

REAL-TIME EVALUATION OF WORLD VISION'S RESPONSE TO THE NEPAL EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY

JULY 2015



Acknowledgements and thanks

The real-time evaluation (RTE) team is grateful to all those who shared their views about World Vision's emergency response to the April 2015 earthquake and to those who provided support to ensure that the RTE achieved its objectives. Special thanks to local participants and government officials in the districts of Bhaktapur, Sindhuli and Sindhupalchowk who gave their time and shared their views about World Vision's emergency response work. Thanks also to external informants including local NGOs and UN agencies as well as World Vision staff in and outside of Nepal. The RTE was commissioned by World Vision International Nepal (WVIN) and carried out by a team of World Vision staff including Purushottam Sharma, Narendra Rokaya, Birendra Chand, Ram Autar Sah, Mhendo Tamang of WVIN, Pat Ryan Gaid of WV Development Foundation Philippines, Clynton Beukes of WV Myanmar, Crystal Penner of WV Canada and Isis Sunwoo of WVI Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs Quality and Strategy Group, and it was supported by consultant Pauline Wilson. The report was finalised on 2 August 2015.

The RTE was funded by the World Vision Nepal Earthquake Response (NER). The RTE team thanks everyone for their support and engagement in the process.

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Published September 2015 by Humanitarian Emergency Affairs on behalf of World Vision International.

Managed on behalf of HEA by Rahel Cascioli Sharp. Senior Editor: Heather Elliott. Production Management: Katie Fike. Copyeditor: Joan Laflamme.

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Cover photo by Crislyn Felisilda/World Vision:
Earthquake survivors in Sindhupalchowk enjoy their new source of potable water.

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Abbreviations

ADP	Area Development Programme
AIN	Association of International NGOs in Nepal
CFS	Child Friendly Spaces
CFW	Cash for Work
CRM	Complaints and Response Mechanisms
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMS	Emergency Management Structure
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIK	Gift-in-Kind
GoN	Government of Nepal
GRRT	Global Rapid Response Team
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HOST	Humanitarian Operations Services Team (World Vision)
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisations
KII	Key Informant Interview
LMMS	Last Mile Mobile Solutions
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organisation
NDMT	National Disaster Management Team
NER	Nepal Earthquake Response (World Vision)
NFI	Non Food Items
NTS	Non-food Tracking System
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
PNS	Private Non-Sponsorship
RDMT	Regional Disaster Management Team
RTE	Real-Time Evaluation
SCM	Supply Chain Management
TLC	Temporary Learning Centre
UN	United Nations
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VDC	Village Development Committee
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WV	World Vision
WVIN	World Vision International Nepal

Executive summary

World Vision International's emergency response was to a 7.6 magnitude earthquake that struck Nepal on 25 April 2015. The Government of Nepal (GoN) requested emergency assistance within two hours of the earthquake, and World Vision International declared its Nepal response a Category III Global Response on 26 April 2015.

World Vision has been operating in Nepal since 1982 and currently implements both development and humanitarian programmes in partnership with local NGOs. World Vision emergency response activities are implemented in seven out of the 14 most crisis affected earthquake districts.

The Response goal is 'to meet the emergency needs and strengthen the resilience and self-recovery of earthquake-affected children and their communities'.

Programmes implemented to achieve the goal have focused on providing immediate relief and services in shelter/non-food items (NFI), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education, health, child protection and food.

In order to assess the quality of World Vision's response to the crisis a real time evaluation (RTE) was conducted from 6 July to 16 July 2015. The RTE assessed the Response against six criteria: effectiveness and timeliness, appropriateness, coverage, accountability, connectedness and sustainability, and organisational efficiency.¹

The RTE was for the period from 25 April to 16 July 2015, the immediate response phase. The GoN, UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), and many INGOs (international NGOs), including WVI, have documented in detail the earthquake's effects and the response by various actors. The RTE report does not repeat these earlier findings.

Main findings

Effectiveness and timeliness: The Response is well on its way to meeting the targets as set out in its response plan. The Response is well funded, with a mix of grants and private non-sponsorship (PNS) funds totalling over US\$26 million at the time of the RTE. Staff, communities and partners said WV was timely in distributing goods quickly in most districts. In two districts visited by the RTE team, goods were distributed within two days of the earthquake, though in the third district, far from Kathmandu, it took WV six weeks to start to distribute to affected people. As the response unfolded, external and internal challenges and uncertainties affected the supply of goods into the country. The lack of adequate local pre-positioned relief supplies and local markets remaining closed for at least a week made it difficult to procure supplies locally. In addition, delayed operations planning and staffing levels, insufficient coordination between the sector leads and supply chain management delayed the process of procurement, compounding the Response's ability to distribute more widely in the first four weeks of the response.

Appropriateness: The Response has done well meeting critical essential needs, especially as related to emergency shelter kits and provision of other essential household items such as blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets and hygiene kits. All focus groups commended WV for the quality and relevance of the materials provided. Child-friendly spaces (CFSs) and World Vision's

'WV's response services are based on the actual needs of people after the earthquake'

(Men's FGD)

¹ Please see 'Annex 1: Terms of reference for the real time evaluation of WV's Nepal Earthquake Response' for a list of the criteria and their definitions.

child protection work were considered by government and local NGO (LNGO) partners to be practical ways of helping children.

Coverage: The Response is mostly achieving its plans in terms of the number of people reached; as of mid-July over 63 per cent of the people targeted in the response plan had received emergency relief assistance.² People reached by World Vision are those most affected and vulnerable, though a few groups such as the elderly may not have been reached.

Accountability: A humanitarian accountability team was quickly expanded to ensure that WV could be accountable to communities for its response. Examples of good practice on information provision and consultation regarding the beneficiary selection process and criteria were described by men and women focus group members in Bhaktapur and Sindhupalchowk. However, participation and use of the complaints and response mechanisms (CRM) were not widespread, and accountability processes are yet to be integrated into all programmes. The response has yet to respond systematically to complaints and to ensure that women receive the same level of information on programme activities and consultation as men.

