About NPHF
Nepal Public Health Foundation (NPHF) was established in April 2010 with a mission to have concerted public health action, research, and policy dialogue for health development, particularly of the socio-economically marginalized population and with a goal to ensure Civil Society's pro-active intervention in public health such as Health policy and Systems Research, Human Resource Development, Communicable Disease Control, Non-communicable disease control, Nutritional Research, Maternal and Child Health, Epidemiology, Biostatistics and demography.

Foreword
The disastrous earthquake that hit Nepal on 25 April with 7.9 Richter scale, followed by another on 12 May with 7.2 scale stunned the whole country with colossal loss of life and property, particularly in 14 districts including Kathmandu Valley, with spill over in 48 more. Nearly 9000 deaths have been reported with many more injured and destruction of 1,227 health facilities. This tragic event derailed the health system for quite some time and routine activities had to be suspended. During this calamity, NPHF provided modest support to earthquake-affected persons in the form of food distribution, organization of health camp with distribution of medicines, dignity kit to pregnant and newly delivered women, counseling etc. The planned evaluation of FHEN project at Chitwan by DIALOGOS team from Denmark scheduled for May had to be postponed.

As elsewhere, there was more concentration on post earthquake disaster activities like rapid need assessment of health in severely affected districts with support of project HOPE, implementation of a project on strengthening inter-personal communication on social mobilization on maternal, child and neonatal health with support of UNICEF. Before the earthquake hit, the Annual General Meeting of NPHF was successfully completed. Post earthquake, the annual Public Health Lecture –sixth in the series, held every year on 30 June was accomplished. It was delivered by no other senior public health personality than Dr. B. D. Chataut on the most debatable issue – Euthanasia, which drew a lot of interest from the audience. Thank you, Dr Chataut,

My thanks are due to staff of NPHF, in particular Ms Chandana Rajopadhyaya who has worked hard to bring this issue out.

Dr Badri Raj Pande
Acting Executive Chair
**Nomination:**

- Dr. Tirtha Rana, Treasurer, NPHF has been nominated as a member of Advisory Group to the Regional Director of SEARO, WHO for the post-earthquake recovery in Nepal. The group is set to advise on policies, strategic approaches, inputs to planning and implementation of recovery work and linking it systematically to developmental activities that incorporate risk reduction mechanisms.

**Appointment**

- Dr. Lonim Prasai Dixit, Member of NPHF, has been appointed as National Professional Officer, Non Communicable Diseases at WHO, Nepal. NPHF extends heartily congratulations!!

**Award**

- Dr. Mukti Narayan Shrestha, Working Group Member of GARP/-Nepal/NPHF was awarded WSAVA Global Merit Award, becoming the first veterinarian from Asia to receive this Global honor in 55 years of the organization history. NPHF extends hearty congratulations!
Ongoing Research / Project Update

A. Overcoming barriers to scaling skilled birth attendants’ utilization in improving Maternal, Newborn and Child Health in Nepal

Dr. Anayda Gerarda Portela had visited NPHF on 28th March, 2015. A meeting was conducted on 29th March which was attended by Dr. Sharad Onta, Principal Investigator, Mr. Narayan Suvedi, Program Manager of the project and Ms. Chandana Rajopadhyaya, Programme Officer. During the meeting in depth analysis of the findings were discussed. It was suggested to include the effectiveness of the intervention and in depth analysis in the final report.

B. District Investment Case (DIC)

The Investment case (IC) is a strategic and evidence-based problem solving approach to support better maternal, neonatal and child healthcare planning and budgeting. It highlights the urgent need to accelerate progress towards health related MDGs 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 by describing health problems being faced by a country in the area of maternal newborn and child health.

Monitoring Visit:
Monitoring visit was done in Dhading districts by two of the members, Mr. Navaraj Bhattarai, Senior Program Officer and Ms. Chandana Rajopadhyaya, Program Officer. Firstly, visit to DHO was done to explore the current status of the implementation of action plan and to collect secondary data. It was found that few action plans have not been implemented due to lack of budget.

Meanwhile, DIC project activities have been postponed due to the massive earthquake. It will be resumed after discussion with UNICEF, Nepal.

