



Monthly Bulletin: June–July 2008

USAID/Nepal Flood Recovery Program

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The USAID/Nepal Flood Recovery Program (USAID-NFRP) started in June 2008 as a two-year program aimed at supporting livelihoods recovery, improved health and infrastructure rehabilitation and reconstruction in a way that makes the 2007 flood-affected communities less vulnerable to future floods by “building back better” and strengthening the ties between the local government, community groups and the populace of Nepal’s Terai region, an area approximately twice the size of the state of Massachusetts.

PROGRAM STARTUP

The USAID-NFRP RAISE-PLUS Task Order was made effective with USAID’s approval on May 20, 2008. Fintrac’s startup team arrived 14 days later and moved into a pre-identified office space in the building of its prime implementing partner/subcontractor, METCON Consultants. Within a week, the majority of the program team was incorporated and started work. During the first month, nearly all the administrative and logistical arrangements were made and work started by collecting baseline data to finalize the FY08 Work Plan and Performance Monitoring Plan. By the end of June, Joe Sanders arrived in Nepal and assumed his role as chief of party. The team visited five of the six program districts, met with the senior district officials (chief district officers and local development officers), international and local NGOs, private service providers and flood-affected communities. The team participated in a detailed Post-Award Conference with USAID/Nepal – ahead of schedule – the first draft work plan for the remainder of fiscal year 2008 and a draft PMP for the entire program period. USAID approved the life-of-project Procurement Plan and necessary waivers.

USAID-NFRP’s COP, livelihoods specialist, engineer, social inclusion expert, M&E outreach specialist and regional coordinators returned to the field to continue baseline data collection and to initiate rapid appraisals of the Village Development Councils’ needs and



A boy walks his bike across a flood barrier in Nepalgunj

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priorities for productive infrastructure, income generation, sanitation, hygiene and nutrition, organizational strengthening, protection of women and children, and other windows of opportunity.

TARGETED COMMUNITIES/ GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

District Development Office: The Bardiya chief district officer invited the startup team to a district-level conference organized to initiate 2008 flood preparedness plans, based on lessons learned from the 2007 floods. More than 60 public and private organizations, including local and international NGOs, participated. This allowed the startup team to cross-check data and anecdotal information gathered in interviews during the field trip to Bardiya and to meet with new organizations about their experiences, both positive and negative, with VDCs and other local organizations.

The best source of baseline data turned out to be the **Nepal Red Cross Society**, with flood affected information organized by severity, number of affected households and VDC. This information helped to quickly prioritize the ten most-affected VDCs in each of the six program districts.

SYNERGIES

OFDA/Save the Children shared their Disaster Preparedness and Response (DPR) Project annual progress report and end report for Mid & Far Western and Eastern Regions. They were able to reach over 60,000 men, women and children with humanitarian relief. One of their main implementing partners was BASE.

World Food Program (WFP): The USAID-NFRP startup team met with the acting Regional Representative in Nepalgunj and a Program Coordinator in the Kathmandu home office. Both were quite interested in joining efforts to respond to priority rehabilitation needs in the Terai. After discussing the needs and the value of a participatory approach to the village development process, the Program Coordinator arranged for a WFP vehicle and a Technical Manager to take the startup team to one of their model villages. Along the way we stopped to see a culvert under construction with labor provided by villagers who had been forced to abandon their farms because of the 2007 floods.

This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of Fintrac, Inc. and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



Senior agribusiness program manager Ray Waldron and livelihood & income generation specialist Brahmaram B. Mathema meet with World Food Program representatives and community beneficiaries in districts of the Terai



The USAID-NFRP team meets with a flood affected community in Banke district



Fintrac Startup team member Mary Duncan oversees office arrangements during USAID-NFRP's office set up