, it was found that PDM had been taken as one of the major parts of this response and included it as a mandatory task. Internally, the IFRC/NRCS staff, district chapters, volunteers have frequently monitored the distribution as a main business. Externally, IFRC hired the external consultant to study the whole process of relief distribution. This report is the part of PDM done by external consultant.

#### **3.4.4.iii. Do No Harm Principles**

Based on the overall observation, 'Do No Harm' principle was taken as one of the important principles integrating in the response cycle. To minimize the dividers and increase the enablers in the communities, NRCS deployed the local trained volunteers for search and rescue, household visit and relief distribution and continuously coordinated and communicated with major stakeholders including communities and affected population. NRCS directly led the entire process of initial rapid assessment and contributed to identify and finalize the beneficiaries' selection to the local government. There were massive destruction and the highest demand at the community level. Due to resource constraint, NRCS selected the most vulnerable households

within vulnerable households in coordination with the local government especially in the case of MPCAs and transitional shelter, which has made dissatisfaction among the households in some cases. The households' survey findings also prove that statement.

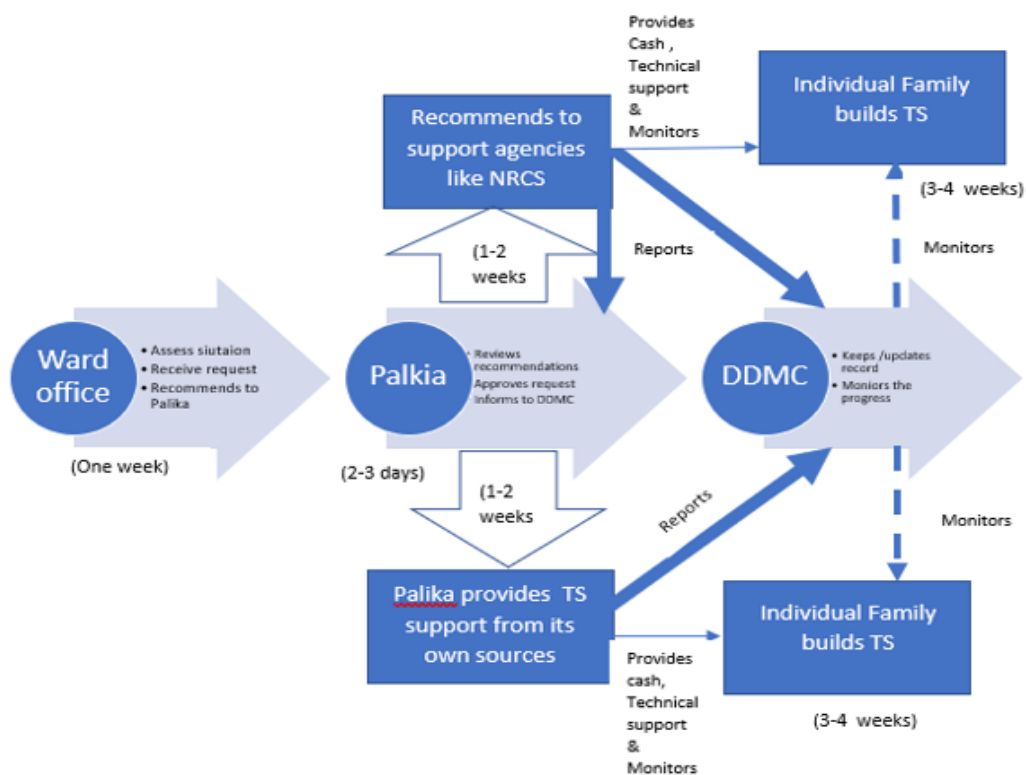
During the survey 30.8 percent (189 out of 614) mentioned that there was a conflict due to relief assistance. During FGDs, some participants shared that there was dissatisfaction by those who were not included in the list as they did not fall in the criteria and some exclusion error also found in the list provided by the local government. To minimize the dissatisfaction at community level, it was found that NRCS has been coordinating with the local governments and sharing the information related to transitional shelter construction done by the local governments and NRCS working approach to the communities.

Overall, the relief distribution did not impart any tensions or deteriorated harmony of the community. In fact, the affected people worked together in transitional shelter.