C. Farming Health and Environment Nepal (FHEN)

The project is being implemented by NPHF with a support of Danish NGO DIALOGOS, Denmark from April, 2013. The project will focus on the prevention of pesticide poisoning among vegetable farmers in the Chitwan District of Nepal by means of training, research and awareness raising activities.
Farmers’ interactions and teaching fellow farmers

The project has periodically conducted farmers’ interactions with fellow-farmers. In the interactions, the alternative aspect of pesticide, improved cultivation practices, safe handling of pesticide, right way of storage and use were discussed. Additionally, the lectures and discussion also covered safe use of pesticides. The VDC level meetings were organized in Chainpur, Sukranagar, Managalpur and Jagatpur VDCs.

Closing ceremony of Jagatpur farmers’ trainings

The farmers’ training was formally closed on March, 8, 2015 at Jagatpur Kerunga Co-operative premises. Twenty four training farmers participated in the closing ceremony attended by Dr. Srikrishna Giri Project Coordinator, besides field coordinator and agronomist of FHEP. The PPE (IN FULL) materials were distributed to the training participants.

Pesticide container management campaign in Jagatpur

Proper disposal of pesticide containers is a big issue in the farming society. Farmers have been throwing the used pesticide containers in public places. To manage the containers in the local level, five cooperatives of FHEP project VDCs have started a pesticide container management campaign in their local communities after being convinced by the FHEP project. The opening programme of container was started from Jagatpur VDC and the container management opening was inaugurated by Dr. Shri Krishna Giri.

Monitoring visit from NPHF central office

Monitoring visit was done by the newly-appointed Project Co-coordinator Dr. Abhinav Vaidya and Finance and Admin Manager Ami Maharjan from June 4 to 6, 2015. The team visited different project sites of FHEP. The main objective of the visit was to get acquainted and evaluation of the ongoing activities and collecting the feedback from the farmers and related stakeholders.
Regular monitoring of trained farmers, pesticide dealers and health workers
The project staff of FHEP has been continuously visiting the household of trained farmers, pesticide dealers and health workers. The main objective of the visits is to encourage them to adapt the knowledge they got from the trainings into practices and to encourage them to teach the fellow farmers. During the visits, the inspecting team recorded and documented the positive changes. In addition, the FHEP agronomist and Field Co-coordinator also provided constructive feedback.

D. Global Antibiotic Resistant Partnership (GARP-Nepal)
A booklet on Final Report on Situation Analysis and recommendations: Antibiotic Use and Resistance in Nepal, which is the first step of GARP Nepal has been completed and published. This report is the documentation of current state of antibiotic use, resistance and access in Nepal of both human and animal sector. Most Prevalent bacterial diseases, policies related to antibiotic use and resistance are documented. Recommendations from experts as provided in dissemination workshop of 15 December 2014 have also been included. It is developed for the aim of creating a baseline for identifying the important information gaps to be addressed in order to make responsible and effective recommendations for policymakers to consider.

Report on Situation Analysis and recommendations: Antibiotic Use and Resistance in Nepal available on

Data entry of DRI (Drug Resistance Index) Program is completed and its analysis is on process. Two researches on veterinary sector: “Antimicrobial Use Pattern, Drug Residue and Antimicrobial Resistance
in Food Producing Animals in Nepal” and “Pattern of Drug Using Aquaculture in Chitwan and Its Vicinity” are ongoing in collaboration with Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) under the guidance of Dr. Sharada Thapaliya, working group member, GARP Nepal.

