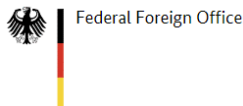




World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Joint Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) of Forecast-based Anticipatory Action Project (FbAA) – 2022



MARCH 2023

Cover Photo – *Locals in Duduwa rural municipality in Banke district benefitted from the anticipatory cash support received before looming floods as part of WFP run Forecast-based Financing programme in Nepal.*

Photo Credit – *Srawan Shrestha, Communications Unit, WFP*

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

The Monitoring, Review and Evaluation (MRE) unit of the WFP Country Office Nepal commissioned a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) of the Forecast-based Anticipatory Action (FbAA) programme implemented in Kailali, Bardiya and Banke districts affected by the October 2022 floods. The AA assistance and related evidence generation were funded by UN Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) and German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO). As a part of the AA framework, WFP implemented cash-based transfer of Rs. 15,000 to targeted households. UN Women distributed comprehensive relief package and counselling services to a pool of targeted vulnerable women. Likewise, UNFPA distributed dignity kits and counselling services to the affected population. In this context, the PDM study assesses the effectiveness of different AA supports. This brief presents some of the key findings of the study.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND TARGETING



About **70% female respondents**



Disability prevalence – Nearly 15%



Over 65% respondents living in **raw/ kachcha houses**



About 30% of the households facing problems with access to food and other necessary items even before the flood (**indicative of prevalence of chronic poverty**)

KEY FINDINGS



More than **one-third** of the total cash distributed (Rs. 4,788 out of Rs. 15,000) used for **purchasing food**



Earlier the response, the better the household's food security

- Food Consumption Score of anticipatory action beneficiaries (51.9) better than post-shock beneficiaries (48.6) ****Statistically significant result**

Supports provided by **UNFPA** and **UNWOMEN** highly acclaimed by the beneficiaries



- **High utility of different food and non-food items** included in the **dignity kit** and **comprehensive relief package**
- Items usable/ useful **beyond the context of emergency**



More than **95%** of the respondents **satisfied** with support provided by all three agencies (WFP, UNWOMEN, UNFPA)

“Our village stands in a very close proximity to the river. When the floods occurred during the Dashain festival this year, the houses in my community were the first to get affected. The floodwaters washed away our food stock, utensils, clothes, and other items of daily use. On top of that, people like us dependent on daily wage labour, lost our source of income in the immediate aftermath of disaster. Under such situation, had we not been supported with cash, our problems would have aggravated, resulting in severe scarcity of food and other basic needs.”

- A beneficiary from Tikapur, Kailali

KEY LEARNINGS



Community-based messaging on different issues can be more effective through use of **interpersonal modes of communication**



Longer-term solutions (embankment/ infrastructure support) to existing disaster threats are highly demanded by local government and communities



Utility and **usefulness** of different items in **dignity kits** and **comprehensive relief packages** are determined by **multiple factors including seasonality**

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaboration with local community leaders – **Badghar**. This will ensure effective communication/ messaging while also enhancing **local project ownership**
- At the **preparedness phase**, explore collaborating with local governments and other agencies on providing **infrastructure support**, river **embankment** construction, etc.
- **Factor-in different elements** including seasonality that can affect the utility and usefulness of items in dignity kits and comprehensive relief supports **while selecting specific goods and items included in the package**

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A local who benefitted from the emergency cash support his family received after the floods as part of WFP run Forecast-based Financing Programme in Nepal. © Srawan Shrestha, WFP



1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Extreme weather events and conflict are two of the gravest global risks to food security in the world today. More than 80 percent of the world's food-insecure people live in countries prone to natural hazards that further aggravate food insecurity and malnutrition by destroying land, livestock, crops, livelihoods, and food supplies. There is a broad agreement for the international humanitarian sector to move from a largely responsive approach to an anticipatory approach.

To support countries in the mitigation and management of climate risks, humanitarian agencies around the world are implementing innovative programme approaches to reduce losses and damages in the livelihoods of people who are faced with increasing climate extremes. One such approach is Forecast-based Financing (FbF), which enables anticipatory actions for disaster mitigation at the community and government level using credible seasonal and weather forecasts.

In the same light, the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) in partnership with Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), World Food Programme (WFP), UN Women and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), implemented a pilot project to provide collective anticipatory action to people at risk of severe monsoon flooding based on early warnings. The hypothesis is that an anticipatory approach leads to a more effective and efficient response and can help affected populations minimize the damage and avoid practicing negative coping strategies such as skipping meals, reducing meal size, and eating less nutritious food, as well as receiving the essential sexual and reproductive health services (SRH) and basic psychosocial support, preventing gender-based violence (GBV) and fulfilling protection and hygiene needs of women and girls.

1.1. Nepal context and the 2022 floods

Nepal is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, ranking tenth in the world on the long-term Climate Risk Index (CRI), with 80 percent of its landmass vulnerable to natural hazards. During the monsoon season which usually starts in June and ends in September, with flooding peaking in July and August, the country receives 80 percent of its annual rainfall. Flood typically affects the districts along the length of Nepal's southern border, the flat plains of the Terai. Monsoon rains also frequently cause landslides, erosion of hill slopes, and rockfalls in the Hill and Mountain areas. The recurrent rainfall-induced floods have devastating humanitarian effects.

One of Nepal's three geographical zones, the flat plains of Terai, are highly populated due to easy access to services and better agricultural productivity. The Terai region is however at the highest risk of flooding during the monsoon season due to low lying plain lands, continuous erosion across Chure, embankments across Nepal-India border, settlements across flood plains, and economic activities mainly related to agriculture. What exasperates these natural and human-induced geographical vulnerabilities is the widespread economic poverty, including stunting and wasting, rampant along the flood plains of Terai.

The flood that came with delayed monsoon in October 2022 affected targeted municipalities of Kailai, Bardiya and Banke districts along the Karnali and West Rapti basin. On 2nd October, early warnings predicted the possibility of heavy flooding within the next seven days in the targeted municipalities of the given districts in west Nepal. These warnings triggered the activation of the pilot's "readiness" phase, following which the relevant UN agencies geared up with their planned interventions. On 7th October, the

threshold for triggering the “action” phase was reached, and the UN agencies promptly took steps to deliver humanitarian assistance and services in the affected municipalities.

1.2. The interventions

World Food Programme (WFP)

The WFP’s targeted beneficiaries in the flood-affected areas of Banke, Bardiya and Kailali districts received a cash-based transfer (CBT) of NRs. 15,000. The CBT was implemented on the remittance model, considering the operational challenges of delivering assistance within the short window of opportunity, beneficiary access to remittance agents and overall procedure for claiming the entitlement by beneficiaries. With this modality, WFP used a pre-existing agreement with a financial service provider (FSP) with a wide network of remittance agents (mapped jointly with FSP and cooperating partners), adequate for the intervention areas. Once the action trigger was reached, the beneficiaries received a SMS/ voice message with an FSP-generated code in order to claim their entitlement at the nearest remittance agent. As beneficiaries targeted by UNFPA and WFP came from the same pool, WFP also provided cash transfers on behalf of UNFPA. On behalf of UNFPA, WFP provided cash assistance to 65 women with pregnancy related complications for emergency transportation for SRH services, and 1 GBV survivor for multi-sectoral GBV services. Apart from that, the WFP also provisioned for different community feedback mechanisms in order to enhance programme’s accountability to affected populations. Likewise, aligned with the AA programme implementation, WFP also launched a series of evidence generation activities – from regular M&E practices to a dedicated impact evaluation – with a view to test the “sooner the better” hypothesis of the Anticipatory Action Framework. Additionally, following first round of cash transfers, WFP topped up an additional 2,000 flood-affected households as its beneficiaries in Bhajani Municipality of Kailali district. These additional 2,000 households would be getting WFP’s cash support at the post-shock stage, i.e., a few weeks after the flood as opposed to other beneficiaries who had already been intervened at an early response (anticipatory action) stage, during or immediately after the flood.

UN Women

The UN Women partnered with Women-Friendly Disaster Management (WFDM) Group/ Forum for Law and Development (FWLD) to design and implement the AA intervention, which included the distribution of Comprehensive Relief Package to 250 vulnerable women (125 each in Tikapur and Janaki municipalities of Kailali district), selected in collaboration with municipalities and respective ward offices. The UN Women’s comprehensive relief package consisted of different food, non-food items and essential services necessary to cope with the challenges brought about by the floods. Apart from that, in coordination with the cooperating partners, UN Women also put in place gender experts, lawyers, psychosocial counsellors and volunteers (all women volunteers), to assist beneficiaries affected by flood.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The UNFPA’s key AA intervention included distribution of dignity kits 12,855 containing a number of important household essential items to support the affected families cope with flood effects. The dignity kits were distributed to the same cohort of beneficiaries identified in Kailali and Bardiya districts by WFP in collaboration with local governments. UNFPA distributed 39 different sets of IARH kits to 9 hospitals/health posts (six in Bardiya and 3 in Kailali) and provided SRH services to 3,293 women and girls. Similarly, in coordination with cooperation partner Women’s Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC), with the view to prevent gender-based violence issues that may surface in the pretext of disaster, health service providers and key stakeholders from affected municipalities and hospital based one stop crisis management centres were oriented on clinical management of rape to ensure the refer services and also trained and mobilized 12 community psychosocial workers in affected municipalities reaching 3428 people with basic psychosocial

support. UNFPA also mobilized 12 volunteers (6 Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV) and 6 Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) volunteers) for the promotion of SRH and GBV services with IEC materials.

1.3. The post-distribution monitoring (PDM)

The Monitoring, Review and Evaluation (MRE) unit of the WFP Nepal Country Office commissioned a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) to assess the overall effectiveness of interventions implemented by WFP in flood-affected municipalities of Banke, Bardiya and Kailali districts; UN Women in Kailali; and UNFPA in Bardiya and Kailali. The PDM explores outcomes of the interventions, the extent to which the respective UN agencies were able to support the resilience of affected communities; accountability, protection and community feedback mechanisms put in place; beneficiary perceptions about overall disaster preparedness, among others. The following section of this report elaborates on design, sampling strategy adopted, quality assurance mechanisms in place, among other details surrounding the study's methodology.