### **3.4.5 Coordination and Collaboration**

NRCS was the major humanitarian organization working in Bajura and Bajhang districts from the first date of the earthquake to the moment. Both district chapters of NRCS were able to support tarpaulin, blankets, and mattresses to the earthquake-hit households within a couple of hours of the earthquake. There were other few organizations such as MPDS and Ansubarna (Individual) in Bajhang district and Upahar Nepal, Badimalika Foundation and Needs Nepal in Bajura district, who directly supported the affected population in the first couple of months. Due to the ground roots of the NRCS, the stakeholders appreciated its working modality and principles, the efforts from the organization to make positive improvement in the lives of disaster affected populations. Regarding the coordination and collaboration, it was found effective most of the cases, but there are still scopes for improvement. There were somehow lacks in coordination with the local government especially in the case of Talkot rural municipality. As per the executive ward chairperson, we had limited coordination and communication in the early days of response; as a result, the NFRI distribution became late due to delaying the process of beneficiary selection and finalization.

Figure 9 Approach adopted in TS



With regards to the One-door approach, the implementation of a one-door policy under the leadership of the District Administrative Officer (DAO) in both districts demonstrates a strategic approach to providing relief support to earthquake victims. Due to lack of clear understanding about one door policy in Bajhang district, the emergency response of humanitarian organizations especially NFRI distribution became late, but there was no delaying in the case of Bajura district. By streamlining the process through a step-by-step approach, starting from ward-level recommendations to approval from the RM/UM, the aim was to ensure efficient allocation of resources and avoid duplication of efforts.

### 3.5. EFFICIENCY

#### 3.5.1. TIMELINESS

Responding to a disaster is a crucial part of humanitarian action, the ultimate and vital aspects are immediate relief distribution. Making effective distribution in complex emergencies always finds challenging and complex. Decision made here is heavily influenced by the many factors such as remoteness, transportation, and scheduling and inventory management. In the case of Bajhang earthquake response, both districts were situated in upper hilly / mountain region. The district chapters' team had only the 50 pieces of NFRI stock, which was distributed within 24 hours of earthquake, but NFRI to rest of the impacted beneficiaries reached in two days from the

nearest warehouse- Kanchanpur. The team firstly accomplished the NFRI distribution within a couple of weeks and MPCA distributed started within 45 days, which was also accomplished in a short period of time. As per households' survey and focus group discussion, the study team found that transitional shelter was made within three month's time period, while the majority of the households completed their shelter construction within a month.

Majority of the FGD participants were found happy with the timeliness of relief activities but some FGD participants from Talkot rural municipality of Bajhang district criticized the timeliness of the relief items. Due to different understanding of decision-making players at district level about one door policy delayed the response in Bajhang, but other factors such as huge community demand for relief items, geographical constraints, low response capacity of municipality offices and district chapters, less stocked items and lack of trained human resources caused some delays. The table below depicts perceived timeliness of the relief.

*Table 15 Timeliness of the relief support*

Particulars		Percentage(%) (N=614)
To what extent do you agree that the relief support received from Red Cross was in time where you need them?	The support arrived in right time	43.3%
	The support arrived somewhat late than expected but was not too late	54.9%
	The support arrived too late	1.8%
After the earthquake, approximately in what time did you receive the relief materials from NRCS?	Less than 24 hours	4.7%
	Within 2-4 days	23.8%
	Within a week	11.2%
	Within a month	45.6%
	More than a month	14.7%
How long did it take to go from your home to the distribution point?	Less than 30 minutes	37.9%
	30 min to 1 hour	44.6%
	1 hour to 3 hours	13.5%
	More than 3 hours	4.0%

About 40 percent (244 out of 614) respondents reported they received relief support within a week, while 45.6 percent respondents acquired relief within a month and 14.7 percent respondents waited for more than a month to receive humanitarian assistance. Additionally, 43.3 percent (266 out of 614) reported they had got support in the right time, while 54.9 percent shared that the support arrived somewhat later than expected but was not too late; and only 1.8% (11 out of 614) responded that the support arrived too late.

Regarding the distance between home and distribution point, the minimum and maximum time taken to the beneficiaries was less than 30 minutes and more than 3 hours respectively. 44.6percent (201 out of 614) respondents mentioned 30 minutes to 1 hour time taken to reach the

distribution point, followed by 37.9percent and 13.5percent who spent 1 hour to 3 hours to reach the distribution point. Only 4percent (N=18) respondents answered that the time taken to reach distribution point was more than three hours. In the case of MPCA and transitional shelter, it is quite interesting. Minimum less than 1 hour and maximum more than three hours time taken by the beneficiaries to reach the FSP (bank). The highest number of respondents reported they took 1 to 2 hours to reach the bank in both districts, while the lowest number of respondents answered 2 to 3 hours in Bajhang and more than three hours in Bajura. The details are illustrated in the table below.


