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**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

Nepal – Humanitarian Assistance

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2008

September 30, 2008

Note: The last fact sheet was dated September 30, 2007.

BACKGROUND AND KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the conflict of 1996–2006 between the Government of Nepal (GON) and the Communist Party of Nepal–Maoist (CPN–M) caused an estimated 13,000 deaths. Relief agencies report that the conflict displaced an estimated 200,000 people.
- OCHA estimates that between 50,000 and 70,000 people remain displaced by conflict in Nepal, as well as approximately 130,000 refugees, including 107,000 long-term refugees from Bhutan.
- Heavy monsoon rains in August resulted in flooding in southeastern Nepal that displaced more than 70,000 people, according to OCHA. In September, heavy rains in mid-western and far western Nepal caused floods and landslides that displaced an estimated 180,000 people, OCHA reported.
- On April 10, 2008, Nepal held the first post-conflict elections for the constituent assembly. The CPN–M received the most votes but did not win a majority. On May 28, the constituent assembly voted to abolish the monarchy, and King Gyanendra stepped down. In subsequent constituent assembly votes, Ram Baran Yadav of the socialist Nepal Congress party was elected president and CPN–M leader Prachanda (Pushpa Kamal Dahal) was elected prime minister. On September 5, the constituent assembly met for the first time after the formation in August and early September of a coalition government of six parties, including CPN–M.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Total deaths caused by conflict since 1996	13,000	OCHA – February 2007
Total IDPs¹ displaced by conflict since 1996	200,000	IDMC ² – October 2006
IDPs remaining displaced by conflict	50,000-70,000	OCHA – June 2008
Refugees in Nepal	130,000	OCHA – January 2008
Residents displaced by floods	More than 250,000	OCHA – September 2008

FY 2008 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED TO DATE

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Nepal	\$3,933,658
USAID/FFP³ Assistance to Nepal	\$18,832,900
State/PRM⁴ Assistance to Nepal	\$2,620,000
Total USAID and State Humanitarian Assistance to Nepal	\$25,386,558

CURRENT SITUATION

- While the end of the conflict and the subsequent inclusion of CPN–M in the political process have greatly reduced violence, occasional violence between CPN–M supporters and supporters of other parties continues to occur in outlying areas. According to OCHA, inter-communal and inter-party tensions in the southern lowland Terai regions are particularly acute, with the September 2007 riots causing displacement.
- OCHA reports ongoing security incidents, including killings, abductions, extortion, and explosions around the country, threatening IDPs' ability to return home. Strikes in the Terai in February 2008, organized by groups calling for autonomy, led to violence, and OCHA reports that unidentified armed groups killed civilians in the Eastern Region in August 2008. In addition, roadblocks and strikes negatively impacted the delivery of aid following the flooding in southeastern Nepal.

Protection and Assistance to IDPs

- Returning IDPs continue to face protection concerns and political persecution, according to OCHA. USAID/OFDA contributed more than \$830,000 to Save the Children/U.S. (SC/US) for protection, relief commodities, and water,

¹ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

² Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC)

³ USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

⁴ U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

sanitation, and hygiene support for IDPs and other conflict-affected populations. USAID/OFDA also provided \$450,000 to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for protection programs and relief commodities.

- USAID/OFDA allocated more than \$470,000 to International Relief and Development (IRD) for a reintegration and resettlement program for conflict-affected populations in the Mid-Western and Far Western regions and more than \$500,000 to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to help ensure IDPs a safe, fair, and humane return.
- In addition, State/PRM provided \$220,000 to the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support the Tibetan Refugee Center in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Emergency Food Assistance

- Based on food security assessments conducted from May through July, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) reported that food insecurity persists across most of the country, due to poor winter harvests in parts of the Mid-Western and Far Western regions; rising food and transportation costs; market closures due to strikes; and heavy monsoon rains. According to WFP, 1.3 million people in Nepal are highly to severely food-insecure.
- In FY 2008, USAID/FFP provided more than \$13.2 million to a WFP Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) to provide emergency food assistance to nearly 1.3 million conflict-affected people. This assistance contributed to food security and provided support to the peace process during the post-conflict period in Nepal.
- In addition, USAID/FFP contributed more than \$5.6 million to a WFP PRRO in support of 108,200 Bhutanese refugees living in seven camps in Morang and Jhapa districts in eastern Nepal. State/PRM also contributed \$2.4 million to WFP for food assistance to refugees.