A local from Duduwa rural municipality in Banke district, who benefitted from the anticipatory cash support received before looming floods as part of WFP run Forecast-based Financing Programme in Nepal. © Srawan Shrestha, WFP



2. METHODOLOGY

The PDM adopted a mixed-methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. The use of mixed methods design has enabled the PDM to generate robust quantitative findings, backed with rich qualitative narratives, anecdotes, and stories, altogether expanding the breadth and depth of analysis. Depending on the nature of designed intervention and its implementation through different UN agencies, both quantitative and qualitative data collection were done in two different stages. The first round of PDM data collection took place in November, following the standard WFP practice of rolling out a PDM three to four weeks post intervention. During this phase of data collection, all information related to the interventions of WFP, UN Women and UNFPA were collected from a pool of sampled beneficiaries spread across different project locations.

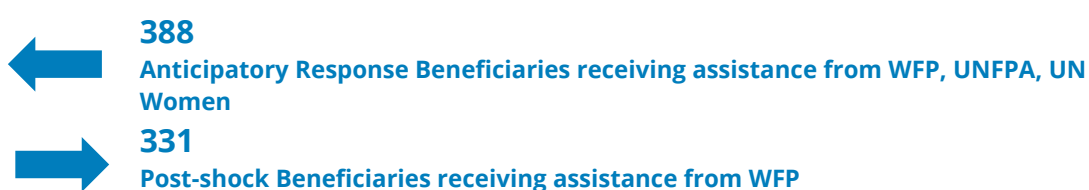
After the first round of PDM data collection in November, WFP topped up an additional 2,000 flood-affected households as its beneficiaries in Bhajani Municipality of Kailali district, as elaborated in section 1.2. This adaptation of a separate cohort of post-shock beneficiaries in WFP's programme design presented the MRE unit with an opportunity to launch another round of PDM data collection, exclusively with post-shock beneficiaries of cash-based transfers. This would enable the PDM to draw comparisons across anticipatory response and post-shock data and incorporate the time factor in determining the effectiveness of cash assistance. In other words, with data from two different stages of cash distribution, i.e., anticipatory response versus post-shock, the PDM would be able to examine the key hypothesis of anticipatory action that earlier the response, the better the communities' resilience against disaster.

With this understanding, the study's findings surrounding interventions of the UNFPA, and the UN Women are from early-response stage of data collection. Meanwhile, the WFP-specific findings have been drawn from both anticipatory response as well as post-shock stages, also comparing results for some key indicators.

2.1. Sampling¹

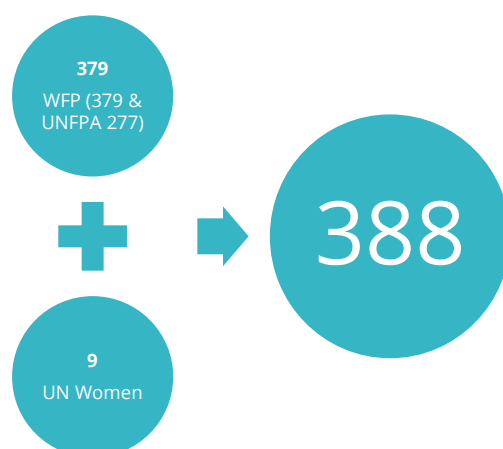
At the early-response data collection phase, the study team determined a sample size of 388 households from all project locations at 95 percent confidence level and five percent margin of error. Out of that, 379 respondents had received WFP interventions (cash), 277 had received UNFPA interventions (dignity kits), and nine had received UN Women's comprehensive relief package.

Similarly, sampling for post-shock data collection was also done at 95 percent confidence level and five percent margin of error. As such, 331 respondents from Bhajani municipality of Kailali district, receiving WFP's post-shock cash transfers were interviewed.



¹ See **Annex 1** for a detailed account of sample distribution across districts and respective municipalities

Disaggregation of anticipatory response beneficiaries by specific UN agencies



2.2. Quantitative approach

A quantitative survey was designed and implemented with the recipients of AA interventions at both early-response and post-shock stages. The survey covered key aspects related to beneficiaries' household characteristics, disability prevalence, HH food consumption pattern/ score, coping strategies, disaster preparedness, accountability and protection, community feedback mechanisms, among others. Data collection was carried out in the field, face-to-face (on-site) with household respondents. Quantitative survey was undertaken on mobile devices using Open Data Kit. The collected data was transferred into WFP's corporate outcome database system Mobile Operational Data Acquisition (MoDA).

2.3. Qualitative approach

Qualitative consultations were a key component of the data collection for the PDM. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with community leaders and other key stakeholders were conducted to explore the emerging quantitative findings at more depth. The qualitative inquiry covered key areas like flood impacts, utility of supports received, respondents' preference of different support modalities (AA versus traditional response), among others. A total of 14 FGDs were conducted at the rate of two FGDs per municipality – one with a group of male beneficiaries and the other with female beneficiaries. Similarly, a KII each was conducted with relevant officials at the municipalities and/ or local government representatives of all seven municipalities visited. Audio records and notes from these qualitative discussions were transcribed, translated, coded, and segregated by themes to support the data analysis phase. The qualitative findings were used to triangulate emerging quantitative findings and develop a deeper analysis of trends and patterns pertaining to relevant themes.

2.4. Quality assurance mechanism

Multiple steps were taken into consideration to ensure high-quality data collection. The process of quality assurance began by hiring local enumerators who were both experienced and familiar in monitoring activities in the local contexts. The MRE unit of the WFP provided a comprehensive survey training to the enumerators prior to deploying them in the field for data collection. The training lasted for a period of three days, covering project orientation, survey tools, quality concerns, and mock tests, among others.

Training contents

The training started with a comprehensive programme briefing, followed by an orientation on the PDM survey tools, data collection methods and processes. As the training was designed using participatory principles, the participants engaged in discussions and interactions throughout the workshop. This ensured that any ambiguities about the questionnaire were resolved ahead of its execution as well as helped to have a common understanding and approach among all enumerators. Besides the training on data collection methods and processes also had sessions on data security, data storage, data quality, and data management. The training facilitation was done jointly by the programme and MRE units. While MRE focal person facilitated the technical sessions, the programme staff briefed them on the programme activities, beneficiaries' selection criteria, implementation processes, the beneficiaries' entitlement, and cash distribution mechanism.

Mock surveys

Following the main training, the enumerators conducted face-to-face "mock surveys" where they administered the questions to their colleagues. The collected mock data were reviewed and discussed to address any additional concerns about the questionnaire design, typos, flow of the questions, among others. A feedback session was organized thereafter to provide feedback regarding individual enumerator's performance as well as overall observation.

Review of best practices for data collection

The MRE unit facilitated discussion with enumerators based on mock data to understand the best practices for engaging with respondents and getting quality and complete data. The discussion focused on following key areas:

- Building a good rapport with the respondents before starting formal interview
- Explaining questions without reading them out from the tablet programme to maximize engagement
- Providing alternative phrasing to the set questions to enhance comprehension
- Making the respondents feel comfortable throughout the interview duration

Apart from training for quality assurance, the focal person assigned for this PDM study from MRE unit conducted daily briefing sessions with enumerators throughout the data collection period. Following the daily data transfer, the focal person assessed quality of submitted data on a regular basis and communicated back with the enumerators to flag any issues or concerns observed. The feedback loop helped to resolve emerging issues related to comprehensibility of the questions, enhance the understanding of the context, monitor the work of enumerators, learn from experiences of enumerators, and ensure smooth operation of the survey.

Data cleaning and analysis

The count of the records transferred by the enumerators to MoDA system was assessed and data screening was done to ensure any missing data or skewed data daily, which were communicated to the respective enumerators for required justification and correction. The data screening was performed mainly to identify:

- Missing observations
- Duplicate observations
- Unusual survey duration (too short or too long)
- Respondents stating "no consent" or "not applicable" options
- Inconsistent patterns in the data

Upon completion of daily data collection, final data transferred by enumerators were closely monitored again by the WFP MRE unit to identify any missing information or data on a daily basis, hence ensuring the data quality and completeness, followed by a thorough data cleaning process. Finally, the cleaned dataset was analysed, interpreted, eventually supporting the process of report writing.

Ethical considerations

Informed consent was obtained from each respondent before starting any form of interview – survey, FGD or KII. The purpose of the informed consent was to mainly ensure that the interviewees were aware of the purpose of the study and the usefulness of their data/ feedback. Also, the respondents were informed that their participation would be voluntary, and they had the right not to participate or quit the interview at any time. They were also ensured that the information obtained from them would be treated with high confidentiality. The interviewees/ respondents were also informed about the interview time and process. Similarly, the enumerators also took precaution to ensure that the questions addressed to the respondents respect their privacy and comfort. Additionally, the enumerators’ training was also designed with specific measures taken to orient them about ethical considerations and protocols in place.