Table 16 Time taken to collect cash






Particulars		N	%
How long did it take to reach the bank from where you collected cash?	1-2 hours	54	33.96%
	2-3 hours	26	16.35%
	Less than 1 hour	43	27.04%
	More than 3 hours	36	22.64%
	Total	159	100.00%

FGD participant, female, 32 years, ChabbisPathivera RM, Bajhang said “I received cash via RastriyaBaniija Bank, which is 15 km away from my house. It took Rs. 500 for a two way trip and it took more than a half day when I went to the bank.”

Taking more than two hours to reach FSP can cause other losses in their daily lives during an emergency period. Due to the long distance between bank and shelter, beneficiaries had to pay extra cash for travel to reach the bank. The cost is up to one thousand rupees maximum and 6 hours maximum.

Figure 10 Findings from Time-line exercise

Timeline	Events/action	
3 Oct 2023 (2:40 PM)  0 hr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hit by 5.3 Richter scale with three consecutive aftershocks</li> <li>▪ Most of the people were out of the house at work, children were in school</li> <li>▪ Livestock in the grazing field</li> <li>▪ No major human casualties</li> </ul>	Affected Households: 17,367 Injured:35 Dead: 1 Fully Damaged Households: 4,021 Temporary Damaged Households: 13,305
		
Within 24 Hr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ward representatives and local police visited communities and initially assessed the damage.</li> <li>▪ Immediate humanitarian service started <b>with tarpaulin sheet distribution (By local govt, NRCS, and other agencies )</b></li> </ul>	

Within 3 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IRA report submission</li> <li>NDRRMC published a preliminary report on loss and damage</li> <li>NFRI continuously distributed</li> </ul>	
		
Within a week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DDMC decided to allocated RM/UMs to different agencies for TS and a adopted one door policy for relief support to avoid duplication.</li> <li><b>NRCS provided NFIs continuously</b></li> </ul>	
		
Within two weeks	NRCS did quick survey using KOBO toolbox and assed the immediate needs	
		
Within 45 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NRCS provided NFIs and MPC</b></li> <li><b>NRCS provided NFIs (mattress and blanket)</b></li> <li><b>NRCS provided dignity kits with the support of UNFPA</b></li> </ul>	Save the children provided warm cloths to children
		
Within three months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NRCS and Local govt provided temporary shelter support</b></li> <li><b>NRCS supported included Toilet and Water tank</b></li> </ul>	
		
Now	Shelter construction is complete, and most (above 90% ) of families whose houses were fully or partially damaged are living in the TS	Nearly 10% TS receivers have not yet used TS because TS does not meet their space requirement
		Reconstruction and livelihood needs are not yet addressed

The timeline of relief support to disaster victims following the earthquake on October 3rd, 2023, illustrates a structured and coordinated response aimed at addressing immediate needs and facilitating long-term recovery.

Immediately after the earthquake, **within 24 hours**, local authorities and humanitarian agencies including NRCS conducted preliminary damage assessments and distributed tarpaulin for immediate shelter. This rapid response helped address the urgent needs of the affected population.

### 3.6. USE OF SUPPORT: IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

NFRI were used well for intended purposes. The MPCA was used in the essential areas. Furthermore, the majority of transitional shelters with toilet construction and water tank installation completed within a month after receiving first installment cash from the bank.

