

# **Annual Report for the Nepal Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Fund**

**for the period 1 January to 31 December 2024**

**Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office  
Bureau for Management Services  
United Nations Development Programme  
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## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



International Organization for  
Migration



United Nations Population Fund



United Nations Children's Fund



World Food Programme



World Health Organization

## CONTRIBUTORS

Foreign, Commonwealth &  
Development Office

Swiss Agency for Development and  
Cooperation

## Introduction

This report provides an update of the progress achieved by the Nepal Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Fund (NSDCFF) in 2024.

The NSDCFF was initially set-up in April 2024 to support the implementation of initiatives that advance a coherent and joint approach of the four strategic priority areas of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027, across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Nepal. It supports the realization of the UN Reform, facilitating a joint approach to planning, programming, implementing and helping the UNCT to a stronger alignment with national priorities and realities, and a more coordinated approach to its interventions.

The first joint programme funded through the NSDCFF is supporting the Government of Nepal, UN and partners to implement the Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) for the Western Nepal Earthquake (November 2023) and the Floods Joint Response Plan for the heavy and continuous rainfall in Nepal in late September 2024.

This report is the annual narrative report, which has been prepared by the NSDCFF Secretariat, currently hosted by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UN RCO) in Nepal. The annual financial report, which has been prepared by the UN Multi Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) in New York, as Administrative Agent of the NSDCFF, can be found on the MPTFO website <https://mptf.undp.org/fund/np100>.

## The Nepal Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Fund

In 2023, the Government of Nepal and the United Nations Country Team in Nepal signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the period 2023-2027. The SDGs, the Government of Nepal's Fifteen Plan, Nepal's LDC graduation process and international commitments and norms to which Nepal is a party are at the core of the UNSDCF 2023-2027.

In response to the national priorities, the UN in Nepal supports the Government in four inter-linked and mutually reinforcing strategic priority areas: 1) Sustainable, resilient, and inclusive economic transformation; 2) inclusive and transformative human development; 3) Environmental Sustainability, climate and disaster resilience; and 4) Governance, federalism, participation and Inclusion.

The Nepal Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Fund is a UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund accessible to members of the UN Sustainable Development Group to carry out joint efforts that support a strategic vision, as outlined in the UNSDCF and national development plans. The Fund is a country-based pooled fund providing a vehicle to enable UNCT members to make strategic investments in accelerating the implementation of UNSDCF results and advance sustainable development in the country.

The Fund provides opportunities for development partners to deliver more coherent and flexible support in response to challenges within the strategic priorities that have been agreed in the UNSDCF. The Fund complements UNCT core and non-core resources that are committed to the achievement of results under the UNSDCF by providing the UNSCDF a UN system wide mechanism to mobilize resources to support priority interventions of the UNCT.

The goal of the Fund is to support the implementation of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 and its abovementioned four strategic priority areas. These four areas form the Fund's Windows. In addition to these four windows, the Humanitarian/Emergency/Disaster Response Window has been established to quickly support humanitarian action in response to onset emergencies. The Steering Committee of the Fund may decide to open new windows to meet new priorities, needs, requests from the Government and the UN system, and adapt to new working environments.

## The Governance Structure of the Nepal Development Framework Multi-Partner Trust Fund

The Nepal Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Fund structures include the Steering Committee, the Secretariat, the Participating Organizations and the Administrative Agent.

The Steering Committee is in charge of strategic guidance and general supervision of the Fund. Chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator, the committee comprises representatives from United Nations agencies (signatories of the memorandum of understanding) and donors.

The Secretariat is responsible for managing Fund operations. Hosted by the Resident Coordinator's Office, the Secretariat provides technical and administrative support to the Steering Committee.

Participating United Nations Organizations develop project/programme proposals, and report on implementation and financial performance to the Steering Committee through the Secretariat and Administrative Agent. The current Participating United Nations Organizations of the Fund are WFP, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO.

The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, as the Administrative Agent, is responsible for the receipt, administration and management of contributions from donors, disbursement of funds to Recipient Organizations, and consolidation and dissemination of progress reports to donors.

### Joint Programmes by Fund's windows

As mentioned above, the goal of the fund is to support the implementation of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 and its four strategic priority areas. These four areas form the Fund's Windows. In addition to these four windows, the Humanitarian/Emergency/Disaster Response Window has been established to quickly support humanitarian action in response to onset emergencies.

To date, only the window for Humanitarian/Emergency/Disaster Response has been operational. The initial Joint Programme funded by the NSDCFF is supporting the Government of Nepal, UN and partners to implement the Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) for the Western Nepal Earthquake (November 2023) and the Floods Joint Response Plan for the heavy and continuous rainfall in Nepal in late September 2024.

The NSDCFF has been an efficient mean to facilitate a joint UN response to these emergencies. As a result, under the overall leadership of the RC and the strategic guidance of the RCO, the Joint Programme "Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) and Humanitarian Response: Western Nepal Earthquake and the Onset Emergencies" is being implemented by five UN agencies (IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO) in close partnership with the Government of Nepal, civil society organizations, the private sector, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The total envelope of this Joint Programmes is USD 16.1 million.