'We have a phone number to call or message but no money to call. We hand feedback messages to staff but staff are not seeming to use feedback.'

(Women's FGD)

Connectedness and sustainability: All partners – local GoN officials, local NGOs and UN agencies – were very positive about their working relations with WVIN. WVIN is a member of the Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN) and the AIN/NGO representative in the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). It is also active in many UN cluster groups, including the health and education clusters. WVIN is required by the GoN to work in partnership with local NGOs. LNGOs are satisfied with the partnerships that are being developed and the level of mentorship they have received on relief work, though they have requested more capacity building in other sectors.

Organisational efficiency: Response management was commended by most staff interviewed. WVIN, the national office and WV NER, the emergency response team, worked well together with many informants noting the important role of the national director, who with previous large-scale emergency experience, moved decisively to get the response moving and facilitated constructive working relationships between the national office and the response team.

World Vision's surge capacity was quickly utilised. The response manager arrived within 24 hours of the Category III declaration. Members of the Global Rapid Response Team (GRRT) and the Asia Pacific Regional Disaster Management Team (RDMT) began arriving within 72 hours of the declaration. They were soon followed by emergency surge staff from the region and across the Partnership. In addition, the national office seconded 48 staff to the response from its regular programme. Nepali staff worked extremely hard, even though they also were affected by the earthquake.

The main constraints to quick distribution to some response locations were external challenges such as the inability to receive airlifts into Kathmandu quickly. This was due to a number of reasons such as airport congestion and capacity, aircraft payload limitations, aircraft delays due to performance issues in hot weather in India and aircraft unserviceability. Other external factors were the shifting GoN policies in response to the earthquake crisis, the lack of a smoothly running humanitarian corridor from India and the second earthquake; all these contributed in different ways to slow the supply chain. Internally, the decision to use the UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) to fly supplies rather than WVI to charter aircraft separately may have been a reason one shipment took longer than normal to receive. Better operations

² For coverage targets, please refer to the 'Nepal Earthquake Response Plan for 26 April–31 October 2015'.

management and pre-planning regarding goods needed by sector leads, coordination between supply chain management and sector leads and higher staffing levels could have enabled faster distribution of goods once these arrived in warehouses.

The efficiency of the Response could have been improved in the first two to three days (prior to GRRT arriving in country) if the team on the ground had one focal person outside the country coordinating all efforts (information flow, ordering pre-positioned supplies and gifts-in-kind) relative to supply chain management. Also, there was no updated list of prepositioned goods the team could work from; this affected proposal writing and budgeting.

Good practices and learning

Good practices on the World Vision Non-food Tracking System (NTS), information management, emergency communications, response management and partnering and collaboration were evident in this response. Areas in which learning occurred were accessing remote areas and locations, using a multi-sectoral approach in the immediate relief phase of a response, identifying culturally appropriate humanitarian accountability mechanisms, Last Mile Mobile Solutions (LMMS) and staffing and staff care.

Community, partner and field staff recommendations for World Vision's Response

Each of these groups asked that WV expand its work and consider long-term programmes in either recovery or development. There were also unique recommendations, including a request to start disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities.

In summary, WVIN's response to these recommendations is that it is developing its national office strategy and that the relief team is actively phasing out of relief into recovery work. A recovery plan is being developed. All recommendations from community, partners and field staff are being considered in these planning processes.

Six major recommendations coming out of the RTE were prioritised by participants in the RTE validation workshop. These are detailed in section 8 of the report. Action plans formulated for these six recommendations are:

1. Equip and build the capacity of current national staff for future emergency responses.
2. Clarify reporting lines and the staff structure.
3. Align the country strategy and the response plan.
4. Strengthen humanitarian accountability.
5. Select leaders with strong management skills.
6. Strengthen preparedness and implement DRR activities.

1. Introduction

World Vision's response to the 25 April 2015 earthquake in Nepal is focused in seven out of the 14 most severely affected districts of Nepal. World Vision's response began on 26 April 2015. As of 16 July the World Vision Nepal Earthquake Response (NER) has served over 96,000 people. Interventions are focused on delivery of immediate relief items including shelter, household and hygiene kits, and the implementation of child-friendly spaces and temporary learning centres for children. To date, funds received for the response are over US\$26 million.

A real-time evaluation (RTE) of World Vision's response to the emergency situation in Nepal was carried out from 6 July to 16 July 2015. The purpose of the RTE was to

- review the response against established criteria (effectiveness and timeliness, appropriateness, coverage, accountability, connectedness and sustainability, and organisational efficiency) and recommend immediate changes that can improve the emergency programme
- identify good practices to use more widely and scale up and also opportunities for improvement
- promote a learning culture and approach within World Vision and among its partners.

2. The RTE process

The six established RTE criteria were used to formulate questions to guide data collection and analysis.

Field work took place in three districts: Bhaktapur, Sindhuli and Sindhupalchowk. Focus group discussion (FGD) and key informant interview (KII) methods were used to collect qualitative data from people benefiting from World Vision interventions. Informants were selected purposefully and included men, women, boys and girls³ and local leaders. Local participants were all beneficiaries residing in the same village development committees (VDCs, an administrative subdivision) and wards and were of diverse caste and ethnic groups. Discussions were in Nepali, the national language, and the identities of participants are confidential.

KIIs were conducted with external agencies. They included discussions with representatives from UN agencies, local NGOs, and government officials at local and district levels.

KIIs were conducted by Skype or face to face with WVIN staff at field and senior management levels as well as with staff in the South Asia and Pacific regional office and in World Vision support and international offices. To reach a wider number of staff, especially at the field level in Nepal, a survey was conducted.

Similar questions were used during all data-gathering methods to ascertain people's views of World Vision's emergency response work.⁴ The number of people involved in these processes is summarised in Table 1.

³ Children surveyed were between 9 and 14 years old. Adults were mostly middle aged, with some elderly in the adult groups in Sindhuli.