E. Health Education/ Orientation Through Social Mobilization

Devastating earthquake of 7.9 Magnitude hit Nepal on 25th April, 2015 Nepal claiming many lives and properties. Health infrastructure and health workers have also been equally affected due to which quality of health service has been highly degraded. In such circumstances, so as to support the health system and to avoid unexpected outbreaks, Nepal Public Health Foundation with the financial support from UNICEF Nepal implemented Health Education Orientation through Social Mobilization (IPCS) in all highly affected 11 Districts of Nepal namely, Sindhupalchowk, Gorakha, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Dolakha, Dhading, Rasuwa, Sindhuli, Ramechaap, Kavrepalanchowk and Nuwakot. The objectives of this project are:

1. To provide relevant health-related orientation/education for mothers and children both in shelters and outreach clinics.
2. To mobilize community networks to access behavior-change communication interventions to improve health-care and feeding practices for mothers and children.
3. To deliver UNICEF health supplies from DHO to HP

Firstly, local NGOs of the respective district were selected to implement the project. Then, Social Mobilizers were recruited by them to work in the community level of the affected VDCs of the respective districts. In the mean time, series of meetings and MToT were held at Kathmandu. This was followed by district level ToT in all eleven affected districts. Right after the training, Social Mobilizers were implemented in their respective VDCs to provide health education to the earthquake affected population.
F. Basic Health Care Service Package and Operational Guideline development

Nepal Public Health Foundation was awarded a project by Primary Health Care Revitalization Division (PHCRD) to develop the Basic Health Care Package (BHSP) and its operational guideline. The BHSP provides a comprehensive list of services to be offered at the four standard levels of health facilities within the health system: community health units, health posts, primary health care centers (urban health clinic) and hospitals. The main aim is to provide an accessible, affordable, available, safe and comprehensive quality health service, free of cost.

Firstly, a draft framework to accomplish the entire process was developed and discussed in coordination with the PHCRD unit and the focal person of Ministry of Health and Population. A team consisting of three medical practitioners, public health experts and a lawyer was formed including Dr. Archana Amatya, Dr. Gajananda Prakash Bhandari, Dr. Abhinav Vaidya, Mr. Janak Thapa, Mr. Badri Pathak and Mr. Navin Shrestha (Coordinator). It worked for the development of the package after a series of meetings at the PHCRD and workshops at central and regional levels.

The central level workshop was organized for the senior officials of the MoHP, DoHS and EDPs on 23rd and 24th June 2015. The objective of the workshop was to discuss and get feedback from the senior official to set the components of the BHSP and also to decide on the modality of the workshop to be conducted at the regional levels. The regional workshop was held in Kathmandu on 25 and 26 June 2015 for central region, in Biratnagar in Eastern (28 and 29 June), Pokhara in Western (1 and 2 July), Nepalgunj Midwestern (6 and 7 July) and Dhangadi in the Far Western (4 and 5 July) development regions.

In the end, a final meeting was held for briefing the developed packages on Basic Health Service and its Operational Guideline on 10 July, 2015 in Kathmandu.
G. Post Disaster Rapid Assessment on Health

Nepal Public Health Foundation with assistance from Project HOPE conducted Post Disaster Rapid Assessment on Health in fourteen affected districts-Gorkha, Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk, Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading, Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Okhaldhunga, Kavre, Makwanpur, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur. A memorandum of understanding between NPHF and HOPE project was done to carry out the assessment, identify areas where support was needed and provide technical support to MoHP to prepare strategic plan in strengthening health system as required. Subsequently, enumerators and cluster supervisors were recruited to conduct field research. Study techniques included, Household interview, Focus Group Discussion and Key-Informant Interview (with Health Facility Incharge).

Orientation to Enumerators and Cluster Supervisors was conducted on 26 and 27 June, 2015. Till date field research has been completed and preparation of preliminary draft report has been also been initiated. Dr. Bal Krishna Subedi has been providing consultancy support.
A. Annual General Meeting

Fifth annual general meeting was held on 5\textsuperscript{th} March, 2015 at NPHF office building under the chairmanship of vice president of NPHF Dr. Badri Raj Pande. He started the meeting with welcome remarks. Then, presentation on different ongoing projects at NPHF and research conducted were presented by the concerned project staffs.

Dr. Sharad Raj Onta, General Secretary briefed about the current projects and programs of NPHF and future activities as well. Dr Tirtha Rana, Treasurer presented the Financial and Audit Report of Fiscal Year 2070/071, which was approved.