#### 1. Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) and Humanitarian Response: Western Nepal Earthquake and the Onset Emergencies

In the evening of 3 November 2023, Nepal's deadliest earthquake since April 2015 struck Jajarkot District in Karnali Province in the west of the country. The 6.4 magnitude earthquake, which was followed by over 300 aftershocks, killed 154 (84 females and 70 males, including 81 children), injured 366, and displaced tens of thousands of people, forcing many to sleep outside in freezing overnight temperatures for fear of aftershocks. According to the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC), approximately 62,011 households were damaged (completely and partially) and 250,000 people were affected (127,750 females and 122,250 males, including 69,575 children), with Jajarkot and Rukum West

districts bearing the brunt of the damage. Despite the earthquake's relatively low magnitude, the high levels of damage and casualties were caused by substandard construction of homes and as it occurred at night when most people were asleep in their homes. The estimated loss from agriculture, livestock and poultry is around NPR 42.9 million and 480 Metric Ton (MT) of wheat and mustard lost at the field. The initial estimate for reconstruction needs prepared by NDRRMA is USD 500 million.

The Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) for Western Nepal Earthquake has outlined three major strategic objectives:

- 1) Support livelihoods and the continuation of basic service delivery.
- 2) Create enabling environments for long term recovery and reconstruction of affected communities.
- 3) Support for the current winter season and build resilience to natural shocks in 2024.

The Joint Programme focuses on addressing the first two objective through recovery interventions aiming to improve the livelihood, food security, nutrition, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) condition of the affected population with major focus on early recovery actions linking with entrepreneurship development, support for reconstruction of damaged houses (shelter) so that the targeted population can bounce back their affected livelihood.

Investments through this Joint Programme aim to strengthen the resilience of affected communities who are more susceptible to future natural hazards. This Joint Programme targets the most vulnerable and highly affected population from earthquake with major focus on: child headed household, single women, people with disabilities (PWDs), ethnic minorities, Dalits, marginalized families etc. where accountability to affected people (AAP), gender equity and disability inclusion (GEDSI), the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), including mental health are highly prioritized for recovery interventions.

Between 27 and 28 September 2024, heavy and continuous rainfall in Nepal triggered extensive damage across 21 districts, with seven districts severely affected. The torrential rains led to widespread flooding, landslides, and road blockages, severely disrupting transportation, agriculture, livelihoods, and public safety. The Government of Nepal declared 71 Local Governments of 20 districts as crisis-stricken areas for three months from 4 October 2024, as they were severely affected by floods and landslides, in order to enable concerted relief, response, recovery/rehabilitation and reconstruction.

This situation demanded urgent attention to both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term recovery efforts to restore essential services, protect public health, and support the affected communities in rebuilding their lives and livelihoods. These floods have worsened existing vulnerabilities, especially among communities with limited resources, displacing over 10,000 households and severely damaging infrastructures. Access to clean water, sanitation, essential health and nutrition services, and food was limited, heightening health and protection risks, especially for vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities. Mental health and psychosocial support were needed to help affected populations cope with the trauma of displacement and loss. The education cluster has been severely impacted, with 250 schools damaged. Households have lost important food stocks in most of the flooded areas and require immediate food/cash assistance.

## Nepal Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Fund Key Results in 2024

While recently established, the Fund has promoted inter-agency cooperation and critically strengthen joint resource mobilization and allocation to under-funded cross-sectoral areas in which the UN has a comparative advantage to jointly respond to the Western Nepal Earthquake (November 2023) and the floods in Nepal in late September 2024.

Advanced conversations are undergoing with relevant development partners and the Peace Building Fund to expand the NSDCFF as the right mechanism to articulate a joint UN initiative to support the Government in the completion of Nepal's Transitional Justice process.

Below follows a summary of the key achievements of the Fund in 2024.

### 1. Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) and Humanitarian Response: Western Nepal Earthquake and the Onset Emergencies

The Joint Recovery Action Plan (JRAP) is implemented in response to the 6.4 magnitude earthquake that struck western Nepal in November 2023 and caused widespread destruction and severely impacted vulnerable communities in Jajarkot and Rukum West districts. During the reporting period, the JRAP has advanced critical recovery interventions to support displaced and marginalized populations, including female-headed households, children, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities. The Joint Programme reached more than 275,000 people in the earthquake affected areas.

The JRAP is considered a Fund's Window to respond to the onset of emergencies in Nepal, as it presents a multi-cluster programming approach. The Steering Committee therefore decided to expand the scope and geographical coverage of the JRAP to enable partners to swiftly mobilize resources and effectively respond to urgent needs with life-saving interventions and to complement the ongoing response and recovery efforts of the government in the areas affected by the floods that hit eastern Nepal in late September 2024.