2.5. Study limitations

- **Limitation 1:** Sampling for PDM was done randomly at a single stage, whereby the total sample size consists of beneficiaries of all three agencies -- WFP, UNFPA and UN Women. Therefore, as the sample calculation was not done to specifically represent the actions of all three agencies, the agency-specific quantitative findings presented in this report are only indicative.
Mitigation measure - In order to mitigate this limitation, the PDM study consciously draws upon its qualitative findings, anecdotes and case stories documented from respective communities.
- **Limitation 2:** The PDM was designed to assess the effectiveness of assistance provided by different UN agencies at the post-distribution phase. Therefore, while commenting on overall effectiveness, the PDM was not able to draw learnings specific to the two distinct ‘readiness’ and ‘action’ phases of the Anticipatory Action Framework.
Mitigation measure - In order to mitigate this limitation, the PDM also refers to a separate field monitoring commissioned by UN Women and an On-Site Monitoring commissioned as a part of WFP’s standard monitoring protocol. Any relevant findings and recommendations for specific ‘readiness’ and ‘action’ phases have been presented where applicable in the report.
- **Limitation 3:** The PDM found that the post-shock cash distribution in some locations of Bhajani, Kailali, were influenced by Badhghar. These community-based leaders reportedly collected the cash received by targeted households and re-distributed the total amount equally in the wider community, encompassing both beneficiaries as well as non-beneficiaries. This has been discussed in detail under Section 4.3 of this report. The amount received by WFP’s targeted households can have significant impact on key indicators related to the household food security, coping behaviours, among others.
Mitigation measure - The limitation under discussion was unforeseen, so preventive action to mitigate this challenge could not be undertaken at the time of research design. Nevertheless, the report acknowledges the limitation as a key finding that should be considered a caveat in the interpretation of key indicators including FCS and rCSI.

A local who benefitted from the emergency cash support his family received after the floods as part of WFP run Forecast-based Financing programme in Nepal. © Srawan Shrestha, WFP



3. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

As mentioned above, the PDM data collection was done in two different stages reaching out to a total of 710 surveys covering WFP’s anticipatory response (n=379) and post-shock (n=331) cash distribution. Likewise, the PDM presents findings from 277 UNFPA beneficiaries and nine out of 250 UN Women beneficiaries. Figure 1 below presents a district-wise disaggregation of the surveyed beneficiaries. District-wise disaggregation for post-shock response is not available, as the data collection was conducted only in Kailali.

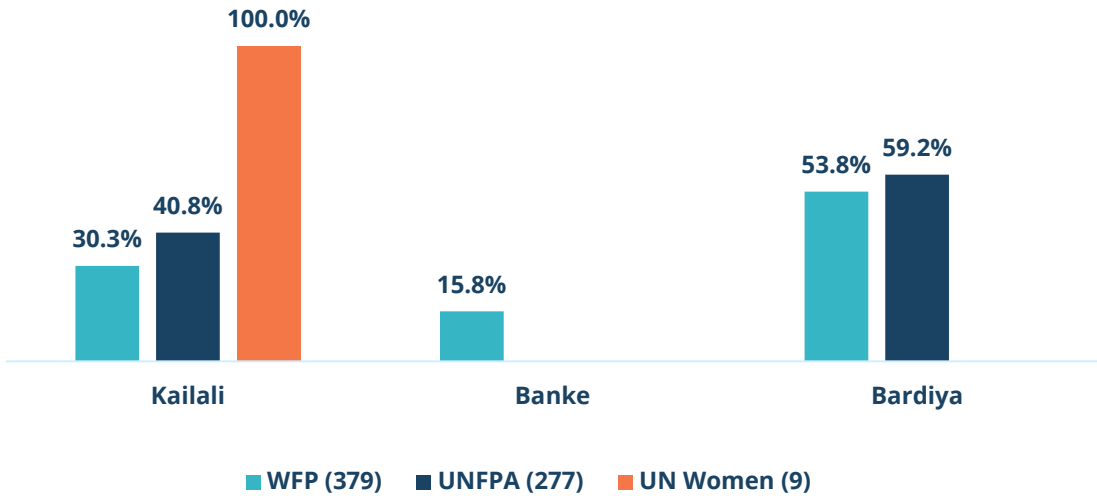


Figure 1: District-wise disaggregation of surveyed respondents
 Source: HH Survey (Anticipatory Response Phase)

In terms of gender (Figure 2), nearly 71 percent of the survey respondents were women, followed by 29 percent men. While more women than men participated in the survey, survey findings suggest that majority of households (59.2%) in the project sites are headed by men (Figure 3). Analysis of gender/ sex has not been disaggregated by UN agencies and WFP’s anticipatory response and post-shock interventions, as the results were similar, with marginal variance which was not deemed statistically significant.

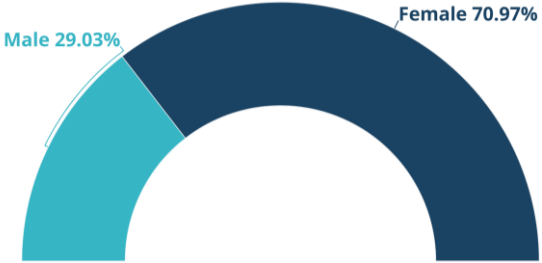


Figure 2: Respondents by sex



Figure 3: Sex of the head of household

N = 719 | Source: HH Survey

Similarly, an ethnicity/ caste wise disaggregation of the survey respondents also shows a similar distribution pattern, whereby majority of survey respondents (60.9%) were found to be representing Janajati caste-groups. Likewise, 18.9 percent of the respondents belonged to Hill Brahmin/ Chhetri caste-groups, followed by 13.5 percent respondents representing Dalit communities.

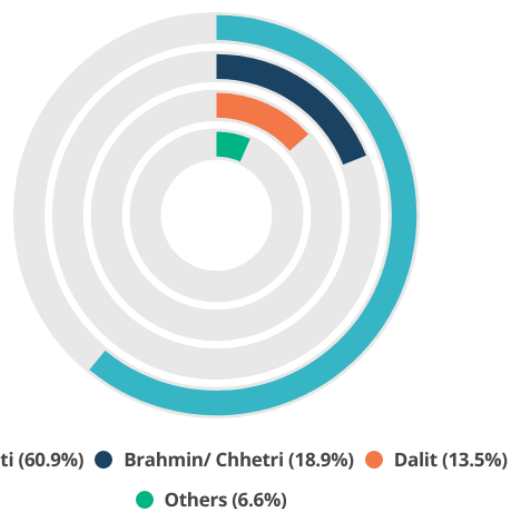


Figure 4: Respondents by caste/ ethnicity
N = 719 | Source: HH Survey

Exploring the pattern of residence in the respective locations visited, the survey found that a vast majority of households, i.e., more than 95 percent, live in their own homes, followed by a marginal section of beneficiaries who reported they live in rented place, others' home as domestic helpers, or with relatives.

Meanwhile, in terms of the household structure, more than 65 percent of the households were found to be living in raw/ kachcha house². Similarly, 14.9 percent of the respondents live in semi-pakka house³, followed by another 12 percent who live in house made of tin (both wall and roof). Only about seven percent of the households were found to be living in concrete houses built of brick and cement. In the same light, about 30 percent of the overall respondents also mentioned that their respective households faced problems with access to food and other necessary items even before the flood, showcasing the prevalence of acute and vicious cycle of poverty. These findings indicate towards an effective beneficiary targeting, based on existing vulnerabilities and contexts of poverty which can exasperate the physical impacts of flood and other disasters.



93%

of the beneficiaries living in mud-houses, houses made of tin, bamboo, etc., or partially concrete houses (some parts made of brick/ cement)



7%

of the beneficiaries living in brick and cement houses relatively safer than other HH structures observed

The PDM survey recorded an overall disability prevalence of about 12 percent out of total beneficiary population, and nearly 14 percent of the household with one or more members requiring continuous medical support due to long-term health complications.



²wall made of mud/ straw/ bamboo; roof made of tin/ straw

³ceiling made of tin; others brick/ concrete

A glimpse of Duduwa rural municipality in Banke after 2022 floods. @ Srawan Shrestha, WFP



4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Food consumption

The household Food Consumption Score (FCS) is associated with household food access and is a standard proxy for assessing household food security. This commonly used food security indicator reflects dietary diversity, food frequency and the relative nutritional importance of the people's diets⁴.

The FCS is used to classify households into three groups: poor, borderline, or acceptable food consumption. These food consumption groups aggregate households with similar dietary patterns – in terms of frequency of consumption and diversity – and access to food. A high FCS increases the probability that a household's food intake is adequate which includes acceptable and inadequate includes borderline and poor food consumption⁵.

4.1.1. Food Consumption score (FCS)

Figure 5 presents FCS recorded among WFP's anticipatory response and post-shock beneficiaries during the two stages of data collection. The result shows that FCS of beneficiaries who received cash assistance at the anticipatory response phase is higher than compared to the beneficiaries assisted at the post-shock phase. This finding was found to be statistically significant at p-value 0.009.

The difference observed in the FCS suggests that earlier the response, the better the households' food security. This also shows that households are more vulnerable to the risks of food insecurity in the immediate aftermath of flood, as compared against the post-shock scenario, i.e., after one to two months of the actual flood.



Figure 5: Food consumption score
N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

Qualitative findings from the PDM also suggest that the cash assisted by the WFP is more effective towards attaining food security outcomes when distributed at the early stages of flood impacts. Households interacted with in all the programme implementation locations unanimously stated that the floods deteriorated their food security status on multiple levels. First, the floodwaters that entered the households resulted in loss and damage of stored food items. Second, the vulnerable households, many of whom depend on daily wage employment for income, were unable to indulge in any income generating activities

⁴ Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) Guidance, pg. 214, Thresholds -> Poor Food Consumption (0-21), Borderline Food Consumption (greater than 21-35) and Acceptable Food Consumption (35 Above)

⁵ Poor food consumption corresponds to less than 1500 kilocalories (kcal) eaten per person per day. Generally, households with poor food consumption consume mainly staples, oil, and vegetables. This diet normally does not meet the recommended energy requirement, lacks essential micronutrients, and is associated with chronic food insecurity and malnutrition. Borderline food consumption corresponds with energy intake of 1500-1800 kcal per person per day. In comparison, an average recommended energy intake is around 2100 kcal per person per day that is considered to be adequate food consumption. Poor and borderline food consumption groups represent inadequate diets in terms of macro- and micro-nutrient requirements and are hence referred to as having inadequate food consumption.

to make up for the loss of food items caused by the flood. Under such circumstances, cash assisted early on after the flood, was pivotal in ensuring households' access to food at the time when it's need was dire.