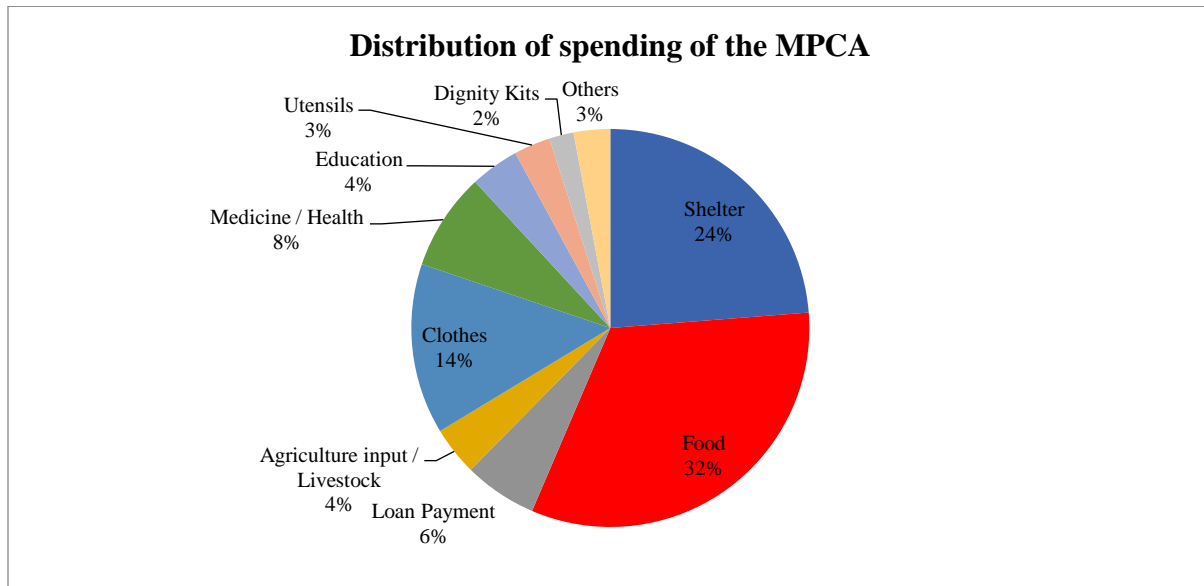
In general, based on survey and interviews or FGDs, the support was used for intended purposes. There were no complaints / feedback received about the selling of the items which they have received. Regarding the cash support for transitional shelter with WASH Support and multi purpose, the beneficiaries have bought CGI sheets and other essentials items including loan payment, medicine, food and education of their children. (More comes from the household survey).

NRCS used two response options: in-kind and cash in this response. Mainly, all the relief items were distributed with a purpose. Cash for transitional shelter, toilet construction and water tank installation was conditional cash, where the purpose was to achieve sectoral outcome: construct transitional shelter with toilet construction and water tank installation. All the respondents reported that cash support for transitional shelter was done for the same purpose. Regarding the MPCA, all the households spent it as per their family priorities. There is a stereotype that people use anti-social practices if we provide unconditional cash, but this unconditional cash (MPCA) support has broken such a stereotype. The expenditure pattern shows that there are no misuses of cash for anti-social tasks. As per the expenditure pattern of households, the survey shows that food (33percent) was the major sector where the highest amount of money was spent, followed by shelter (24percent), and clothes (14percent) in two districts. The table below shows the uses of MPCA as per the district, and the diagram overall.

*Table 17 Use of MPCA in different sectors*

Sectors	Bajhang	Bajura	Overall
Shelter	29%	19%	24%
Food	25%	42%	33%
Loan Payment	6%	6%	6%
Agriculture input / Livestock	4%	3%	4%
Clothes	14%	13%	14%
Medicine / Health	7%	9%	8%
Education	4%	4%	4%
Utensils	4%	2%	3%
Dignity Kits	4%	0%	2%
Others	4%	2%	3%

Figure 11 Spending pattern of the MPCA



Regarding the usefulness of NFRI, the majority of the households (94.7% i.e. 427 out of 614) responded that all the received NFRI were useful. In contrast, 5.3% (N=24) found that receiving NFRI from NRCS was least useful or not useful at all for their families. The status of the least useful/ relevant relief items (N=24) are as follows

- *Still in the home, unused: 66.7percent*
- *Do not want to share: 25.0percent.*
- *Gave out to others: 8.3percent.*

#### 4. LESSONS LEARNED

Although the human loss was considerably less (i.e. one casualty), the earthquake has remarkable impact on the livelihoods of the local people. At the same time, the disaster brought lessons for different stakeholders, and reminded them on how to be prepared for future such events.

One third of the FGD participants and almost half of interview participants shared that the earthquake reminded them how the information related to disaster risk reduction and management is vital for saving lives.

Earthquake provided some lessons for better preparedness to the RM/UM. The expression from the DRR focal person has been captured below.

*I think the Sudurpaschim (Bajhang) earthquake is not only a disaster for us, it has also been a learning opportunity for us. The Bajhang earthquake has shown our reality in terms of disaster preparedness and response. We had 28 NFRI set stock in the palika warehouse. We have realized the importance of stockpiling at palika level this time. Similarly, we clearly saw the lack of awareness to our citizens, which could save more if we had provided the awareness message on time, so we manage some budget for stocking items and awareness creation in our palika in upcoming days.*

DRR focal person, Chabbis Pathivera RM, Bajhang

Likewise, expression from a Chair of Palika s been captured in the box below.