⁴ The main questions used in FGDs, KIIs and the survey with informants were the following: What is World Vision doing well? What concerns is World Vision's work raising for people like yourself? What improvements does World Vision need to make to its response work in this location?

Table 1. Numbers of people interviewed

Type of stakeholder interviewed	Number
Beneficiaries (men, women, girls and boys)	178
External agencies including UN and local NGOs	12
Local-level and district-level government officials	7
World Vision field and senior staff – KIIs	28
World Vision staff survey	24
Total	249

A document review was completed which included the response plan, proposals and reports. In addition, reports on the crisis from UNOCHA and other INGOs including the Assessment Capacities Project were reviewed to better understand the context.

Information from the various sources was triangulated during the analysis process and the findings and conclusions presented for validation during an in-country reflection workshop with 32 World Vision staff from field, national and support offices on 15–16 July 2015 in Kathmandu. Recommendations presented by the RTE team were considered by World Vision staff, who prioritised areas for immediate action and planned accordingly.

The main limitation to the process was that the girls who participated in the focus group in Sindhuli were very shy, so information from them is limited. Otherwise, informants were very open in sharing their views on World Vision's response.

This report presents the main findings as validated at the workshop. Section 3 presents an overview of the current context. Section 4 presents the emergency programme overview. Section 5 presents the main findings and conclusions about World Vision's response programme implemented from 26 April through 16 July 2015. Findings are in relation to the six criteria used to assess the quality of all World Vision's emergency responses. Section 6 presents the good practices and learning from the response, while section 7 summarises World Vision's responses to the recommendations from communities, partners and field staff. Section 8 describes the overall recommendations coming out of the RTE.

3. The context in which World Vision is operating

On Saturday, 25 April 2015, at 11:56 a.m. NST, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal. The first earthquake was followed by 300 aftershocks, with the largest one being 6.8 magnitude on 12 May. Earthquake destruction was widespread, especially in rural areas, with over 600,000 houses fully damaged and much public infrastructure destroyed.⁵ The Government of Nepal (GoN) declared an emergency within hours of the earthquake and asked for assistance. Fourteen districts were declared 'crisis-hit' by the GoN.⁶ It

⁵ Nepal Earthquake Assessment Unit (10 July 2015) 'Weekly Situation Update'.

⁶ Government of Nepal (2015) Post Disaster Needs Assessment: Executive Summary .

is estimated that 2.8 million people had been affected by housing damage and/or destruction; 8,856 people were killed; and 22,309 injured (GoN 9/07/2015).

The monsoon season started on 13 June, by which time few people had repaired their homes. The monsoons are compounding the suffering of affected people and raising challenges for agencies trying to provide humanitarian assistance. While the GoN declared the emergency phase over on 22 June and asked all agencies to begin work on recovery, humanitarian needs remained in the 14 'crisis-hit' districts – particularly in terms of shelter, but also in terms of food; nutrition; health; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); protection; and educational support.⁷

Shelter remains a priority need

The post-distribution monitoring (PDM) survey completed by World Vision in late June found that shelter damage across five World Vision operational districts was 96 per cent, with 67 per cent completely damaged and 29 per cent partly damaged. Forty-one per cent of the 751 households surveyed cited shelter support as their most pressing need.

In the three districts visited in July for the RTE many people remained anxious about their housing situation and their ability to survive the monsoon. Markets, transport, teashops and sports activities seemed back to normal in all three districts. However, in Bhaktapur and even more so in Sindhupalchowk, housing destruction was observably widespread and many people were still living in tents or partially destroyed shelters. People seemed relieved to speak about their situation and the need for psychosocial support was evident.

4. Emergency programme overview

When the earthquake struck, WVIN was working in 16 area development programmes (ADPs) in 10 districts of Nepal. Two ADPs were affected by the earthquake, one in Sindhuli and the other in Lamjung. By 27 April WVIN selected its operational areas in Bhaktapur, Gorkha, Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Lamjung districts. Sindhuli was added on 29 April and Sindhupalchowk on 5 May. On 27 April distributions started in Bhaktapur and Lamjung, in Sindhuli by 29 April, and in other districts some distributions got underway between 1 May and 12 May.

5. Findings

5.1 Effectiveness and timeliness

After declaring a Category III emergency on 26 April 2015, World Vision moved quickly to respond to immediate relief needs in terms of shelter, household and hygiene kits for families, and support for children in child friendly spaces (CFSs) and temporary learning centres (TLCs). Funding for the response programme has come from a range of government and private donors.⁸ A World Vision emergency response plan to guide the emergency response and provide coherence across sector projects was quickly defined for the

⁷ Nepal Earthquake Assessment Unit (1 July, 2015) 'Monthly Situation Update'.

⁸ The donors funding the World Vision response include the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade–Australia, DFATD–Canada, ECHO/ADH–Germany, Hong Kong Government, Irish Aid, Korea Consortium, DRA/SHO–Netherlands, MFAT–New Zealand, Spain, DEC–UK, World Food Programme and UNICEF, plus funding support from 27 different World Vision support offices.

'I'm proud of World Vision as an organisation. We were able to respond immediately.'

(World Vision senior staff)

period 26 April to 31 October 2015. At the time of the RTE, immediate relief distributions were still under way and some recovery activities were just starting.

WVIN is well on its way to achieving the response plan,⁹ which is comparable in scale and scope to the work being done by peer INGOs in Nepal. An integrated multi-sector approach was planned to provide affected households immediate relief support in shelter, NFIs, WASH, education, health and food. External challenges and internal supply chain management constraints have made applying a multi-sectoral approach difficult, though its use in the recovery phase may be easier.

What went well

WVIN's response was considered timely by communities and partners in the two districts visited by the RTE team. Staff working in the two ADPs affected by the earthquake in particular were commended for the speed of their response – they started to distribute blankets and tarpaulins within 48 hours of the earthquake. Thirty five CFSs were quickly established, with the first set up on 1 May, and local facilitators were trained to run them.