Floods

- On August 18, the Koshi River, part of one of eastern Asia's largest river basins, broke through a retaining wall on its eastern embankment following heavy monsoon rains, resulting in extensive floods in Sunsari and Saptari districts in southeastern Nepal. Flooding affected eight village development committees and displaced more than 70,000 people, according to OCHA. The displaced populations took shelter in public buildings—mostly schools—and spontaneous settlements, unable to return to flooded areas until repair of the embankment. Flood waters blocked 14 miles of Nepal's east–west highway and disrupted communications systems. On August 18, the GON began search–and–rescue efforts, and district officials in the flood-affected areas reported difficulties providing shelter and distributing relief materials. As of mid-September, flood waters were still as high as 2.5 meters in some areas, according to WFP.
- In response to the effects of the floods, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) provided food, shelter, and emergency relief commodities, including pre-positioned supplies from a USAID/OFDA-funded Disaster Preparedness and Response (DPR) program implemented by SC/US. WFP provided rice, lentils, vegetable oil, and salt to affected populations in Sunsari and Saptari districts.
- Immediately following the onset of flooding, USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through USAID/Nepal to SC/US for the local purchase and transport of emergency relief supplies, including blankets and shelter materials, to affected populations. USAID/OFDA subsequently provided \$500,000 to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for emergency shelter materials, \$200,000 to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for camp management and coordination, and \$100,000 to SC/US for emergency relief supplies. SC/US provided additional relief items valued at \$71,100 for flood-affected populations through the existing DRR program.

Disaster Preparedness

- To address disaster vulnerabilities such as flooding, landslides, earthquakes, and drought, USAID/OFDA supports preparedness and mitigation activities in Nepal and other Asian countries. In FY 2008, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$429,000 to support the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) in Kathmandu, which works with the GON, non-governmental organizations, schools, and local communities to increase earthquake awareness and preparedness and coordinates the long-term earthquake risk reduction plan for the Kathmandu Valley.
- Funded by USAID/OFDA and implemented by NSET since 2003, the Program for Enhancement of Emergency Response (PEER) is developing national and regional cadres of professional emergency response instructors in six Asian countries, including Nepal. PEER assists national disaster management agencies in organizing and conducting training in medical first response, collapsed structure search–and–rescue, and hospital preparedness for mass casualties after a disaster. USAID/OFDA funding for PEER in FY 2007, of which nearly \$270,000 supported activities in Nepal, carried over into FY 2008.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- On October 2, 2007, U.S. Ambassador Nancy J. Powell re-declared a disaster due to the ongoing humanitarian needs resulting from conflict. On August 21, 2008, Ambassador Powell declared a disaster due to the effects of the flooding.

- In FY 2008, USAID/OFDA allocated more than \$3.9 million for humanitarian assistance programs in Nepal, including more than \$2.6 million for the complex emergency, \$850,000 for flood response, and more than \$429,000 for disaster preparedness.
- In addition, USAID/FFP provided more than \$18.8 million in P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance. State/PRM has provided \$220,000 to the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support the Tibetan Refugee Center in Kathmandu and \$2.4 million to WFP for food assistance for Bhutanese and Tibetan refugees.
- State/PRM contributed \$11.9 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for activities in South Asia (including Nepal) and \$4.5 million toward UNHCR's non-Afghan South Asia appeal, as well as supporting refugee assistance programs implemented by IOM and the Tibet Fund.

USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NEPAL IN FY 2008

FY 2008			
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE ¹			
IFRC	Emergency Shelter Materials	Eastern Region	\$500,000
IOM	Camp Management and Coordination	Eastern Region	\$200,000
IRC	Economy and Market Systems, Protection, Relief Commodities	Countrywide	\$450,000
IRD	Economy and Market Systems, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Mid-Western and Far Western Regions	\$471,772
NRC	Protection	Countrywide	\$501,893
NSET	Earthquake Preparedness and Mitigation	Kathmandu Valley (Central Region)	\$429,516
SC/US	Disaster Risk Reduction, Protection, Relief Commodities, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Mid-Western, Far Western, and Eastern Regions	\$530,526
SC/US	Disaster Risk Reduction, Health, Relief Commodities, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Mid-Western, Far Western, and Eastern Regions	\$299,951
SC/US	Emergency Relief Supplies	Eastern Region	\$150,000
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Countrywide	\$400,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$3,933,658
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE ²			
WFP	15,830 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Eastern, Mid-Western, and Far Western Regions	\$18,832,900
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$18,832,900
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE ³			
UNHCR	Protection, Refugee Assistance	Kathmandu Valley (Central Region)	\$220,000
WFP	Refugee Food Assistance	Eastern Region	\$2,400,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM			\$2,620,000
TOTAL USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NEPAL IN FY 2008			\$25,386,558

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2008.

² Estimated value of food assistance.

³ This figure includes neither State/PRM regional support for UNHCR and ICRC nor funds provided to IOM and the Tibet Fund for Bhutanese and Tibetan refugees.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Nepal may be available at www.reliefweb.int.

- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int.