*OurPalika is one of the most affected ones in the Bajhang earthquake. We lost huge property and resources due to earthquake. After the disaster, we realized that trained human resources for search and rescue and data collection are the crucial parts to minimize the human loss as well property damaged, so we are going to build the capacity on search and rescue and data collection in the coming days.*

Chairperson, Khaptad Chededaha RM, Bajura

Red Cross capitalized the disaster for better preparedness for future. An expression from Bajhang District Chapter has been stated in the box below.

*We took this earthquake as an opportunity. It has shown our ability and key gaps during the earthquake response programme. We have realized there is a huge scope where the district chapter can work alone and also in coordination with the central team of NRCS. One of the areas, which we have to work now, is roster maintenance of volunteer and trained human resources at district level from our side. We were taking it lightly but we have clearly observed how trained human resources and volunteer's rosters are important for us to respond quickly and effectively, therefore, we are going to develop a roster of trained human resources and volunteers very soon.*

Treasure, NRCS Bajhang District Chapter

Although the earthquake brought significant consequences in the living of people, livelihood, and local economy, no rapid assessment was done as such. As a result, there were inadequate information on situation of input (buying) & output (selling) market centres, prices of essential commodities, situation of private service providers, and supply chain. But if market assessment had been conducted, the cash transfer mechanism, amount of cash, quality assurance (of shelter) would have been enhanced.

In the view of the evaluation team, the approach of one door system approach is beneficial as it minimizes the chances of duplication, ensuring that support reaches a larger number of victims in need. However, the delay in receiving support highlights a potential drawback of this method. While reducing duplication is important, it's also crucial to streamline processes to ensure that the victims receive the support in time. To address this issue, the authorities may consider reassessing the workflow to identify bottlenecks and streamline the approval process without compromising the objective of minimizing duplication. Additionally, enhancing coordination

between different agencies involved in relief efforts could further expedite the distribution of support to the affected families.

Some other lessons captured during the study, which may be helpful for future response, were as follows:

- Efforts made in maintaining minimum stocking, trained volunteers and the committed district chapters, and leadership direction from the NRCS HQ were the key enablers of the fruitful relief distribution.
- Cash modality is effective and one of the best practices.
- There is a stereotype that people use anti-social practices if we provide unconditional cash, but Sudurpaschim earthquake response has challenges this type of myth.
- The expenditure pattern of recipient shows that there are no misuses of cash for anti-social tasks.
- Households who were far from the bank, had high cost of transportation from NRs 500 to NRs. 1500 for a single time, it is huge amount for them, should be explored it via beneficiary perspective. On the other side, waiting in a distribution sites and difficulties to withdraw amount due to problems of bank, may hamper NRCS' trust among the beneficiaries so there is space of timely conversation and message sharing them about the delaying process.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 CONCLUSION**

Sudurpaschim earthquake response, one of the response programmes of NRCS operated with the support of IFRC, found NRCS' role inevitable and effective to response the impact of disasters. As a ground rooted humanitarian organization, its network of district chapters and close connection with communities, NRCS deployed its volunteers immediately after the earthquake and provided non food relief items to the disaster affected communities within six hours of earthquake. Despite of challenging contexts and difficult terrains, the NRCS motives for saving lives, reducing sufferings and maintaining human dignity worked well, supported to build the trust at community and stakeholder level and started coordination role with the local governments, security forces and others in the ground for rescue and relief operation, which really worked to reach the target population efficiently. As a result, NRCS was able to distribute NFRI, MPCA, and conditional cash for transitional shelter and toilet construction as well as water tank installation. Basically, MPCA and conditional cash for transitional shelter were deposited in beneficiary's bank account through FSP. All these activities were highly relevant and found appropriate in the earthquake context and much appreciated the integrated approach of relief support. However, there are still rooms for improvement in the adequacy of relief material.

Despite having the context that first relief items distributed within a six hours of earthquake response, there were other areas where the distribution delayed more than a week due to lack of

clear understanding about the one door policy of district government administration. As an auxiliary body of the government of Nepal for disaster risk reduction and management, there are spaces in improving the coordination in between humanitarian organizations and the government of Nepal. Similarly, the distance in between recipient and the selected bank found far in most of the cases so there are also spaces to assess the financial service providers prior to the distribution at local level.