Quick response was helped by WVIN's long-term presence in Nepal, the willingness of WVIN local staff to continue working though they and their families were affected by the earthquake, the quick hiring of 40 new staff and by a national director with previous experience in large-scale emergency response. Further, prompt support came from other parts of World Vision globally. This included deployments by the GRRT and RDMT and quick funding support from 27 World Vision support offices. Assessments using secondary and some primary key informant interviews from affected areas were brought together by 5 May, providing a reasonable level of information so that quality programming could be designed and proposals written. As of mid-July, 12 response grants were funded.

Improvements needed

Make fast decisions on operational areas. Support was considered very fast by people in ADPs and districts where WVIN had worked already. However, at the start there was caution about working in new operational areas such as Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha, two of the most severely earthquake-affected districts. This caution ultimately affected the reach of WVIN's response, resulting in a low level of assistance compared to the huge needs in these two districts. In addition the response in some districts was delayed.

'World Vision covered many VDCs in Sindhuli though the situation was not so bad. In Sindhupalchowk the situation is very bad. World Vision could have worked in more VDCs in Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha as they were badly affected.'

(external partner)

'It took 46 days to distribute goods in in some areas in Sindhupalchowk'

(Men's FGD)

'Determination of operational areas took time. The village development committees ranking by WVIN using mostly secondary data did not always correspond with the reality on the ground. Physical verification of damage is needed.'

(World Vision senior staff)

⁹ World Vision (May 2015) WVIN Response Plan for the period 26 April 2015 to 31 October 2015.

Prepare better for emergencies. Six weeks into the response only shelter/NFIs and CFS activities had been implemented. This was due to the numerous challenges to importing goods, few pre-positioned stocks in-country and gaps in national office staff skills to respond to a large-scale emergency. The fact that staff and the WVIN office were affected by the earthquake was also a factor. In addition, attention had to be given to strengthening donor relations because World Vision had only begun to engage with donors over the last year.

5.2 Appropriateness

Relief programmes are appropriate to the immediate needs of affected people, and goods and services provided are mostly of good quality. The level of assistance to targeted affected families was appropriate, though WV could have tried to work in more crisis-hit VDCs earlier, given the high level of funding and the wide amount of WV Partnership support that was provided.

What went well

Beneficiaries and partners across the three districts were satisfied with the quality and type of materials provided by WVIN.

<p><i>'The relief package was holistic and appropriate and included two tents, rope, blankets, jerry can, solar light, mosquito nets, soap, shampoo and brush.'</i></p> <p>(Men's FGD)</p>	<p><i>'NFIs made it easy to survive in the emergency.'</i></p> <p>(Boys' FGD)</p>	<p><i>'We liked the solar lamps because the children can read and women continue cooking in the evening.'</i></p> <p>(Women's FGD)</p>	<p><i>'Local people praised WV for the quality of goods and getting to the grassroots to serve people.'</i></p> <p>(external Kathmandu partner based on a visit to Sindhupalchowk)</p>
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The CFSs were considered well run and practical by partners, local staff and senior staff. Other agencies commented positively on them. Men noted that the play materials used 'were helpful to reduce children's fear and anxiety', and government partners in Bhaktapur considered the CFSs effective. WV volunteers in Sindhuli also commented on the ongoing positive impact of the psychosocial support offered by WV to children affected by the earthquake. In addition, in June WV participated in an inter-agency children's consultation which enabled children to share their views on children's needs.

In all three districts beneficiaries in FGDs said that 'World Vision did not discriminate and distributed to everyone equally'. However, in at least two of the districts people said there was not enough materials to cover all families that were in need. Nonetheless, all families on GoN-provided lists received support. While relief materials did arrive late in Sindhupalchowk, earthquake-affected families said they were still needed when received.

These findings correspond to those from the PDM survey, which found that that 94 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the quantity, quality and timeliness of the relief support they received.

Improvements needed

The tarpaulins distributed are not useful in the monsoon rains which started in June. Men in the focus group in Sindhupalchowk noted that solar lamp battery life is only an hour. Partners particularly are concerned about the delay of corrugated galvanised iron sheet distributions for shelter support.

Improve distribution capacity.

Local staff have struggled to deliver an integrated sector approach as relief materials have become available at different points in time. This is due to the import challenges experienced during the early stages of the response and also due to the lack of detailed distribution plans and limited staff distribution capacity.

Strengthen preparedness on use of cash modalities.

The timeframe set for delivery of specific programmes such as cash for work (CFW) was not realistic. This is because of the challenges of accessing remote VDCs in the hills and mountains of Nepal and the fact that people want plant in their fields once the rains started and not work on CFW projects. Also, it took time to reach an agreement with the WVI treasury on the bank that would be used for cash distributions.

‘Communicating these realities to the donor, though, has continued to be a challenge.’

(World Vision senior staff)

External factors that hampered all aspects of this response, including its speed

- Difficulties in getting in relief goods due to physical access constraints including a small airport that was damaged by the earthquake and traffic jams and back logs at border crossings.
- India’s refusal to give fly-over approval for WV flights from Dubai resulting in WV deciding not to use Dubai for stocks.
- GoN controls on where NGOs could respond, what they could do and for how long, e.g. GoN set a cut-off date for relief supply distribution so WV had to stop international procurement under some grants because duty-free status was lost.
- GoN continued to change its policy about what could be imported with customs exemptions.
- GoN allowed assessments only when an agency was ready to distribute.
- GoN provides beneficiary lists, leading to concerns that the needs of the most vulnerable may not be met. Beneficiary verification makes WV appear to be challenging the GoN.
- GoN position on recovery is unclear, especially about customs when importing supplies; GoN visa requirements change depending on who one speaks with.
- Difficulty in finding warehouse space in badly affected districts such as Sindhupalchowk.
- Helicopters are expensive, yet many hilly and mountainous areas are difficult to access by car or on foot.