During the fourth Annual General Meeting (AGM) one of the agenda was to develop a strategic plan of NPHF as a guiding document for the upcoming five years. A sub committee was formed and a draft strategic plan 2015-19 was developed. The following four strategic directions were envisioned which was approved in principle by the AGM:

1. Advocacy, leadership and partnership (Coordinator: Ms. Binjwala Shrestha)
2. Public Health research for evidence informed policies (Coordinator: Dr. Gajananda P. Bhandari)
3. Health Promotion and Social Mobilization (Coordinator: Dr. Abhinav Vaidya)
4. Institutional Capacity Development (Coordinator: Dr. Rajendra BC)

Support to Earthquake victims

Health camps were organized for the victims affected by the earthquake of April 25, 2015 at Sangle, Dharmasthali and Dahachok of Kathmandu district on May 7, 11 and 22, 2015) organized by Mahila Bikas and Sahayogi Sahakari Sanstha, jointly with Nepal Family Planning Association. Over 500 persons were examined and counseled and provided medicines, dignity kit for pregnant and newly delivered women and nutritious food (Sarbottam pitho) to young children.
• Facilitated and provided food support to earthquake victims residing at temporary camps at Tundikhel, Nilbarahi at Bhaktapur (about 1500 people from Sindhupalchowk) and for victims from Lamtang valley, Rasuwa residing at tents at Yellow Gumba. These activities were coordinated by Dr Tirtha Rana, Treasurer, NPHF

B. Nepal Public Health Foundation lecture series

NPHF has been organizing public health lecture series as its core activity every year inviting eminent persons on 30th June to foster collective action of people around common agendas of public health. This year, Dr. BD Chautat had delivered lecture on “Unveiling the Debate of Euthanasia”. After this, the discussion focused on dealing euthanasia from spiritual aspect. Similarly, participants also put forth their query on possibility of legalization of euthanasia whereas others said that regarding passive euthanasia, there should be a strong medical ethics for taking euthanasia towards legal procedure.

Participation in National and International Activities

Dr. Tirtha Rana, Treasurer, Nepal public Health Foundation participated in the following activities;
• Early Market Information Management meeting (EME) to provide information to bidders, which was organized by DFID on March 12, 2015. About 40 International and National NGO in Health sector were invited to inform on the support of DFID for Nepal Health Sector Program -3 (NHSP-3)
• One day long National Dementia Action Alliance Workshop held on March 25, 2015 organized by NASCIF at Hotel Shankar.
• A half day workshop organized by NASCIF on March 29, 2015 to discuss on the transportation issues and concession to be provided to the senior citizens by public vehicles. It was stressed that although it is mentioned in plan and policies, it remained to be complied and need of a pressure group movement.
• Inauguration of a workshop organized by RECPHEC on Health Rights and Tobacco control and on March 30, 2015 chaired a session on Presentation on “Status of Primary Health Care in Nepal", by Dr. Ramesh Kharel the Director of Primary Health Car Revitalization Division of Department of Health Services.
• NHRC Summit of Health and Population Scientists held during April 11-12, 2015 and chaired the first plenary session with a theme of "Public Health challenges" Status of Ambient air quality in Kathmandu valley that was assessed by measuring PM2.5 (particulate matter) concentration in the air. This study
pointed out that the air quality of Kathmandu valley is highly polluted and need urgent attention for its control.

- Participated in an expert group meeting called by Health Minister at MoHP on May 17, 2015, before his departure to participate in World Health Assembly in Geneva from May 18-26, 2015.

Dr. Shyam Thapa, Founding Member, Nepal Public Health Foundation reported his involvement in the following activities:

He was a special guest to speak on "Emerging issues in abortion in Nepal" at a regional meeting participated by District Public Health Officers and other seniors health officials representing 16 districts of the Western Regional Health Directorate in Pokhara, January 13, 2015. He also served as a special resource person for a Research Methodology Workshop organized for faculties of the Chitwan Medical College, November 17-19, 2014 in Bharatpur. Further, he completed the first phase of an implementation research on medical abortion in Pokhara, Aug 2014-January 2015. The second phase is expected to begin in August. He has also published an article entitled "12+ weeks of abortion" in Swastha Kabar- Patrika (December 2014).