On the other hand, households that received the assistance at post-shock stage, between about one and two months after the flood, had already passed the stage of dire need for food, which was during the immediate aftermath of flood. This finding was also reflected in the expenditure pattern observed in data from both data collection stages. For instance (Figure 6), while households receiving WFP-supported cash at the early-response phase reportedly spent about 32 percent (NRs. 4,789 out of NRs. 15,000) of the money on purchasing food items, proportion of post-shock beneficiaries spending the assisted cash on food is slightly lower at about 25 percent (NRs. 3,783 out of NRs. 15,000).

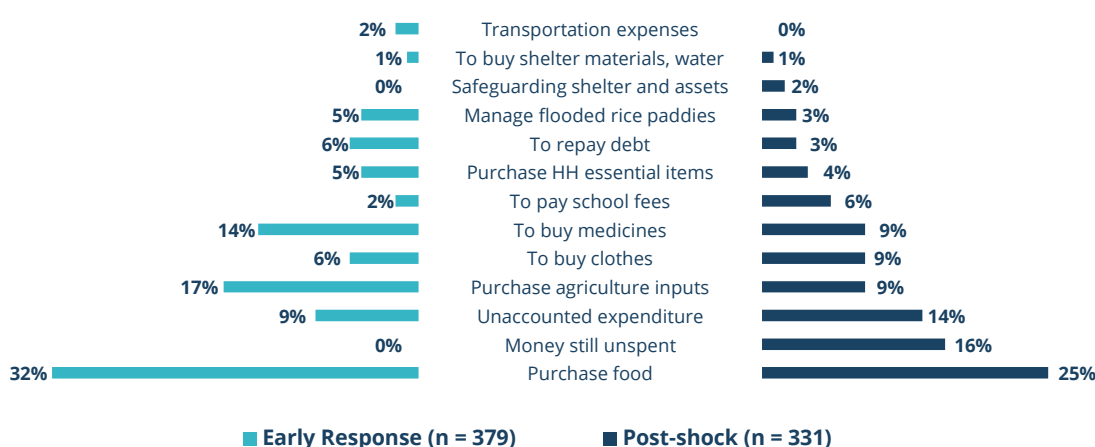


Figure 6: Reported expenditure records from WFP-assisted cash
N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

Our village stands in a very close proximity to the river. When the floods occurred during the Dashain festival this year, the houses in my community were the first to get affected. The floodwaters washed away our food stock, utensils, clothes and other items of daily use.

On top of that, people like us dependent on daily wage labour, lost our source of income in the immediate aftermath of disaster. Under such situation, had we not been supported with cash, our problems would have aggravated, resulting in severe scarcity of food and other basic needs.

- A beneficiary from Tikapur, Kailali

We store all food stock of the household on the floor, piled upon a few wooden sheets. This protect foods and grains from dampness and rotting, but as they are not too elevated from the ground level, the wooden sheets cannot protect food against floodwaters. My family lost over three months of stock of rice and lentils in 2022 flood.

- A beneficiary from Rajapur, Bardiya

4.1.2. Food consumption groups

As presented in Figure 7 below, majority of households interviewed in both early-response (84.20%) and post-shock (79.20%) data collection phases reported an acceptable food consumption pattern. Nevertheless, the analysis of food consumption categories also reflects the difference observed in FCS of early-response and post-shock response beneficiaries, reiterating the conclusion that households assisted early on after the flood are more likely to better cope against food insecurities resulted by the disaster. None of the household were found to be on 'poor' food consumption category. This finding regarding 'poor' food consumption is consistent with the findings of other similar studies conducted by the WFP. The socio-economic and cultural grounds and practices of Nepali communities rely upon migration for work and remittance. In the case of FbAA districts of Bardiya, Kailali, and Banke, vulnerable low-income households find seasonal labour jobs in the bordering Indian towns – a key to providing for basic household requirements including food. Apart from that, rural Nepali communities also have informal economies, such as communal food-sharing practices, barter of goods and services within the neighbourhoods, among others. In this light, a baseline study conducted in flood-prone districts of Banke and Saptari in 2022 also showcased a marginal prevalence of 'poor' food consumption. However, proportion of households in the 'borderline' food consumption category was higher during baseline, i.e., prior project intervention. This signifies that the impact of WFP's interventions remains towards the households' one-step mobility from 'borderline' to 'acceptable', not all the way down from 'poor' food consumption to higher categories. An analysis of food consumption categories disaggregated by the gender of household head is available in **Annex 2**.

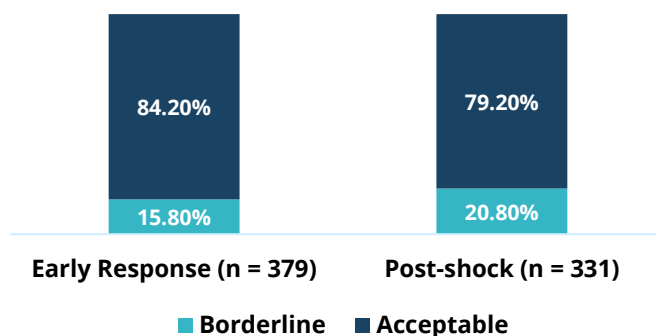


Figure 7: Food Consumption Group
N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

The graph below presents different types of food consumed by the households over the period of seven days prior to survey. As per the findings, most of the households have been consuming all food groups listed at least once throughout a week. Cereals and oil/ fat/ butter are the two food groups consumed every day, followed by vegetables and leaves (6 days a week on an average); legumes/ nuts and sugar/ sweet (4 days a week on an average); milk/ dairy and meat/ fish/ eggs (2 days a week on an average); and fruits (once a week on an average). The acquisition sources of these different food items have been included in **Annex 2**.

**7 out of 7 days**

Cereals – Rice, Pasta, bread, sorghum, millet, maize, potato, yam, white sweet potato, etc.

**2 out of 7 days**

Milk and dairy – Fresh/ sour milk, yoghurt, cheese, etc.

**6 out of 7 days**

Vegetables and leaves – Spinach, onion, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, green beans, lettuce, etc.

**7 out of 7 days**

Oil, fat, butter – Vegetable oil, palm oil, shea butter, margarine, other fats/ oil, etc.

**4 out of 7 days**

Legumes/ nuts – Beans, cowpeas, peanuts, lentils, nut, soy, pigeon pea and/ or other nuts, etc.

**2 out of 7 days**

Meat, fish, eggs – Goat, chicken, pork, organ meat, fish, tuna, eggs, etc.

**1 out of 7 days**

Fruits – Banana, apple, lemon, mango, papaya, apricot, peach, oranges, etc.

**4 out of 7 days**

Sugar or sweet – Sugar, honey, jam, cakes, candy, cookies, pastries, cakes, and other sweets including sugary drinks, etc.

4.2. Consumption based coping strategy index (reduced CSI)

The rCSI measures the behaviour of households over the past seven days when they did not have enough food or money to purchase food. The rCSI tool consists of the following five negative coping strategies, exploring if the sampled households had to opt for one or more of these, over a period of seven days prior to the survey.

- Rely on less preferred and less expensive food
- Borrow food or rely on help from relatives or friends
- Limit portion size at meals
- Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat
- Reduce number of meals eaten in a day

Based on the weightage prescribed on each of the negative coping behaviours, an overall rCSI score is calculated, which ranges between the minimum value of 0 and the maximum of 56. The higher the rCSI score, the severe the household's food insecurity.

The overall average rCSI was found to be below 1, implying that the tendency of adopting negative coping strategies listed above is generally low among beneficiary households. Nevertheless, as with FCS, a comparative analysis of rCSI also suggests that households receiving early-response assistance are lesser likely to adopt negative coping strategies, as compared against the households receiving delayed assistance at the post-shock stage.

The rCSI score of anticipatory response beneficiaries is 0.8, against 0.9 of the post-shock beneficiaries, meaning that households receiving assistance at the latter stage adopted more negative coping strategies. A similar result is reflected in a gender-wise disaggregation as well, where rCSI of female-headed households is higher at 1.2 than that of male-headed households (0.6). As presented in Figure 9 below, rCSI was found to be higher among women-headed households at both anticipatory response and post-shock stages. The rCSI results disaggregated by gender are statistically significant at p-value 0.001.

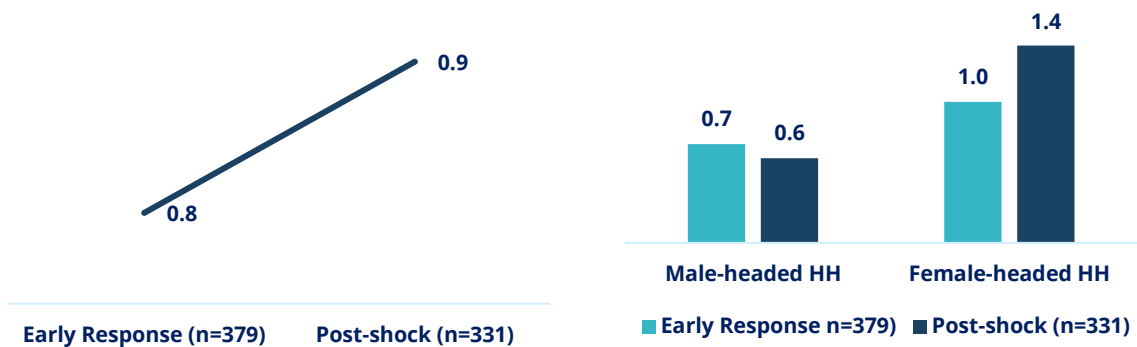


Figure 8: rCSI by distribution phase

Figure 9: rCSI by gender of HH head

N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

4.2.1. Prevalence of different negative coping strategies

The figure below presents an overall rCSI prevalence by individual coping behaviour, i.e., households that reported experiencing the given negative coping at least once during the week before the survey. As per the findings, 'rely on less preferred and less expensive food' was found to be the most prevalent negative coping strategy at 18.3 percent, followed by all other types of negative coping adopted by only less than five percent of the respondents. The rCSI findings, and prevalence of specific negative coping strategies, resonate with findings on FCS (discussed in section 4.1.2.), implying that the food security status of households does not fall under the 'poor' category. The negative coping behaviour – 'reliance on less preferred food' – bears just one severity point in the overall rCSI calculation based on weightage that each coping strategies carry, indicating that it's not too severe in terms of food insecurity.