5.3 Coverage

The WV NER has served 96,000 people and will meet the targeted number of people as set in its response plan.¹⁰ When distributing, WV worked hard to ensure that there was no discrimination against any social groups and that all groups were served based on need.

‘World Vision is well aware that the poorest and most vulnerable people in Nepal are often excluded and tries to make sure that their needs are met regardless of caste, status or political affiliation.’

(World Vision senior staff)

¹⁰ The response plan target is 152,500 people or 30,500 households (estimate of five people per household).

What went well

Generally people are satisfied with the beneficiary selection process, noting that severely affected earthquake families are receiving support though there has been some exclusion (detailed in the PDM report). In fact, all FGDs with men and women said ‘World Vision is distributing to the most severely affected though not to all severely affected families’, indicating that beneficiary selection was appropriate though coverage limited.

WV distributes to households on lists received from the District Disaster Relief Committee. Those on the list are supposed to be families with a severely damaged or destroyed house. World Vision tries to obtain the list before the distribution date and visit the area to verify physically that those on the list qualify. This has helped to ensure that those in need are assisted. However, physical verification is at times a challenge, especially in remote areas which World Vision is not able to reach before distributions are due to start or when beneficiary lists are provided late. In addition, houses in some VDCs are scattered, making physical verification difficult.

Sindhuli cash-for-work project ensures inclusion

Ms Reecha is 82 years old and has lived in her VDC for 75 years. She moved there at the age of seven, after being given in marriage to a man from the community. Ms Reecha lives in a rented house in the community. On 25 April, like so many Nepalese, her world was shaken by the magnitude 7.6 earthquake. Unfortunately, due to her status as a renter, she was initially left off the beneficiary list provided by the VDC. She also didn’t receive the Rs15,000 payment given to affected people by the Government. This was compounded when WVIN started implementing a World Food Programme–funded cash for work programme. Again she was left off the beneficiary list given by the VDC.

Thanks to the intervention of a WVIN design, monitoring and evaluation officer, she was added to the beneficiary list and was able to register for the CFW programme. Ms Reecha said, ‘I attended two health trainings,’ which she did since she was too frail to participate in the work component, ‘and learnt how to take care of my high blood pressure and diabetes. The trainers shared with us what local herbs can really help me. This training was fantastic and really benefitted me.’ She went on to say that thanks to the CFW programme in her community. ‘The community came together. Usually people in the community don’t work together much, however people did so as part of this project.’

Thirty-five CFSs were quickly established, with the first CFSs set up the 1 May and local facilitators trained to run them. CFSs have served 3,535 children. As conditions have stabilised and the GoN asked agencies to focus on education, 24 CFSs were closed, including eight that were initially transitioned into TLCs. As of July there are 25 TLCs running that serve 1,634 children. All other relief support is provided for families and benefits all family members including children.

Improvements needed

Ensure inclusion of all groups. According to FGD members, some affected groups were not reached. They include the elderly, pregnant women, renters,¹¹ those not physically present at the time of a distribution and those without proper citizenship papers.

Seek to avoid duplication. In one district partners said that there was duplication by World Vision and Save the Children, though this was likely due to the GoN changing the INGOs assigned to specific VDCs.

¹¹ The brief Sindhuli case study, based on a real interview, highlights the difficulties in receiving assistance faced by an elderly woman renter. To protect the identity of the person, her name has been changed and the name of the VDC omitted.

Expand coverage. With relief distributions still ongoing, both community members and partners in two districts asked that all severely affected families be covered and that coverage be expanded. Partners also requested that World Vision expand its coverage in Sindhupalchowk and Bhaktapur.

The target was to reach 50 per cent of affected households with hygiene kits. There is still a large gap, as 50 per cent of the affected have not received support. We hope World Vision will cover them.'

(LNGO partner)

5.4 Humanitarian accountability

Humanitarian accountability staff and activities were scaled up for the response. There were some good practices in information provision and consultation with community members to verify those who qualified for distributions. Humanitarian accountability mechanisms, however, still need to be better contextualised, integrated and regularly used in all sector programme areas.

What went well

In all three districts some FGD participants noted that WV provided information about programme activities through pamphlets, face-to-face meetings with staff or volunteers, mobile phones and/or radio.

In two districts men and women said that the 'beneficiary selection criterion and process was transparent, a helpdesk established and feedback forms distributed along with the relief package. A feedback box was set up and some used it'. In Sindhuli, women said that 'WV staff are open to face-to-face feedback'. Men in Sindhupalchowk appreciated that 'World Vision conducted activities by consulting, coordinating, working and receiving approval from the district, community and VDC level'.

In one district, government partners noted that WVIN staff were very committed and practical in the way they worked with them and with the communities.

Improvements needed

Strengthen accountability systems. In two districts women said that 'there was no follow-up on feedback that they gave to World Vision' and that they 'didn't know the objectives of World Vision's relief work'. In the third district women said 'there were no feedback mechanisms'. In one district the girls' FGD members said that 'children aren't aware of what was inside the boxes given to schools' and that 'information was only given to some but not to all'. In two districts people asked for more information about WV, its ways of working and its longer-term plans. While staff said that phones and help

Steps to strengthen accountability proposed by RTE validation workshop participants:

- Budget for accountability activities in all proposals
- Build capacity of all staff and partners on accountability, with emphasis on women's inclusion
- Review WV's advocacy strategy with the GoN to see how WV can better influence beneficiary selection
- Complete vulnerability assessments as part of the national office's disaster-preparedness plan
- Engage with existing women's platforms such as health posts or working groups and farmers' co-ops to identify accountability measures that work for women
- Actively use radio to reach vulnerable and traditionally excluded communities
- Ensure that children's views are heard by working with children's clubs.

desks were set up as feedback mechanisms in all response areas, comments from community members indicate that not everyone was aware of them.¹²

World Vision set up accountability systems and processes where communities, the local authorities and other stakeholders were brought into the beneficiary selection and verification process to ensure that beneficiary lists were not politicised. Field staff want more orientation on humanitarian accountability and voiced concern that donor priorities rather than community voice seem to be pushing programme design and field operations.