The below achievements is a summary of the progress from May to December 2024, while highlighting the sectoral achievements resulting from cooperation with the government and national and international non-governmental organization (NGO) stakeholders, and the effective engagement with the local communities in the affected areas. This report covers only the response in the earthquake-affected areas in western Nepal.

In light of the pre-existing vulnerability of the affected population to protection risks exacerbated by the earthquake, the **Protection Cluster**, through UNICEF and UNFPA-supported programme activities, expanded the reach of protection initiatives in the earthquake-affected areas of Jajarkot and Rukum West in the recovery phase. Implementation of the recovery phase included: a) Establishing four additional child-friendly spaces (CFSs); b) Identifying vulnerable children and providing emergency services; c) Continuing awareness interventions through radio, print media, and other platforms; d) Deploying counsellors and community-based psychosocial workers to address psychosocial needs; e) Ensuring access to age-appropriate quality multi-sectoral gender-based violence (GBV) services to women and girls; and f) Providing essential and life-saving sexual and reproductive health services through the provision of inter-agency reproductive health (IARH) kits, mobile reproductive health services and emergency assistance to pregnant women and postpartum complications.

The **Nutrition Cluster**, through UNICEF and WFP-supported programme activities, expanded the reach of nutrition programming in the earthquake-affected areas of Jajarkot and Rukum West in the recovery phase. Implementation of the recovery phase included: a) Strengthening infant and young child feeding (IYCF) knowledge and practices of mothers and caregivers; and b) Capacity building of health workers and female community health volunteers (FCHVs). The capacity of health workers and FCHVs through the enhancement of their competencies in IYCF counselling: they were trained and equipped with in-depth knowledge of effective counselling techniques, critical aspects of infant and young child nutrition, and the practical application of this knowledge to support mothers and caregivers. In addition, nutrition mobilizers were deployed across eight local levels of Jajarkot and Rukum West to ensure high-quality counselling support. These counsellors collaborated closely with community health workers and FCHVs to deliver one-to-one

household-level counselling to mothers and caregivers, addressing their specific needs and concerns. Overall, this capacity-building and counselling programme has made significant progress toward empowering health workers and volunteers to champion better nutritional practices, contributing to improved nutrition for infants and young children.

To respond to the nutrition needs and to expand food security support in the affected areas, the **Food Security Cluster** through WFP-supported programme activities, provided food security and nutrition support to households struggling to restore their livelihoods in Jajarkot district and Rukum West district after the November 2023 earthquake. Support has been provided in the form of conditional and unconditional cash transfers, and nutrition cash top-ups. Through the conditional cash transfer, the food assistance for assets (FFA) and food assistance for training (FFT) modalities have mobilized and engaged beneficiaries in the reconstruction/rehabilitation of public infrastructure damaged by the earthquake using a build back better approach for long-term community resilience. Unconditional cash transfers were provided to vulnerable households unable to participate in FFA or FFT modalities, while nutrition cash top-ups were provided to family members of FFA and FFT beneficiaries and unconditional cash recipients who are pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and children under the age of two.

To support the recovery of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and promote hygiene practices, the **WASH Cluster**, through UNICEF-supported programme activities, prioritized improving WASH services in the earthquake-affected areas. UNICEF provided technical support and capacity building to enhance the capacities of provincial and local governments and cluster coordination mechanisms, in order to ensure there are coordinated preparedness, response and recovery processes on the ground. Seventy-one communities were supported through water schemes, 51 schools were assisted with the repair and reconstruction of WASH facilities, and over 5,000 households were assisted with the repair and reconstruction of damaged toilets and handwashing facilities and provided hygiene education and supplies to promote dignified living and behaviours and thus reduce the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks in 100 vulnerable communities, reaching over 82,000 people.

The **Shelter Cluster** interventions reached the affected population through IOM-supported programme activities including the construction of model houses using compressed stabilized earth bricks (CSEB), some of which are designed with accessibility features. In addition to providing immediate shelter solutions, support was provided to establish CSEB and stone-cutting enterprises, and equipping them with machinery, tools, and training to strengthen local rebuilding capacity. Through targeted community awareness campaigns, training programmes for masons and engineers, and theatre performances, community members were provided with knowledge on safe construction practices, ethical rebuilding standards and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

Given the project's focus on the most vulnerable earthquake-affected populations and the acknowledged heightened risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by aid workers, PSEA was a top priority. Demonstrating a firm commitment and accountability to the affected population and community, the Resident Coordinator's Office led and supported all clusters in implementing robust PSEA measures through various interventions utilizing a multi-layered strategy. This strategy emphasized the systemic strengthening of implementing partners, capacity building, collaboration with local government, and comprehensive community engagement across all municipalities.

By fostering community engagement and accountability through complaint and feedback mechanisms (CFMs) and ongoing dialogues, the JRAP ensured a transparent recovery process that aligns with both national disaster strategies and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focused on poverty reduction, decent work and economic growth, sustainable communities, and climate action. Together, these efforts lay a resilient foundation for sustainable development and preparedness in Nepal's disaster-prone regions.