KEY FINDINGS

- According to key informants, 55% of the population in the assessed VDCs, 64 out of 79 in total, is in need, with 38% in immediate need of support.
- 99% of the population has been affected as a result of damage to their home. 88% of the population has been displaced due to uninhabitable shelters. The displaced population is approximately evenly split between displacement sites (away from home) and scattered sites (close proximity to home).
- Key Informants indicated that shelter, food security, and livelihoods are the main needs in order of priority. Borrowing, support from friends and relatives and relying on less preferred and less expensive food are the main coping strategies. The main constraint to meeting these needs are primarily due to the lack of physical access, followed by interference to aid delivery and the gaps in aid provision.

PEOPLE IN NEED

PRIORITY SECTORS

Priority sectors as reported by key informants

The top three overall priority needs are shelter, food security, and livelihoods, although some differences between population centres and rural areas exist. A possible explanation for this difference in priorities between different areas is that in rural communities, there is less access to markets, and much of stored food is likely to have been destroyed or trapped in collapsed homes. Also in rural areas, agricultural work has been impacted due to the destruction of seeds and loss of tools, and landslides blocking paths to markets have further impacted livelihoods. In more populated centres, people were more likely to be connected to piped systems or large community tanks which were damaged during the earthquakes, making water a higher priority.
**COPING MECHANISM**

Main reported coping mechanisms

- Borrowing money or food
- Support from friends or relatives
- Relying on less preferred, less expensive food
- Reducing the number of meals per day
- Reducing portion size meals
- Sale of animals
- Sale of productive assets
- Withdraw children from school
- Harvesting immature crops
- Sale of household assets
- Sale of house or land

Borrowing money or food and relying on help from friends or relatives were the most common coping mechanisms reported. There are two main differences in coping mechanisms used by communities in rural areas compared with population centres. The sale of animals was reported more often in population centres, while reducing the number of meals per day was reported more in rural areas.

**HUMANITARIAN PROFILE**

**VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Priority vulnerable groups

Overall, the three most vulnerable groups identified were female-headed households, single-headed households, and pregnant and lactating women. A notable difference between population centres and rural areas is that pregnant and lactating women were ranked as most vulnerable in the former, but ranked quite low in rural areas. In rural areas, the most vulnerable groups were deemed to be female-, single- and child-headed households. The vulnerable groups were identified through community discussions and subject to the same limitations as the rest of the data. The failure to rank a group as vulnerable (for example,
marginalized ethnicity or caste) does not indicate that this is not an issue.

**HUMANITARIAN ACCESS**

Access of humanitarian organisations to beneficiaries

Access of beneficiaries to aid

The main humanitarian access constraint is the lack of physical access, with key informants in 43 VDCs mentioning this as a medium or high constraint. Fear of accessing aid is the following main concern, reported as an issue in 25 VDCs. Key informants in 30 VDCs highlighted aid worker safety as a problem.

**INCIDENTS**

Reported increase of observed incidents since earthquake

An increase in tensions between different groups within the communities in the aftermath of the earthquake was reported in nearly half of VDCs. However, this is reportedly no longer a major concern. Other security incidents mentioned include discrimination by caste or ethnicity. Discrimination by caste or ethnicity was reported slightly more often in rural areas compared with population centres. Although other data indicates that there is a large number of marginalized groups within the VDCs, this was not mentioned by key informants. In 11 VDCs reported no observations of increased security incidents since the earthquake.

**METHODOLOGY**

Between 11 and 24 May 2015, 64 out of 79 VDCs in Sindhupalchok were assessed with the objective to capture the multi-sectoral needs of the population within the district. The assessment was designed to collect data from primary sources at the VDC level, through key informant interviews. This brief outlines the preliminary results of several key questions. More detailed information, including in-depth sector specific findings, will be made available before the 10th of June. For more information on this assessment please contact nepalassessments@humanitarianresponse.info.