Provide clear information on the use of relief items. In one district boys noted that the girls got clothes but the boys didn't. Deeper investigation found that the girl's hygiene kit included cloth for sanitary use, but the cloth was used by community members to make girls' dresses. This and the swallowing or non-use of aqua tabs instead of their use for water purification indicates that WVIN needs to provide more information about the use of specific materials.

5.5 Connectedness and sustainability

The Response, while focused on relief, is aligned with WVIN's national strategy and positions WVIN to plan and work on recovery. Proposals are in line with the emergency response plan which limited the work to key sectors that World Vision could do well.

In the Response WVIN has developed positive working relationships with the majority of its stakeholders including UN agencies, peer INGOs and donors. While relationships with national, district and local government and local NGOs and communities are good, more can be done to strengthen them. WVIN's relations with the local media could also improve.

'Work with the media needs to focus on channelling regular information about WV programmes to editors so that miscommunication about WV does not occur.'

(external partner)

What went well

The quality of the Response was good in both ADPs and non-ADP areas. This provides opportunities for expanding the scope of WVIN's recovery work, particularly in the areas of health and education, the priority sectors in the national office strategy. Relationships with all actors at the local level are positive.

In Bhaktapur and Sindhupalchowk, all interviewed government partners' perception of World Vision is positive. Generally, partners at local levels expressed satisfaction with the way World Vision staff worked with them and actively participated in district-level WASH, Nutrition, Education and Child Protection clusters.

Local partners were satisfied with the leadership and technical expertise of World Vision staff.

During the relief phase the World Vision response team directly distributed to beneficiaries; for the recovery phase work will be done in partnership with local NGOs. The identification and signing of memorandums with local partners is already under way. However, local staff in Sindhuli noted that they were able to draw on pre-existing relationships with local NGOs. This enabled relief efforts in

¹² RTE findings correspond to those in the PDM, which found that 80 per cent of beneficiaries were satisfied with information provision though 19 per cent did not know about WV and its response; only 58 per cent were satisfied with consultation and participation mechanisms, and 45 per cent did not know about CRMs.

the ADP to move quickly. Staff in Sindhupalchowk said they were able to mobilise volunteers effectively to facilitate a quick response.

Improvements needed

Define and communicate recovery plans. In Sindhuli, NGO and government partners and local staff noted that while recovery plans are in place, they are not yet operational for longer-term recovery efforts or longer-term development plans, highlighting the need for this to happen soon.

Speed up partnership processes. Staff at local and national levels noted that processes for selecting and completing memorandums of agreement with local NGOs need to be faster and that more attention needs to be given to building the capacity of LNGO partners to carry out programmes in accountable ways.

Be more intentional with DRR programming. Senior staff noted that WVIN needs to be more intentional in implementing DRR work, particularly in ADPs, so that schools and health posts are safe and communities are prepared for emergencies. Local partners and staff stressed the need for DRR work to get under way in the Response and/or the recovery phase as aftershocks continue and the risk of landslides have increased during the monsoon. While there was a strong intention from the Response manager to integrate DRR as of the onset of the Response, there was not sufficient technical support to maintain this intention.

Strengthen relations in Nepal. Staff worked hard to collaborate with government. They provided government officials with information, engaged them in planning and decision-making, shared resources, ensured that WVIN was aligned with government priorities and involved them in review and feedback processes. However, the view of RTE participants was that these efforts need to be continued and strengthened. RTE participants also stressed the importance of strengthening community, LNGO and media relationships by:

- maintaining timely action and transparency
- developing and communicating clearly on recovery and long-term plans
- providing space for collaborative creation of plans
- continuing to ensure government involvement in review and feedback mechanisms.

5.6 Organisational efficiency

Organisational structures and systems for delivering the response were largely effective . Only a few areas were identified that need to be improved to strengthen response efficiency.

What went well

Staff at all levels of WVIN and from other WV offices commented on the cooperation among WV offices, especially on the part of the national office, in rapidly ensuring that an effective Response team was on the ground quickly. GRRT and RDMT members with the right professional skills for a large-scale emergency response were deployed. New staff were quickly recruited in Nepal and national office staff seconded into the Response team.

National office secondees were said by many senior staff to have been quick to pick up emergency response skills and to work hard, even though they themselves were affected personally by the earthquake. National staff morale was improved as ‘many support offices were generous in providing funds for staff care’ (senior staff).

‘This is possibly one of the best internally coordinated responses by World Vision ever.’

(view of a majority of staff)

Common views expressed in interviews with senior staff inside and outside Nepal were that:

- Those in leadership – the national director, the regional HEA director and the Response manager – worked well together.
- WV's emergency management system (EMS) was quickly established and it was clear to most. Once it was in place, WV stuck to it, and this proved beneficial for the Response overall.
- Those working within the Response knew and trusted one another.
- Leadership outside the Response did not interfere, criticise or micro-manage the Response, which was the responsibility of the Response manager and the team.
- The national director exemplified how national directors can best respond in this type of emergency. Her prior experience in the GRRT in responding to emergencies proved important to decisive decision making and preparing national office staff for what to expect. In addition, the willing involvement of the national office Operations director in key decisions helped greatly.
- The Response office and national office were located in the same place; this helped staff remember that 'we are one organisation'.
- Systems and guidelines, including those for finance, largely worked well. At the field level, however, a few information gaps on some finance and logistic systems areas exist that need clarification.

An area where good practice was evident was in WVIN's positioning in external forums, e.g. WVIN is a member of the AIN and is the AIN/NGO representative in the HCT and sits in various AIN working groups. This positioning enables WVIN's to understand and influence the Response by all actors. Information Management and Emergency Communications teams did excellent work on behalf of the Response. Section 6 of this report defines the good practices by these functions, and these are described in more detail in Annex 3. However, advocacy messaging for the Response could be stronger, more directed and better resourced.