There is a stereotype that people use anti-social practices if we provide unconditional cash, but Sudurpaschim earthquake response has challenges this type of myth. The expenditure pattern of recipient shows that there are no misuses of cash for anti-social tasks. Majority of the households spent money to meet their essentials needs: food, shelter, clothes, medicine and health, but some households who received NFRI reported that NFRI items found less or no useful, so they have kept it at home to use later when they need it and some beneficiaries didn't want to share the reason. Additionally, those households who were far from the bank, had to pay high cost of transportation from NRs 500 to NRs. 1500 for a single time, it is huge amount for them, should be explored it via beneficiary perspective. On the other side, waiting in a distribution sites and difficulties to withdraw amount due to problems of bank, may hamper NRCS' trust among the beneficiaries so there is space of proper coordination and collaboration with bank and timely conversation and message sharing them about the delaying process.

Volunteer mobilization was found one of the crucial aspects of this response to accomplish all the task in a given time, so their roster maintenances, regular follow up and capacity strengthening on online and offline data collection, knowledge and skill building on disaster risk reduction and management and community engagement process can be an opportunity as a preparedness action for the future disasters.

Among the modes of feedback, face to face was found the most preferred methods during emergency in this context; there is also an opportunity to share the message regarding the other community engagement methods such as NRCS hotline numbers, which can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme.

In a nutshell, NRCS' Sudurpaschim earthquake response found effective and the national emergency operation centres team, district team, district chapters and volunteers' continuous efforts were significant. As a result, almost beneficiaries were found satisfied with the process, relief items and adopted methodology and the local stakeholders have also appreciated the work done by NRCS. It was only possible when the IFRC generated DREF fund, which means there is great significance of such kind of emergency fund in the future to response in time. However, there are some gaps highlighted in the findings section, should be better to check following recommendations for better response in the future.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATION

1. Put additional efforts in capacity building of volunteers and staff about the online and offline data collection including the knowledge building of them on disaster risk reduction and management
2. As one of the best practices, continue multi- purpose cash assistance and conditional cash to meet shelter outcomes in the future.
3. As one of the best practice, continue integration of transitional shelter with toilet construction and water tank installation.
4. Conduct regular orientation to local stakeholders about humanitarian principles, government rules and regulation on DRR&M
5. Provide support to establish and or capacity building of local emergency operation centres
6. Update and maintain roaster of volunteers and trained human resources at district/ local level
7. Conduct Cash Top Up for specific vulnerable groups in the recovery phase
8. Top- up transportation cost in the transfer value provided to the beneficiaries in upcoming days while operating such kind of programme where the financial service providers are far
9. Assess the financial service providers at local and district level and service contract at national level with regular coordination with FSP before, during and after the distribution at national and local level
10. Conduct the rapid local / district market assessment before operating such kind of cash and voucher assistance programme in the target location
11. Increase the NFRI stock items at district level
12. There are aftershocks, which traumatize to the disaster affected population. Therefore, increase the level of engagement with affected population at individual level, household level and community level
13. Provide the NFRI at package in a standard form as per family size
14. Disseminate the information related to feedback mechanism of NRCS and local level
15. There are higher expectation received during the data collection on permanent shelter building and livelihood support so better to conduct such projects, which connect livelihood recovery with shelter construction.
16. Adopt those transitional shelter modalities which fits as per their family size
17. Provide options of different shelter modality as per local context, considering the viability to cold weather, models of other agencies & local government
18. Ensure environmental impact has been studied before supporting relief items, and especially transition shelter, in order to minimize damage to the environmental resources.

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## 6. ANNEX

### ANNEX 1: WORKING DISTRICTS AND PALIKA WITH NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES



Working districts and palikas.docx

## ANNEX 2: DATABASE OF PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN QUALITATIVE PROCESS



Database of Qualitative Process.x

## ANNEX 3: STORIES



Case 1.docx



Case 2.docx



Case 3.docx

## ANNEX 4: QUESTIONNAIRES AND CHECKLISTS



PDM\_HHs\_questionnaire\_clean version.doc



FGD Checklist\_MPCA\_clear



FGD Checklist\_NFRI\_Clear



FGD Checklist\_Transitional



Interview\_Checklist RC\_Clean Version.doc



Observation Checklist\_NRCS.docx

## ANNEX 5: HOUSEHOLD SURVEY BENEFICIARY LIST



PDM\_Beneficiaries List.xlsx

## ANNEX 6: TERMS OF REFERENCES OF THE EVALUATION



ToR\_IFRC Consultancy Service\_

**ANNEX 7: PHOTOS**



Earthquake damaged households



New transitional shelter of the households





**THANK YOU!**