



HIGHLIGHTS

- **FAO continues to support Government-led efforts to address and coordinate the response to food security and livelihood needs in the six most severely-affected districts:** Dolakha, Dhading, Gorkha, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, and Sindhupalchowk.
- **Since April 2015, FAO has reached close to 1.5 million people** with agricultural inputs.
- Led by the Ministry of Agricultural Development, **FAO continues to support the Food Security Cluster** as its co-lead by providing human resources as well as advisory support to Cluster partners on the quality of agricultural inputs distributed to affected communities.
- **FAO is continuing its longer-term recovery and resilience work**, which is critical to help vulnerable farmers rebuild their livelihoods, by investing in the following activities:
 - Prevent post-harvest losses by providing grain and seed storage metal bins.
 - Ensure spring vegetable and maize crop planting through seed distribution.
 - Support production of staples and high value crops by repairing small-scale irrigation schemes through community work.
 - Improve nutrition and promote income generation by distributing materials and provide training for the construction of protective plastic tunnels for winter vegetable production.
 - Keep animals healthy and productive by providing mineral mixture, training to produce mineral blocks and material to rehabilitate animal shelters.
- The **four-month long border crisis and the resulting import challenges** delayed operations. However, FAO was able to effectively identify alternative local procurement options to meet the needs of its beneficiaries.
- **FAO's emergency response programme will be successfully handed over** to the local government by May 2016, while support from FAO will continue as needed.

BACKGROUND

Two major earthquakes struck the Western and Central Regions of Nepal on 25 April and 12 May 2015. Millions of people were affected throughout the country – four out of five people in the worst-affected districts depend on agriculture and livestock for their livelihood. FAO continues to work in close collaboration with the Government of Nepal and Food Security Cluster partners to assist the vulnerable population, including support for early recovery activities.

AGRICULTURAL IMPACTS AND PRIORITIES

❖ **High impact on food security and agricultural livelihoods**

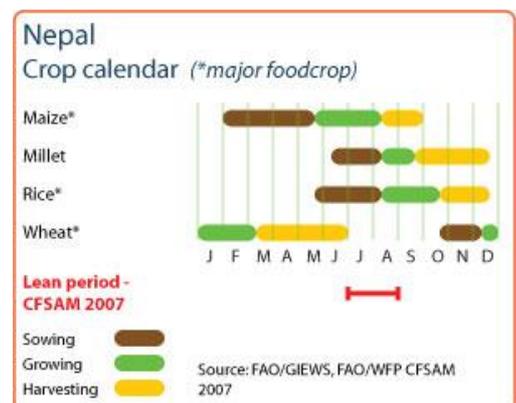
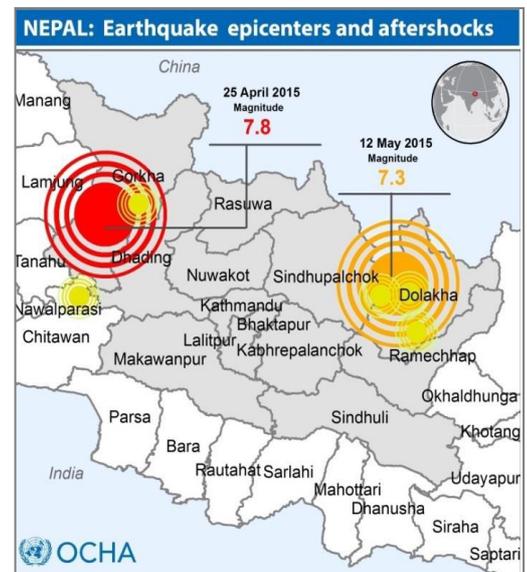
Two-thirds of Nepali population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. The earthquake affected houses, livestock, food and seed stocks and standing crops. Similarly, damaged infrastructure including markets, roads, terraces and irrigation systems, further exacerbated the problems faced by the agriculture-dependent communities, leaving poor families even more vulnerable.

❖ **Farmers need support for winter and spring planting and harvest**

Farmers need immediate grain storage capacity to avoid post-harvest losses of their rice and maize crops. Provision of more vegetable seeds is critical to ensure a nutritionally diverse diet and generate income. The distribution of maize and vegetable seeds is a priority for spring. In addition, support is needed to rehabilitate critical irrigation infrastructure that was damaged by the earthquakes.