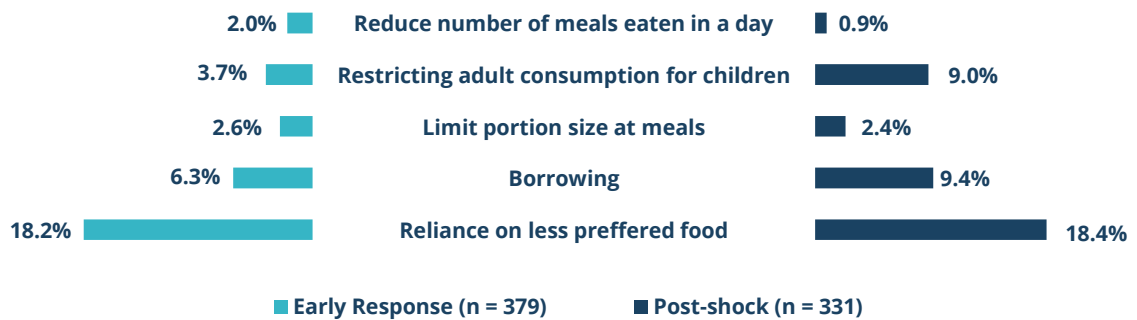


Figure 10: Prevalence by individual coping behaviour

N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

4.3. FbAA assistance by WFP, UNFPA and UN Women⁶

4.3.1. Project information dissemination

The PDM explored the status of information dissemination among beneficiaries about process, date and time of assistance. In that regard, the findings suggest a consistent, well-rounded efforts undertaken to inform the beneficiaries about intervention. More than 95 percent of the beneficiaries receiving assistance from either of the three UN agencies said they were informed about process, date, and time of distribution.

In the case of WFP, the key sources of information were neighbours, friends, and family members, in both early-response and post-shock stages, as mentioned by about 50 percent of the respondents. Similarly, about 25 percent of the respondents in both early-response and post-shock distribution phases stated they were informed by local authorities. While WFP's cooperating partner Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) was identified as a key source for the early-response phase of cash distribution, NRCS engagement was limited in the post-shock response distribution area of Bhajani Municipality of Kailali district. Exploring the reason behind this, the PDM found that NRCS does not have a strong presence in Bhajani, and as this site was selected later after the first phase of distribution, NRCS had limited scope to be engaged there for post-shock distribution. On the contrary, local elected representatives and community leaders played key role in information dissemination in Bhajani, as mentioned by 23 percent of the respondents. Lastly, WFP officials seem to have had a limited physical role in information dissemination, as only about one percent of the respondents said they were informed directly by WFP officials. As with WFP beneficiaries, the major sources of information for UNFPA and UN Women beneficiaries are also the neighbours, friends, and family members (over 50 percent), followed by local authorities (about 25%), local leaders (about 15 percent) and NRCS (about 10 percent).

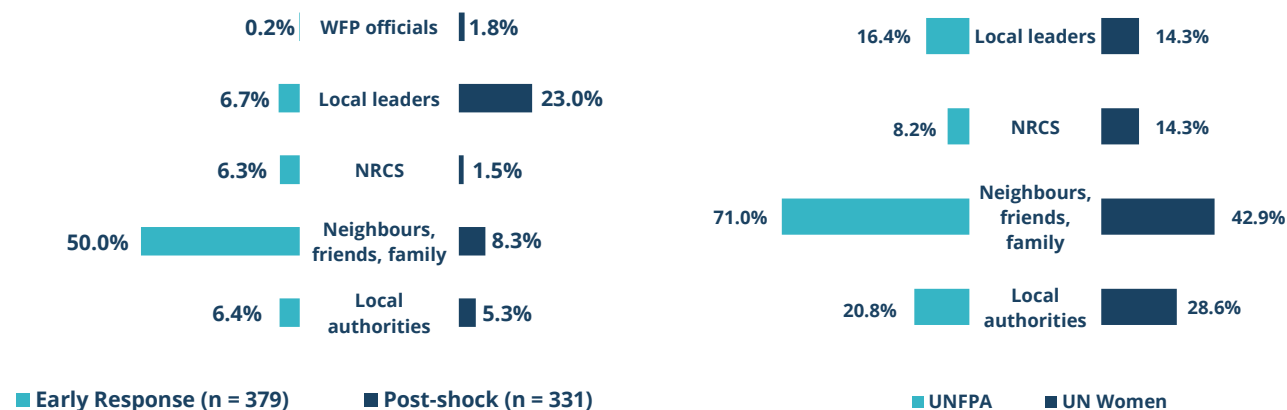


Figure 11: Sources of information about distribution process, date, and time
 N = 696 | Source: HH Survey | **Multiple Response Set N = 288 | Source: HH Survey | **Multiple Response Set

Findings about information sources relevant for all three UN agencies suggest that majority of beneficiaries still depend on interpersonal modes of communication for community-level messaging and information dissemination. Findings from field-level qualitative consultations also suggest the same, whereby most respondents highlighted how they culturally depend and rely upon interpersonal communication with neighbours and *Badghar*⁷ of their respective areas, for any important communication exchanges and

⁶ Please refer to Section 1.2. for different interventions implemented.

⁷ Badghar the village head in Tharu communities, appointed at the settlement level informally. The role of the Badghar is to work for the welfare of the village. The Badghar direct the villagers to engage in community-level actions and oversee and manage the cultural traditions of the villages.

information relaying and dissemination. This also highlights the need for UN agencies to incorporate collaborations with local institutions like *Badghar*, especially for interventions involving community-based communication and messaging. Following excerpt from an interview highlights the same.

The *Badghar* practice has been in place in Tharu communities since centuries. The person appointed as *Badghar* is responsible for the welfare of the village and is trusted by everyone. For that reason, even the government bodies relay important community messages through *Badghar*. In my opinion, *Badghar* is the most reliable source of information dissemination in Tharu communities.

- Government official, Thakurbaba Municipality, Bardiya

4.3.2. Beneficiaries informed why and/ or how they were selected for assistance

Meanwhile, despite high community awareness about the process, date, and time of assistance, only a limited proportion of the targeted beneficiaries were found to have been adequately informed about the beneficiary selection criteria. This messaging was better among UN Women beneficiaries as compared to that of WFP and UNFPA, especially as UN Women’s beneficiary targeting was highly specific and limited to a small number of populations only within Kailali district.



4.3.3. Early warning messaging

With regards to the risks associated with flood, there are a number of early warning mechanisms in place in the given districts. The PDM explored the community reach of these early warning messaging systems at action-trigger phase in the given locations. As presented in Figures 12 and 13 below, the reach of early warning mechanisms was found to be on the higher side in the communities. For instance, 84.2 percent of the anticipatory response beneficiaries of WFP said they received an early warning signal/ message before the 2022 floods. The proportion was slightly lower for the post-shock respondents in Bhajani, Kailali, at 74 percent. Exploring the reason behind this difference, the PDM found that as post-shock settlement of Bhajani was targeted only after the floods, WFP did not have any extensive prior engagement in the effective implementation of early warning messaging in this area. Likewise, 84.1 percent of UNFPA beneficiaries, and 77.8 percent of the UN Women beneficiaries mentioned they received the early warning messages before floods. The respondents mentioned the average time before flood they received the message during the action-trigger phase was between four to five hours.

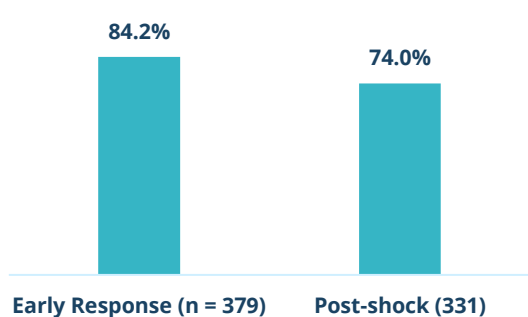


Figure 12: WFP beneficiaries who received early warning messages before flood
 N = 719 | Source: HH Survey

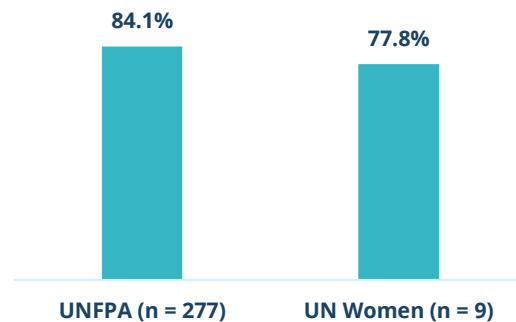
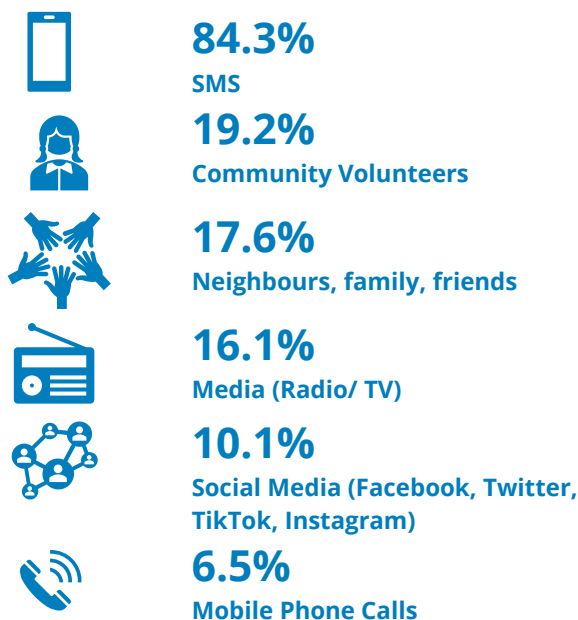


Figure 13: UNFPA and UN Women beneficiaries who received early warning messages before flood

Meanwhile, the key sources of early warning messages were found to be similar for the beneficiaries, regardless of the agencies supporting them. For example, most of the respondents said they received early warning messages sent by government via SMS, followed by community volunteers, neighbours, media, and other sources. As this finding stood in contrast with other related findings of this study, which suggest most people rely on interpersonal verbal communications in communities, the PDM explored this further through qualitative consultations. As such, it was understood that in the case of early warning messaging, many respondents were referring to the SMS received by their neighbours, family members or friends, through whom they got the message verbally. Consequently, even the respondents who don't own mobile phones themselves, stated that the SMS received by someone else in their community was their source of information.