'The HR team was the best that I have ever worked with. They quickly organised national and RDMT secondments and did recruitment which enabled a fast response.'

(senior staff)

Improvements needed

Improve supply chain management by

Ensuring coordination among managers when bringing in goods. When bringing goods rapidly into a country becomes difficult, as in this Response, it is recommended that the logistics manager be represented on the Response Management team so that the logistic manager can provide real-time and thorough analysis of issues and potential options that will help the Response Management team make informed decisions quickly.

Speeding up delivery of goods in-country. Closer coordination and pre-planning among operations management, supply chain management and sector leads (particularly in distribution) are necessary. By week 3 of the Response all of the response warehouses were 80 per cent full, which indicates that distribution rates were very slow. Further development around the planning, coordination and control of operations is needed to enable faster delivery to beneficiaries.

Updating the HOST catalogue. The Response received a list of prices within the first two to three days that was not accurate. This affected the writing of proposals, development of budgets and operations thereafter. This area of work was identified by the Humanitarian Operations Services Team (HOST) for the future.

As soon as a response is declared, identify a global-level person to communicate with the team on the ground. The speed of the Response regarding ordering GIKs and pre-positioning supplies was affected by the many people the team on the ground had to work with until the GRRT supply chain manager arrived in Nepal.¹³ This affected the efficiency of the Response in the early days. There needs to be a focal person at the global level to coordinate with the different functions within supply chain.

Deciding on best option for air transport of goods. When there is too much demand on goods brought in by air, it may be better for World Vision to organise its own flights rather than scheduling through UNHRD because UN flights may get priority over World Vision flights.

Strengthen local pre-positioning. It normally takes four to six days for goods to be brought into a country by air unless there are challenges and barriers in place, as was the case in this Response. For World Vision to be able to respond rapidly to people's needs, local pre-positioning is necessary and memoranda of understanding with local vendors need to be signed prior to a disaster.

Clarify for field staff the EMS and roles and responsibilities of different staff members. Staff in the field said that they were not clear about relations between sector and district teams and that communications between the districts and national office level could improve so that all are updated on response progress. Senior staff remarked that communication among operations, programme and finance also needs to be better so that donor-funded programmes are implemented as outlined in proposals.

'Roles and responsibilities of sectors versus area teams and functions at each level need to be clearer.'

(field staff)

Strengthen World Vision's surge capacity. Some RTE respondents, both partners in the field and a few senior staff, were concerned about the high turnover of response management staff, advocating that they stay for at least three months. Response team members noted that staffing within World Vision for key technical capacity areas such as emergency shelter and cash programming remains thin. A few senior staff noted that all GRRT members need to have a coaching mindset and come to build capacity. This was done by some GRRT members but not all. A few senior staff stressed the importance of expatriate staff being oriented culturally upon arrival and being ready primarily to share their skills and knowledge rather than to gain career experience. They were concerned that a minority of those deployed into the response came to extend their own experience and also that not all showed respect to local staff.

'Leave must be mandated and not left to staff, as they are wearing themselves out.'

(regional office)

Attend to local staffing issues. A concern raised by both regional office and national office senior staff is WVIN's 'marketability' to prospective employees. WVIN staff are leaving to go to other agencies because WVIN's compensation package is not competitive. Another concern is that national staff are wearing themselves out and have not taken their leave.

6. Good practices and learning from the Response

The RTE highlighted four good practices and five major learnings from the Response. Annex 3 presents these in detail, but the main areas are listed below. The good practices demonstrate that WV is learning from its responses, and the learnings indicate where WV continues to have difficulties. In terms of staffing and staff care, there was both good practice and learning.

¹³ Supply chain management staff arrived in Nepal on 28 April 2015.

Good practices

- **Information management** systems provided regular, correct, good-quality information. This allowed the response team to do better evidence-based programming and other WV partnership offices to meet their donor and support needs.
- **Emergency communications** were quick to use multiple media, including social media, to promote public awareness about the crisis and WV's response.
- **Response management** worked collaboratively. This helped to speed up the response.
- **The implementation of NTS** was seen as a promising practice. NTS enables sector managers, requestors and budget owners to see exactly what they have purchased and what they have spent. More training on how to use the software is requested.
- **Partnering and collaboration** ensured that WV promoted a coordinated response with minimal duplication.

Learnings

- Contingency plans need to define ways to access and work in **remote areas and locations**.
- Guidance on using a **multi-sectoral approach** during the immediate relief phase is needed. Doing an integrated response during the immediate relief phase may not be possible if there are many challenges around procurement and logistics, unless WV is willing to do multiple distributions in the same location or delay distributions until WV has the full complement of kits ready to go. Overall, participants agreed that a multi-sector integrated response is a good approach, as long as all the sectors being targeted are needed in the target areas, and as long as it is logistically possible, during the relief phase, when most of WV's activities are distribution focused, to get everything out together. The problem is when there is a need to do multiple distributions in one location, and that location is difficult or expensive to reach – then perhaps WV needs to be picking the key sectors for those areas and then focusing on delivering them and delivering them well rather than trying to be everything to everyone. WV should develop principles to help response managers and operations managers decide whether they want to pursue an integrated response in the initial phase of the response.
- Research is needed on culturally appropriate ways to ensure **humanitarian accountability**.
- **Staffing and staff care** are getting better, but there are areas for further improvement.
- **LMMS** is a good practice, and therefore LMMS teams need to be mobilised immediately so the platform can be used to capture assessment data which will enable faster distribution of NFI and quicker implementation of cash-based programming initiatives. It is recommended that these teams deploy with the Logistics/Distribution teams.

7. Recommendations from communities, partners and field staff on World Vision's Response

The RTE team spoke with community, partners and local staff. They all made suggestions or recommendations about the Response. In the interests of accountability to those who shared their views with the RTE team, World Vision participants in the validation workshop were asked to consider the recommendations and agree on a response. The main recommendations and World Vision's response are

summarised below. The detailed set of recommendations by district is presented in Annex 4 and will be referenced when the WVIN management team is developing its recovery plan.