❖ **Critical need to protect livestock**

Livestock are a reliable source of food, income and draught power for rural families and are costly to replace. Livestock losses can be prevented with timely veterinary services, improved feed and rehabilitated shelter. Farmers and government partners are receiving technical support and training in these areas to ensure the adoption of these practices.



❖ **Rehabilitation of community-managed small-scale irrigation schemes**

Irrigation is vital for the agriculture sector in Nepal. The total reported damage from the earthquakes to the irrigation sector is close to USD 4.3 million, compromising the income and food and nutrition security of the 80 percent of families living in the affected areas. Farmers – particularly those in high hills and remote areas – continue to depend on unpredictable monsoon rains. Rehabilitation and reconstruction of irrigation schemes would allow the cultivation of multi-cycle crops.

FAO RESPONSE

An FAO-supported **Joint Assessment on Food Security, Livelihoods and Early Recovery** – for which the results were released in November 2015 – highlighted that in the past nine months, significant progress has been made in reviving the agriculture sector in the aftermath of the earthquakes. Nevertheless, the assessment identified a critical need for long-term recovery and rehabilitation work.

In response, FAO is working in close collaboration with the Government and local agencies to address early response, recovery and rehabilitation needs.

Working with local Non-governmental Organization (NGO) partners with an understanding of the local context and traditional knowledge has helped to facilitate ownership and leadership of the recovery and rehabilitation activities. FAO is working with six different local NGO partners in the six worst-affected districts. Partnerships with local civil society organizations have allowed FAO to ensure that its Accountability to Affected Populations strategy – which outlines measures for local participation and knowledge sharing – is adhered to throughout the response.

As of March 2016, FAO has assisted:

- 42 000 households with 5 kg bags of rice seeds, to provide months of staple food;
- 25 317 households with 10 kg bags of wheat seeds in six districts;
- 60 000 households with 3 kg bags of maize seeds in six districts;
- 60 000 households with cowpea and bean seeds in six districts;
- 112 000 households with packets of mixed vegetable seeds to improve nutrition, including fast-growing varieties which can be harvested in as little as one month;
- 40 000 households with grain and seed storage bags, to protect food and seed salvaged from collapsed homes;
- 20 000 households with 25 kg bags of animal feed supplements, to keep surviving animals healthy and productive;
- 1 200 households with construction of plastic tunnels for off-season vegetable production in six districts; and
- 555 drip irrigation sets will be installed inside the plastic tunnels distributed for off-season vegetable production.

FAO's ongoing recovery and resilience work includes:

- Grain/seed storage metal bins: distribution of durable metal bins for 15 000 households.
- Vegetable production: distribution of additional vegetable seeds for 20 000 households to foster better nutrition, and training on the construction of plastic tunnels for off-season vegetable production, among 240 women's groups (6 000 households).
- Irrigation repair: rehabilitation of 24 community-managed small-scale irrigation schemes; drip irrigation sets will be installed in 555 plastic tunnels, benefiting women's groups in high mountain dry areas.
- Livestock feed: distribution of 85 machines for producing urea molasses mineral blocks for livestock owners in six districts; training of 2 000 farmers to make the urea molasses mineral blocks; and supplementary mineral mixture for 105 000 households to boost livestock health.
- Animal shelter: distribution of corrugated galvanized iron sheets to 5 500 households for rehabilitation and construction of animal shelters in six districts.

Moving towards disaster risk management (DRM)

FAO Nepal is now transitioning its Emergency Operation Unit capacity towards a focus on DRM in support of FAO Strategic Objective 5 to build resilience. The main focus will be the mainstreaming of DRM for the Ministry of Agricultural Development in coordination with the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium – a group of bilateral and multilateral donors focused on building institutional resilience to the frequent and varied disasters which regularly strike Nepal. This work closely aligns with ongoing support being provided by FAO to the National Reconstruction Authority for the development of a Post-Disaster Recovery Framework Sectoral Action Plan (SAP) for the agriculture, livestock and irrigation sector. The SAP covers a five-year period and includes strategic objectives on DRM and climate change adaptation, as well as governance and capacity building for Ministry agencies and departments.

Food Security Cluster

Working in partnership for an effective, coordinated and evidence-based response.

Co-led by FAO and WFP



Food and Agriculture
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