Almost all the respondents, i.e., an average of 99 percent across all three UN agencies, who said they received the early warning signal from different sources mentioned that the messaging was clear and well understood, and that the message was beneficial to them. The respondents mentioned that key early warning messages they got mainly had information about level of risk of potential flood (80.2%) and actions to be taken (50.1%). Based on these triggers, the actions that they took to prepare against the flood, hours before the disaster actually occurred, were evacuation of family members, children, PLWs, elderly and vulnerable, protection of portable valuable assets, purchase of essential food items, among others. Qualitative findings about early warning and disaster preparedness of communities paint a similar picture, whereby respondents mentioned the early warning messages helped them significantly to gear up for last-leg preparedness actions before the disaster.

I got the early warning message on my phone about five hours before the floodwaters entered our village. Within these five hours, we gathered all necessary food items and clothes together, put them on a basket and hung it by the ceiling.

- A respondent from Bhajani, Kailali

A number of qualitative respondents in Bardiya also flagged how the early warning message enabled them to shift the children, older persons and pregnant women of the community to a safehouse, a school at an elevated location, which was used for common shelter for a couple of days after the floods. However, the respondents from multiple locations unanimously highlighted a problem about poor WASH (Water and Sanitation Hygiene) facilities in common shelters, which caused major problems particularly for PLWs and other people requiring special care. Alongside identification of common shelters, it is also equally important to ensure that such facilities have adequate toilets, enough drinking water and basic health care facilities. This is an area that the programme can seek to improve through coordination with local government at the preparedness phase of Anticipatory Action. Government representatives interacted with the project implementation locations said that the government would be interested to collaborate with external agencies like the UN to efficiently coordinate for the provision of basic services at the community shelters.

4.3.4. Difficulties faced while collecting assistance

27 percent of WFP beneficiaries and 28 percent of UNFPA beneficiaries mentioned they experienced some difficulties while collecting their entitlement. None of UN Women respondents (0 out of 9) in the sample flagged any difficulties experienced while receiving the assistance. Another PDM study of a similar CBT programme implemented by WFP during COVID-19 pandemic in 2021-2022 had also highlighted that a similar proportion of respondents, i.e., between 20 to 30 percent experience operational challenges and difficulties. Some of the key difficulties flagged include -- 'waiting time' (about 80%), verification of identity card (about 10%) and accessibility to distribution sites (around 17%). Nevertheless, all the respondents flagging these difficulties said they received relevant support to overcome those challenges at the distribution points. Some of the key actors providing this support include staff of the bank/ remittance office, ward representatives, volunteers, neighbours/ family/ friends, local community leaders, among others.

4.3.5. External influence

The PDM explored if beneficiaries were externally influenced about their decision on how to use the cash supported by WFP. While only a marginal proportion of respondents interviewed at the early-response stage (about a percent) said they were externally influenced, the figure was higher at 22 percent among the post-shock respondents of Bhajani. Exploring further, the respondents said the cash they received in assistance was centrally collected by *Badghar* of their respective communities and distributed equally among all community members – beneficiaries as well as non-beneficiaries – in the pretext of maintaining “social cohesion”, “equality”, and “justice”. Consequently, in some specific communities, the money didn't just go to targeted households, but instead the *Badghar* distributed it to people who weren't in project's list of targeted households.

Similar instances were reported in some settlements during the early-response data collection as well, but this was higher in the post-shock settlement of Bhajani. Delving deeper into the matter, the study found that this proportion was higher in the post-shock settlement for various socio-political and cultural reasons. First, at the post-shock stage, the visible impacts of flood had already subsided, and the cash distributed in the context of flood seemed a little out of context already to the wider community, as well as the communal authority of *Badghar*. Secondly, and as the consequence of the first reason cited above, community

members who were either unaffected by flood or were not included in the programme's targeting protested what seemed to them like an 'inequitable external assistance' in their communities. As a result, the *Badghar(s)* of respective villages thought of rather ensuring a 'more equitable' distribution of cash among both flood affected as well as unaffected households, which in some instances if not all, even brought more accolades and popularity to the *Badghar* and their leadership.

A number of people in the community were not happy about only some households receiving the cash assistance. After several community discussions, the *Badghar* decided to centrally collect cash received by all households and re-distribute it again in the wider community. This definitely made some of us a little discontent as we were not able to utilize the money that was primarily given to our selected households. But no one goes against *Badghar* due to the fear of social ostracism. Therefore, once it was decided, everyone in the community stood by it.

- A respondent from Bhajani, Kailali

This finding also resonates with the difference observed in proportion of beneficiaries reporting they experienced, as a consequence of assistance, increased tensions within the household or with other community members. While only 10 percent of the early-response respondents had reported tensions within household or community due to cash distributed by WFP, the number doubled to almost 20 percent for post-shock cash distribution.

It is important to contextualize this entire phenomenon regarding the utility of cash distributed in reference to the Anticipatory Action (AA) hypothesis which emphasizes on the plain principle of "sooner the better", as also clearly demonstrated by findings surrounding food security.

4.3.6. Utility/ usefulness of UNFPA and UN Women assistances

As highlighted in Section 1.2., the key interventions implemented through UNFPA, and UN Women include the distribution of Dignity Kits and Comprehensive Relief Package respectively. Both Dignity Kits and Comprehensive Relief Package consisted of several items of households' essential needs. In that regard, the PDM explored the status of utility or usefulness of different items.

Figure 14 below presents a gender-disaggregated data regarding the use of different items included in UNFPA's Dignity Kits. According to the findings, woollen shawls were the most used item, as highlighted by 40.3 percent female respondents and 30.3 percent male respondents. This also factors-in the seasonality in utility of woollen shawl, especially considering that it was early winter (November) at the time of data collection. Likewise, 32.6 percent males and 20.4 percent females said saree was useful in their respective households. This reflects how although more male members assumed the females of the household were using saree from the dignity kit, the females were not actually using it as much as it is generally assumed. The finding is similar with maxi, a female casual outfit, as 8.6 percent of the females were found to be using it, slightly lower than as assumed by 11.2 percent of the males. Likewise, 21 percent females and 12.4 percent males said the sanitary items in the dignity kit were useful. While 4.5 percent of males flagged *gamchha* towel as a useful content of the dignity kit, only 1.1 percent females identified it as useful, especially as *gamchha(s)* are mostly used by males. The respondents identified chargeable torch as the least used content of the dignity kit (0.40%), as power cut was not a major problem in the project intervention areas in the aftermaths of flood.

In similar light, qualitative findings suggest that seasonality is a major factor in determining the usefulness of especially the garments included in the dignity kits. Most of the female respondents interacted with during qualitative consultations mentioned that they had kept items like saree and maxi to use during

All the items in the kit are useful. While we have put some contents to use already, others can be utilized later at a relevant time. For instance, saree and maxi are more comfortable to use during summer.

- A female respondent from Thakurbaba, Bardiya

As all essential items come in a package, we can move and relocate these items as per our need during emergency. Therefore, at the event of a crisis, we do not have to be bothered about finding food and other items.

- A beneficiary of UN Women's comprehensive relief package

summer season. A small proportion of female qualitative respondents also mentioned that the maxi was a misfit as they were either oversized or undersized.

