

Nepal Earthquake: Communicating with Communities Update

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Situation Overview

- Mobile connectivity in Kathmandu is improving, restoration assessments of mobile networks outside the capital are ongoing. Access remains a challenge and power grid remains out in many areas, so mobile generators are being deployed. Coverage data from NCell is available in the [DropBox](#).
- [Télécoms sans Frontières](#) teams are travelling to remote districts to provide free calls to affected people. Teams are currently in Choutara, Sindhupalchok District and Tipling, Dhading District.
- Facebook and Whatsapp remain key channels for information sharing, with requests of help from affected communities in rural areas coming through on Facebook pages, as well as [local volunteers](#) organising fundraising efforts and relief missions to remote areas where needs have been identified.
- [Skype is continuing to offer free calls](#) to landlines and mobiles worldwide from Nepal for the next month, in recognition of the importance of communication following the disaster.
- [The CwC Working Group](#) is now meeting three times a week and is developing and translating common messages for affected people. The Humanitarian Coordinator has requested agency representatives join the meeting to share critical self-help messages and ensure agencies are providing communities with information they need, as well as actively seeking their feedback.
- Assessments carried out by the Radio Sub-Working Group highlight station infrastructure, power back-up and programme content as key needs identified at community stations.
- In response to Strategic Objective 5 of the [UN Flash Appeal and Action Plan](#), resources are being sought to support a proposed Inter-Agency Common Service Feedback Project, aiming at coordinated information provision and feedback management across the response.

CwC Response

Information on agencies' responses and contact details are being updated in this 4W GoogleDoc: <http://bit.ly/1ba5p0K>. The following summarises CwC initiatives.

Assessments

- The UN coordinated assessments team has included two questions in the agreed assessment questionnaire conducted by NGOs. These are: "What are the main sources of information for people now?" and "What do people need to know now?" What do people need to know now?" The questions have also been posted on the [BBC Nepali Facebook page](#).
- BBC Media Action has created a mobile phone app with key information and communication needs assessment questions. This is available for INGOs and NGOs to use as part of their assessments. Contact theo.hannides@bbc.co.uk for more information.
- Findings from radio station assessments being carried out by the Radio Sub-Working Group (coordinated by [AMARC](#)) highlight station infrastructure, power back-up and programme content as key needs identified at community stations. This [map](#) of radio stations (from 2011 infoasaid data) is currently being updated with damage reports from radio stations visited so far.
- This [census data](#) from Nethope (2011) maps household communications equipment by district.

Communications and Power

- Connectivity in Kathmandu is improving, restoration assessments of mobile networks outside the capital are ongoing. Access remains a challenge and power grid remains out in many areas, so mobile generators are being deployed. Coverage data from NCell is available in the [DropBox](#).

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster has been activated and meetings are being chaired by NetHope. [ETC updates and meeting minutes on their website](#).
- Ericsson Response is sending a team with equipment to ensure [emergency communications remain active](#).
- Telecom Sans Frontieres teams are travelling to remote districts with [mobile wireless networks donated by Vodafone](#), offering free calls to isolated communities.

Media

- **BBC Nepal** (supported by **UNICEF**) is holding a call in psycho-social support programme four times a day
- **BBC Media Action** continues to broadcast its Lifeline programme on BBC Nepali and shortwave frequency. Content is available to be shared for broadcast on other stations.
- **Nepal Red Cross** has two radio programmes and has begun sharing lifeline messaging on the radio and through volunteers on the ground.
- **Search for Common Ground** is planning a call in programme focused on bringing people and the government together, as well as psychosocial support and recovery planning.
- **First Response Radio (FRR)** has deployed a team of six to the northern District of Rasuwa (one of the most affected areas) to help the local community radio station get back on air, as per needs identified by the radio sub-working group. They are taking 140 solar radios with them.
- **Ujyaalo Radio** has continued to broadcast from Kathmandu, and is reaching the Nepalese diaspora who are able to receive information from affected areas thanks to the radio's reporters who have travelled to 11 of the affected districts. More information can be found [here](#).
- **IMS** has procured together three generators and will be receiving fuel to support community radio stations from Fuel Relief Fund.

Translation

- **Translators without Borders (TwB)** has assembled a team which is available for translation into Nepali, Newari and Hindi, as well as from these languages into English. They are also looking for translators into Tamang and Gurung. Contact rebecca@translatorswithoutborders.org. Translated messages available on message library in Nepali: <http://bit.ly/1c1Kyhv>
This tool helps with pronunciation by translating Nepali text into spoken Nepali <http://tts.kaushalsubedi.com/>
- In recognition of the diversity of languages spoken in Nepal, Translators without Borders has provided [graphs showing mother tongue languages](#) spoken in Eastern and Central Nepal. This data will be mapped and shared in due course.

Feedback Mechanisms and Mapping of Needs

- Resources are being sought to support the Interagency Common Service Project (as per the [UN Flash Appeal](#)). The project will be hosted by the Resident Coordinators Office, with full support from the Humanitarian Coordinator. The planned project includes a call centre that will focus on feedback and complaints on aid delivered by international agencies. The project will be linked to a number of existing platforms including face to face, radio broadcasting, and online.
- Mobile Networks TeliaSonera & Ncell are collaborating with www.Flowminder.org, aiming to support relief efforts by analysing data to try and assess how many people have been affected, and/or displaced by the earthquake. Analyses will be provided for free to all relevant aid agencies through established UN and humanitarian channels as they become available.
- Women's needs are being [highlighted](#) as some villages are made up of 80% women. This manual on [Gender Mainstreaming in Emergency Management](#) has information on communication with women.

CwC Coordination and Contacts

The **Communicating with Communities Working group** has agreed to meet Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at UNIC at 12 noon. The Humanitarian Coordinator today urged agency representatives to join the meeting to share critical messages for communities.

Meeting minutes and common messages will continue to be available on [Humanitarian Response: Communicating with Communities WG](#)

Focal point contacts for different initiatives within the group are as follows:

Common Feedback Platform	Stewart Davies - Davies1@un.org
Common Messages	Giovanni Congi - Giovanni.congi@one.un.org Ninamma Rai - Ninamma.rai@one.un.org
Radio Coordination (Sub Group)	Binod Bhattarai - bbhattarai2006@gmail.com Suman Basnet - suman_basnet@asiapacific.amarc.org Mona Laczó - mona.laczo@np.bbcmediaaction.org
CwC Coordination	Rudrajit Das - rdas@unicef.org Binoy Lama - bdlama@unicef.org Giovanni Congi - Giovanni.congi@one.un.org

A **Radio Coordination sub group** has been established for coordination amongst the radio networks. Five key areas have been identified, with designated focal points: Content development; Assessment of radio stations; Asset and inventory; Trainings; Distribution of equipment / radios.

Information from radio assessments carried out by this group have been outlined throughout this update.

In the News

- 3 Ways Nepalis Are Using Crowdsourcing to Aid Quake Relief: <http://nyti.ms/1EBlkjn>
- As Nepal Reels, A Radio Station Offers a Steady Voice: <http://osf.to/1Kcr9F9>
- Crisis Mapping in Nepal: Plenty of Bandwidth, Not Enough Time: <http://huff.to/1zMDPCB>
- Kathmandu Post: Taking a Hit – Journalists Need to Be Trained to Effectively Report on Disasters: <http://huff.to/1zMDPCB>

For more information or to contribute to this update please contact nicki.bailey@cdacnetwork.org