Researches and Articles

- Recently a manuscript on ‘Follow-up survey of Jhaukhel - Duwakot health demographic surveillance site 2012, Bhaktapur, Nepal’ has been submitted to Journal of Global Health Action. The authors of the manuscript are Bishnu Choulagai, Umesh Raj Aryal, Binjwala Shrestha, Abhinav Vaidya, Sharad Onta, Max Petzold, Alexandra Krettek.
MoHP to send MBBS doctors to VDCs hardest hit by quake

Arun Poudel
KATHMANDU, May 6

In a bid to prevent possible epidemic outbreak during the monsoon, the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has decided to send MBBS doctors to VDCs highly affected by the devastating earthquake.

This is the first time the MoHP has decided to deploy doctors at the health post level. Earlier, the MoHP used to send MBBS doctors only at the public health centers (PHCs).

Every year hundreds of people die and thousands lose their homes due to waterborne diseases during monsoon.

Officials at MoHP said chances of epidemic outbreak during the monsoon are very high as almost all health post buildings in these VDCs have collapsed in the earthquake.

“We have decided to send MBBS doctors to the highly affected VDCs, as chances of epidemic outbreaks are very high in these areas,” Shanta Baburam Shrestha, Secretary at the MoHP said. He informed that the ministry has planned to send doctors who studied on scholarships, volunteer doctors and doctors hired on contract.

According to Secretary Shrestha, the MoHP has already opened vacancy for MBBS doctors to be hired on contract basis. As soon as they apply for job, the MoHP will verify them and send them to the VDCs,” added Secretary Shrestha.

He informed that the authority has planned to send doctors to the affected areas before the start of monsoon.

Dr. Guna Raj Lohani, the MoHP’s spokesperson informed that almost all the health centers in the quake-hit areas have collapsed.

“These are neither health facilities nor homes for health workers to stay,” said spokesperson Lohani.

Dr. Lohani informed that the ministry has planned to run health facilities under tents in the affected areas.

The MoHP said that it has suspended the public procurement act to remove hurdles in purchasing essential medicines for the monsoon.

“We have already started procurement process,” said Dr. Lohani.
नेपाल जनस्वास्थ्य प्रतिष्ठान
Nepal Public Health Foundation
Women in makeshift tents suffer menstruation silently

Carelessness during period invites long-term reproductive health woes

SHREEDAMA SHRESTHA
KATHMANDU, May 6

Sapana Chaudhari didn’t have the audacity to approach the army camp at Tundikhel and ask for sanitary pads after she started menstruating. She rather opted to keep using the same pad she already had on the first day of her period.

For Chaudhari, 18, telling a male about one’s menstruation would be shameful and awfully awkward.

“How can one let an army man know about your menstruation and ask him for sanitary pads?” she asked.

On the second day, she crossed the road and bought sanitary pads at a shop at Bagbazar. Her extrovert nature was not enough to overcome the taboos of menstruation even during such a difficult time.

An earthquake victim who is from Sarlahi, Chaudhari is living with 12 others of her community under tents at Tundikhel. She also spoke about her difficulties in tiding over her period for lack of enough water in the makeshift toilets they have to use.

Lack of adequate water in the toilets has not only created problems for menstruating women but also poses long-term health risks.

“I felt so sick for almost a week because there was no water to clean up during menstruation,” Chaudhari said adding, “I filled mineral water bottles and used them in the toilet.”

Dr. Arun Upadhye, a gynecologist who writes on issues concerning women’s health, said that menstruation is directly linked with the purity of women, because of which many of them suffer both mentally and physically.

“When women are not able to maintain proper hygiene during emergency situations like the one we are facing, they are sure to have long-term problems with reproductive health,” she said.

Tirtha Tamang, 32, also had stories to share about her suffering during menstruation. She reckons that throwing away used sanitary pads is a sinful act.

“I will incur tons of sin as I have been throwing away used sanitary pads in open places that people clean up at random,” she said. Back home in Bhojpur, she used to throw the used pads into a truck that collects garbage, she added.

She further opted that sanitary pads should be distributed to all women living under makeshift tents across the country.

Even though relief packages have flooded Nepal from both national and international sources, the need for sanitary pads and more on pages...