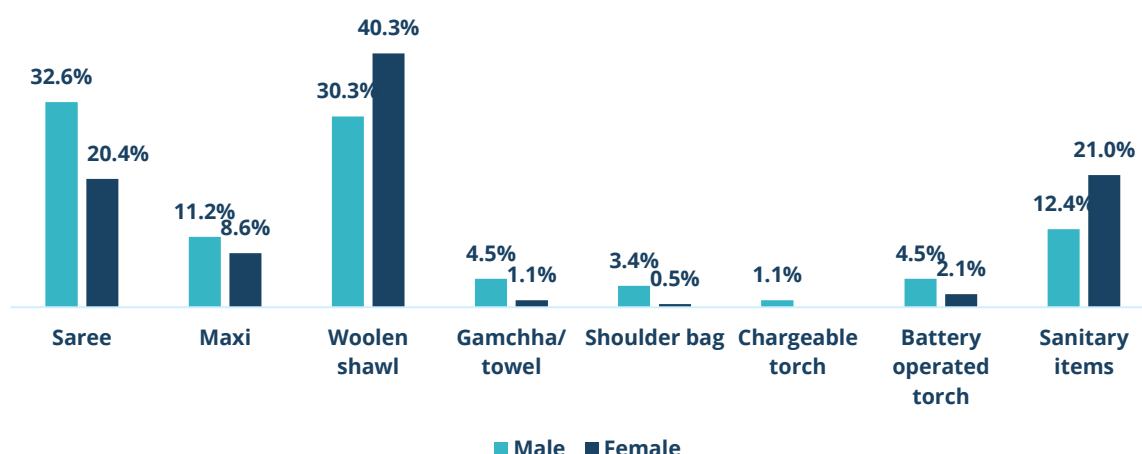


Figure 14: Utility of different items included in UNFPA's Dignity Kits, disaggregated by gender
N = 277 | Source: HH Survey

The UN Women's Comprehensive Relief Package included different food and non-food items, distributed with the purpose of reducing the impacts of flood and strengthening households' resilience in the immediate aftermath of floods and extending essential services (legal, psychosocial and accompaniment support) In that regard, the beneficiaries particularly appreciated food items like rice and oil that constitute communities' staple food preference in the Nepali context. Similarly, some of the most used non-food items in the package, as highlighted by the respondents, include bath soaps, sanitary pads, and clothes for infants, in households with infants. Items such as raincoat and mosquito nets were the least utilized ones at the time of data collection. However, as with UNFPA's dignity kits, seasonality must be factored-in while analyzing the actual usefulness of these contents. Although some of these items may not have been used yet, raincoat and mosquito nets were flagged as highly useful contents that the households will use during summer and rainy seasons. In that regard, the usefulness of both dignity kits and comprehensive relief package extends beyond just the direct impact of flood, to different times throughout a year, when one item can easily be useful than another.

4.3.7. Respondents' preference of different support modalities

Depending upon context and priorities, WFP's modality of community assistance involves the distribution of cash, food or both the items. For this project, WFP implemented a cash-transfer modality, whereby targeted households of the given locations received cash assistance, so that they could fulfil some of their immediate needs for food and support their households' essential needs in the aftermath of flood. Likewise, while UNFPA's assistance included in-kind distribution of dignity kits and other psychosocial and reproductive health supports, UN Women distributed comprehensive relief package consisting of food, non-food items and essential services useful for individual and household needs.

In that regard, the PDM sought to explore which of the three modalities – cash, food or both – is preferred the most by communities. To this, majority of respondents across all three UN agencies selected assistance that includes cash in its package. 47.3 percent of WFP beneficiaries stated they prefer cash, followed by 44.4 percent both and 8.2 percent food. Likewise, 64.6 percent of UNFPA respondents stated they would prefer a combination of both in-kind support (e.g., dignity kits) as well as cash, followed by 31 percent who mentioned they would prefer cash exclusively, and 4.3 percent food. Similarly, all of UN Women's beneficiaries mentioned they would prefer a combination of both in-kind support (e.g., comprehensive relief package) as well as cash. When probed further, the respondents opting for cash-based supports said it expands their freedom of choices as a certain amount of cash in hand not just helps a family enhance food security, but also identify other priority expense-areas that could differ from one context to another, and from one household to another. Similarly, respondents opting for cash over food and/ or both, said being able to decide where and how to spend cash in hand is about dignity and self-respect, which cannot be matched by distributing food and other in-kind supports in isolation.

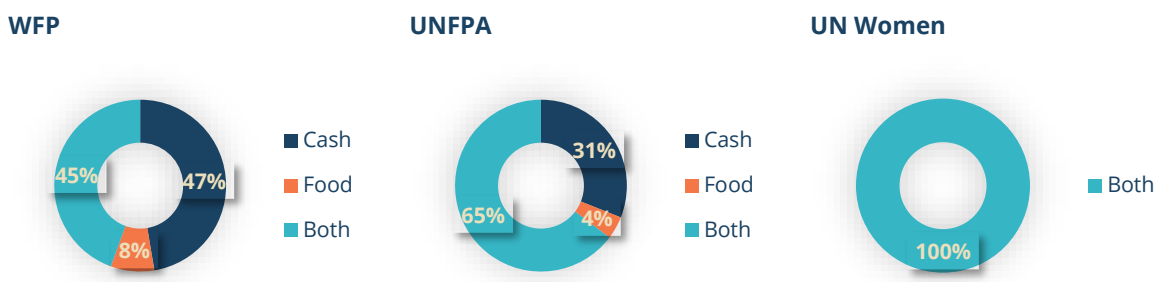


Figure 15: Beneficiary preference of different support modalities
N = 719 | Source: HH Survey

Besides preference of different support modalities, the PDM also explored overall beneficiary satisfaction. Findings suggest that most beneficiaries are highly satisfied with given UN assistances (Figure 16).

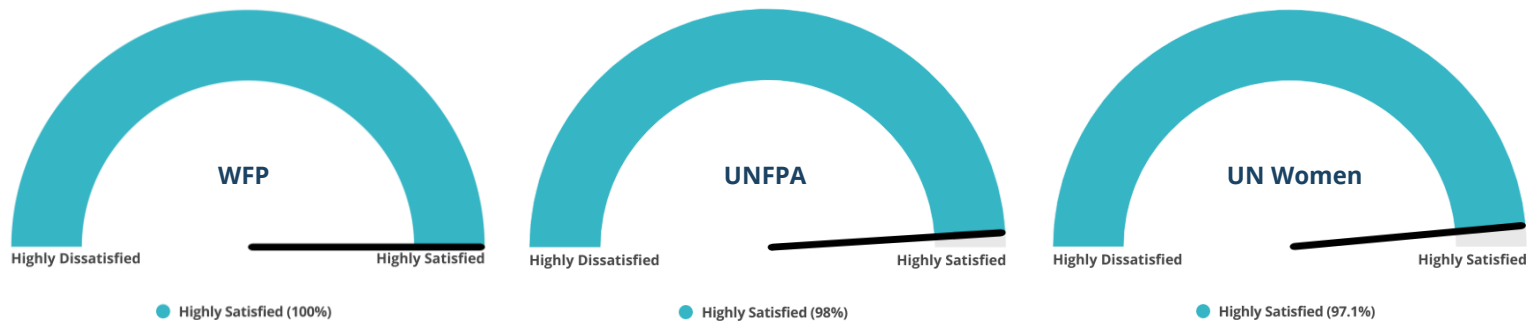


Figure 16: Beneficiary satisfaction with UN assistance
N = 719 | Source: HH Survey

4.4. Community feedback mechanisms (CFM)

The PDM found a largely limited public awareness of different feedback mechanisms put in place by the WFP to ensure an effective bottom-up communication and thereby enhancing project's community accountability. One key feedback mechanism is the Namaste WFP toll-free hotline, which the beneficiaries can utilize to provide their feedback and/ or register complaints, while keeping their privacy and anonymity intact. Apart from that, a number of other formal inter-personal channels, such as cooperating partners, staff of the respective UN agencies, among others, are also the feedback mechanisms provisioned for same purposes as mentioned above.

Nevertheless, in what highlights a core area of improvement for the project in its future programming and implementation, only a little proportion of beneficiaries were found to have information about the different feedback mechanisms in place. For instance, only about 17 percent of WFP and UNFPA beneficiaries stated they know about relevant contact points, or communication mechanisms for complaints and feedback. The proportion was even lower for UN Women at only 11.1 percent. Out of the 17 percent WFP respondents aware of CFM, 47 percent identified Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) as a CFM, followed by 30 percent local government, and informal channels involving family, friends, community leaders, etc., each. Likewise, only 16.70 percent of the respondents aware of different feedback mechanisms identified Namaste WFP. Similar pattern in identification of respective feedback mechanisms was also found among UNFPA beneficiaries, while one UN Women beneficiary found aware of community feedback mechanisms identified only 'local government'.

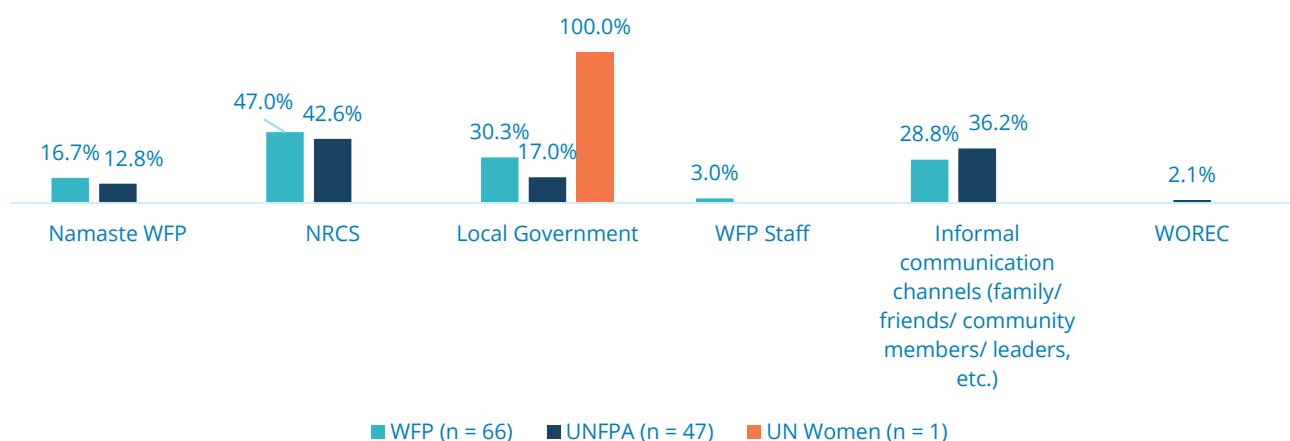


Figure 17: Different CFM mechanisms identified by respondents
N = 114 | Source: HH Survey

Presenting the count of individual beneficiaries who reported using different feedback mechanisms, only three and five WFP and UNFPA respondents respectively mentioned they have gone to NRCS and local government to report their complaints. The complaints and feedback that they usually raise are related to the payment, about not being on the beneficiary list, etc. None of the UN Women respondents were found to have ever used the CFM mechanisms in place. Those who reported using the CFM mentioned the response was immediate and that they were happy with the actions taken. Meanwhile, those who have not used the CFM mechanisms despite having awareness of the same said they have not experienced any issue worth complaining about.