Community

In all three districts community members asked that World Vision do longer-term programmes on water supply, sanitation (toilet and drainage), shelter (corrugated galvanised iron), rebuilding schools and new homes to be earthquake resistant, new home construction, vocational training, irrigation and health facility improvement. Other recommendations were specific to districts, with participants in one district asking for WV to do more sensitisation about earthquake preparedness and those in another requesting better feedback mechanisms and expanding the number of VDCs where World Vision works.

WVIN's response: *World Vision is in the process of determining its longer-term programming in earthquake-affected areas. This will take into consideration the recommendations that have come from the community and involve communication and coordination with targeted communities and key stakeholders. The response plan for recovery and rehabilitation will be developed starting the end of July, with an initial draft in August with some key elements that can be communicated to communities.*

Partners

In each district partner suggestions were unique. In Bhaktapur, partners asked that World Vision take into consideration the needs arising because of the monsoons. In Sindhupalchowk, partners asked that WV consider doing a long-term programme focusing on reconstruction, livelihoods, WASH, shelter, education, protection, vocational training and school renovation and also provide scholarships to students who have lost the main breadwinner in their household. In Sindhuli, partners asked that WV start working on recovery while not forgetting that there are still urgent relief needs, to recognise that government in Sindhuli is strong and that bureaucratic systems exist, and to increase the daily subsistence allowance for participants and incentives for volunteers.

WVIN's response: *The response is similar to that for communities in that these recommendations will be considered as WV develops its recovery plan in July and August 2015. World Vision notes that it recognises that government is strong and that it follows government policy and local practices when setting per diem and incentive levels.*

Field staff

Recommendations from field staff were similar to those from communities and partners. Field staff also recommended that ADPs be set up in response/relief areas where they don't already exist and that the number of VDCs for the recovery programme be increased, especially in earthquake-affected areas where need is great. They also asked that DRR elements be incorporated into the current relief effort. Other recommendations were that WV develop and use local staff in the response more so that funds can be used locally to help people, give district managers more authority, find a new and safe office and housing for staff, and ensure proper orientation and training for new staff.

'DRR is in the plan, but no real effort has been observed, especially on shelter.'
(field staff)

WVIN's response: *The response is similar to that for communities and partners, in that field staff recommendations will be considered during the recovery planning process. Some recommendations, like finding adequate office and housing space, is already under way.*

8. Overall recommendations

RTE team members reflected on the findings and presented six recommendations for consideration by workshop participants as action plans. The first four recommendations below were selected, and actions for immediate implementation planned. Parts of the recommendations that will take longer to put into action are to be considered in the national office strategy development process. The action plans for the four recommendations are in a separate document available upon request from WVIN. The recommendations are listed in the order in which they were prioritised by the participants.

Recommendation 1: Equip and build the capacity of response staff to respond effectively to emergencies

Retain committed and skilled staff in the response and provide them the resources, including cultural sensitivity training, to do the job effectively. Draw on surge capacity as needed with the expectation that the surge team will pass knowledge to longer-term national office staff who can then be deployed to other emergency contexts. In the coming months build the capacity of national staff interested and committed to working in emergencies by:

- developing the National Disaster Management Team(NDMT), increasing NDMT member participation in the RDMT and providing NDMT members with training in humanitarian standards and exposure (deployments) to emergency operations
- providing simulation exercise opportunities for NDMT members
- creating and increasing awareness of the national office disaster preparedness plan among staff
- providing all staff with tents, tarpaulins, solar lamps and mosquito nets to deal with various disasters
- ensuring that staff have key documents and 'quick run bags'.

Recommendation 2: Clarify reporting lines and staff structure

There is some confusion about the EMS structure and various roles in the structure. It is necessary to

- clarify the rationale of staff reporting lines, including how the technical specialists work and report to district managers and/or dotted lines to district managers and technical leads
- circulate a clear organisational chart with well-defined roles and responsibilities for sector leads and area team leaders
- clearly communicate the structure and the composition of the senior management team to all staff
- clarify and improve programme-level and operational-level decision-making processes for a faster/more effective response
- send weekly updates to all staff, particularly those in the field, from the national director/response manager in order to minimise miscommunications.

Recommendation 3: Align the national strategy and the response/recovery plan

The national office strategy and the response/recovery plan should coordinate programmes and operational plans. The level of financial grant resources and available PNS funding should be considered in the planning process. The strategy needs to consider WVIN's potential reach (geographic and sectoral) based on current and future needs and given the resources available.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen humanitarian accountability

Invest in WV accountability mechanisms and creation by staff of an accountability plan that also considers and captures information from children. This could be done by developing a longitudinal relationship with children in children's clubs which can help World Vision develop child-friendly feedback mechanisms.

Recommendation 5: Select leaders with strong management skills

Choose leaders that have strong management abilities and training on emergencies. Ask national office and response level leaders to plan and communicate how roles are expected to change over the next few months.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen preparedness and implement DRR activities

Increase preparedness and DRR capacities in the following areas:

- pre-position supplies (e.g. stock 1,000 relief kits in each ADP)
- plan ways to correct the supply chain management issues experienced in this response and develop local logistic staff capacity
- prepare key documents such as a national office disaster preparedness plan, vulnerability maps, and a key action checklist on administrative/human resources tasks to implement whenever an emergency occurs
- ensure that there is safe and adequate office space
- develop human resources policies around volunteer and partner engagement in emergency response
- incorporate DRR plans and activities in all ADPs
- map all vulnerable groups in ADPs.

Annex 1: Terms of reference for the RTE of WV's Nepal Earthquake Response



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Evaluation_June201!

Annex 2: Timeline of WV's Nepal Earthquake Response



TimelineNepal
response.docx

Annex 3: Good practices and lessons learned



NER GP and LL.docx

Annex 4: Recommendations from the three districts



Recommendations
by District.docx

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