The findings from the PDM survey resonates with complaints and feedback records maintained by a dedicated CFM unit at WFP Country Office, which suggests that only 65 feedback was recorded between

October and December 2022. Qualitative component of the PDM also paints a similar picture whereby respondents who took part in community Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were found to have a very limited awareness and understanding about CFM mechanisms in place, their importance in holding project accountable towards the community, and the accessibility/ utility of existing mechanisms. While the formalized CFM tools like Namaste WFP hotline are little known in the communities, the beneficiaries were found relying on interpersonal/ informal communication channels available at the village level. In that regard, the existing CFM mechanisms have the opportunity to expand community outreach through integrated collaboration with community-based interpersonal sources of communication. At the same time, the CFM interventions will also require dedicated and conscious efforts from programme unit to not just sensitize the communities about formal technology-based feedback mechanisms, but also train them on using the toll-free numbers and integrate Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) interventions for the same, along with other disaster-preparedness actions rolled out through cooperating partners.

The PDM understands that similar programmes implemented in humanitarian/ emergency contexts have little opportunity to engage with communities for the achievement of longer-term and highly subjective goals of behaviour changes. Therefore, it might be useful to think about alternatives whereby even the beneficiaries of humanitarian and emergency operations can benefit from SBCC interventions on important aspects like CFM, accountability, protection, among others. An exploration of cross-functional integrated programme approach could be a viable alternative in this regard.

A local who benefitted from the emergency cash support his family received after the floods as part of WFP run Forecast-based Financing Programme in Nepal. © Srawan Shrestha, WFP



5. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Programme targeting

- The PDM highlights an effective programme targeting based on gender, poverty, geographic remoteness, among others, whereby the vulnerable sections of community were benefitted by AA interventions from WFP, UNFPA and UN Women. Nevertheless, government authorities and beneficiaries in multiple locations flagged problems associated with duplication in beneficiary registration, people excluded from the initial list of beneficiaries, among others. The programme did the needful by addressing such concerns, but it would be advisable to seek a closer coordination with government authorities and community leaders in the identification and registration of vulnerable households. As suggested by government representatives, the programme could also seek for a wider collaboration with different political parties in the communities to avoid confusion and protests later, rather than only coordinating with the political party in government.

Programme design/ implementation

- Findings on Food Consumption Score (FCS) and reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) suggest that households are better likely to cope with the impacts of the flood when they are provided with anticipatory assistance at the early stage of the disaster than at the post-shock stage. The findings clearly indicate that the continuation of the AA approach, making necessary arrangements at the preparedness phase, and gearing up for support at an early-response phase, as opposed to the traditional post-shock assistance will have a better impact on the lives and livelihood of the affected population.
- The early warning messages were found to have been highly successful in ensuring last-leg preparedness of communities, whereby the PDM presents evidence of how communities were able to evacuate and safeguard vulnerable groups like PLWs, elderly, children, among others. Several communities were also found to have coordinated well with the local government to identify community shelters for emergencies. However, the common shelters were found to be highly disorganized in terms of provision of adequate toilets, clean drinking water, proper sanitation, and hygiene. At the preparedness phase, the AA programming can also be directed towards coordinating with local government in provisioning for such basic safeguarding elements.
- The AA does not directly deal with providing long-term solutions to floods. However, at the preparedness phase, the programme has an opportunity to work with communities and local governments on constructing hardware supports including embankments to protect the communities from flooding. This is a key recommendation recorded by the PDM on behalf of the beneficiaries and government representatives interviewed in the course of this study.

In-kind assistance (dignity kits/ comprehensive relief package)

- For in-kind assistance like UNFPA's dignity kits and UN Women's comprehensive relief package, the items in package should be tailored on need-basis. For instance, clothes for infants would be irrelevant for households without infants. Therefore, apart from items of daily use, the agencies can ask the households themselves to select a couple of other additional items from a wider list, depending on their need and priority.
- The contents of the dignity kits are included after analysing the cultural appropriateness to address immediate protection and hygiene needs of women and girls during early days of emergencies. The contents were included based on feedback from the beneficiaries during different emergencies. Nevertheless, as the PDM found that not all items of the dignity kits were being used at the same time by beneficiaries, it is advisable to the UNFPA to explore potential areas to maximize the usability and usefulness of items.
- The package was designed to fit the needs of the beneficiaries during the immediate aftermath of crisis, as well as intermediate needs that can last a little longer during emergency (weeks and months). For a wide variety of items included in the package, the usability of comprehensive relief package stretches beyond the context of flood, as items can be useful for different times in a year, e.g., raincoats and mosquito nets to be used during summer and rainy seasons. While this has its own sets of advantages, as with UNFPA's dignity kits, a possible downside is that the items could not be put to use altogether at once to collectively mitigate the impacts of flood or any other emergency for that matter. Therefore, to maximize usefulness of contents particularly in the context of flood, UN Women should factor-in seasonality and carefully consider the items that have more likelihood of usage and utilization during crisis.

Information dissemination/ community feedback mechanism

- In multiple sections throughout this report, the PDM talks about widespread community reliance and confidence upon informal/ interpersonal community-based channels of communication -- be it for information access/ dissemination, or for registering complaints and feedback. Findings suggest that information dissemination are better and effective through community leaders called *Badghar*. Therefore, the programme can incorporate collaborating with *Badghar* as a strategy towards effective and efficient community-based messaging and information dissemination. This would also mitigate the chances of *Badghar's* influence on people's decision on the use of assistance, as observed in Bhajani of Kailali and some other locations.
- The wider prevalence of interpersonal/ informal channels of communication that takes place through *Badghar*, family, friends, etc. even tends to supersede the formalized community feedback mechanisms like Namaste WFP. In this context, while making conscious efforts to strengthen and popularize formalized feedback mechanisms, it is important for the programme to deepen its collaboration with the locally accepted modes of communication to maintain effective and efficient community feedback loop.
- Considering the dismal use of community feedback mechanisms in place, as also highlighted by the CFM records beyond survey data, programme should make deliberate efforts to strengthen effective community messaging about the existence, use, and importance of community feedback. For an effective messaging in this regard, the programme can bring on board the existing trusted mechanisms of *Badghar*, local government, and any other formal and informal channels that may have a deeper community presence and penetration.
- The report highlights that by virtue of its programmatic design, it may not always be viable for a humanitarian assistance programme like AA to engage in long-term social behaviour change communication in the communities. However, the findings of this study clearly state that communities are not yet there in terms of effective use and utilization of community feedback mechanisms. In that regard, SBCC interventions would be necessary to adequately sensitize communities on the use and

utilization of CFM. Therefore, it would be useful for the AA programme to start stretching its arms, reaching out for intra/ inter-agency collaboration and coordination to explore cross-functional operations with other units, and thereby coupling its humanitarian assistance with long-term programme logic of bringing about relevant behaviour change regarding the use and utilization of CFM in the communities.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

- As highlighted in 'study limitations' (Section 2.5), the joint-PDM had some challenges related to its design, whereby enough sample power could not be ensured for the analysis of all interventions specific to all three UN agencies separately. This challenge can be mitigated in future design of similar joint M&E exercises through a more efficient inter-agency coordination and the allocation/ contribution of adequate resources. Such a coordination will also facilitate in designing of a more comprehensive PDM.

Locals in Duduwa rural municipality in Banke district benefitted from the anticipatory cash support received before looming floods as part of WFP run Forecast-based Financing Programme in Nepal. © Srawan Shrestha, WFP



6. ANNEXES

6.1. Annex 1: Sample disaggregation by districts and municipalities

Table 1: Sample disaggregation by districts and municipalities

Districts	Municipalities	WFP		UNFPA	UN Women
		Anticipatory Response	Post-shock		
Banke	Duduwa	46			
	Narainapur	14			
Bardiya	Geruwa	65		28	
	Madhuwan	6		6	
	Rajapur	112		111	
	Thakurbaba	21		19	
Kailali	Janaki	38		37	7
	Tikapur	77		74	2
	Bhajani			331	2
TOTAL		379		331	277

N = 719 | Source: HH Survey

6.2. Annex 2: Food consumption analysis

Table 2: Food Consumption Categories by Gender of HH Head

		Borderline	Acceptable
Anticipatory Response	Male	34	204
	Female	26	115
		60	319
Post-shock Response	Male	38	171
	Female	31	91
		69	262

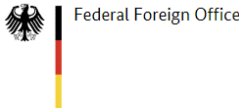
N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

Table 3: Food acquisition sources

	Own production	Market (Purchase with cash)	Market (Purchase on credit)	Gathering	Loan	Gift from relatives/friends	Food aid (civil society, NGO, government, etc.)	Exchange labour or items for food)	Hunting/ fishing
Cereals (n=709)	52%	42.60%	2.10%	0.40%	0.10%		1.10%	1.60%	
Legumes/nuts (n=626)	14.70%	81.20%	1.90%	0.30%	0.20%	0.30%	1.40%		
Milk and other dairy products (n=227)	31.70%	59.90%	3.50%			4.80%			
Meat, fish, eggs (n=516)	6.20%	81.20%	0.80%	1.40%	0.20%	0.60%		0.20%	9.50%
Vegetables and leaves (n=696)	56.30%	40.80%	0.90%	0.90%	0.10%	0.90%		0.10%	
Fruits (n=276)	1.80%	94.60%	0.40%	0.40%	0.40%	2.20%		0.40%	
Oil, fat, butter (n=710)	16.30%	80.60%	1.80%		0.10%		0.80%	0.30%	
Sugar or sweet (n=502)	5.40%	93.40%	0.40%		0.20%	0.40%	0.20%		

N = 710 | Source: HH Survey

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