

FINAL REPORT

Strengthening Resilience through GEDSI-Based Disaster Preparedness and Response for
Landslide and Flood Risks in Two Municipalities of Ilam District



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1. Acknowledgements

Group for Technical Assistance (GTA) Nepal is pleased to present this final report for the project "Strengthening Resilience through GEDSI-Based Disaster Preparedness and Response for Landslide and Flood Risks in Two Municipalities of Ilam District," implemented from January to June 2026 in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality of Ilam District.

We sincerely express our gratitude to Myriad USA for providing financial support to implement this important project. We also thank the Social Welfare Council (SWC) for granting project approval and providing guidance throughout the implementation period.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), Ilam, Maijogmai Rural Municipality, and Suryodaya Municipality for their continuous coordination, technical support, and active participation. We are especially grateful to the Mayors, Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, Chief Administrative Officers, Disaster Focal Persons, ward representatives, and municipal staff for their valuable leadership and commitment.

We would also like to thank the School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), community leaders, youth volunteers, local responders, security agencies, trainers, and all community members who actively participated in the project activities. Their cooperation, enthusiasm, and commitment were essential to the successful implementation of the project.

Finally, we extend our sincere appreciation to the GTA Nepal project team for their dedication, professionalism, and hard work throughout the project. We hope that the knowledge, skills, and partnerships developed through this project will continue to strengthen disaster preparedness and build safer, more resilient, and inclusive communities in Ilam District.

2. Executive Summary

The project "Strengthening Resilience through GEDSI-Based Disaster Preparedness and Response for Landslide and Flood Risks in Two Municipalities of Ilam District" was implemented by Group for Technical Assistance (GTA) Nepal from January to June 2026 in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality of Ilam District, Koshi Province, Nepal.

Among all local governments in the district, Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality were among the most severely affected. Maijogmai recorded 8 deaths, the highest in the district, while Suryodaya recorded 5 deaths. Heavy rainfall, landslides, damaged roads, and difficult mountainous terrain delayed rescue operations in several communities, especially in Maijogmai.

In response, GTA Nepal implemented this project to strengthen disaster preparedness and community resilience through inclusive, gender-responsive, and community-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) approaches. The project directly benefited 5,000 people and indirectly reached approximately 20,000 people through strengthened disaster management systems, improved preparedness, and increased public awareness.

The project was implemented in close coordination with the Social Welfare Council (SWC), District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), both municipalities, schools, community organizations, and other local stakeholders. During the project period, all planned activities were successfully completed. The project strengthened the capacity of Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs), improved the knowledge and skills of local responders, promoted Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) in disaster management, increased community awareness, strengthened school preparedness, and improved the availability of emergency response resources. These efforts have enhanced the disaster preparedness and response capacity of both municipalities and improved coordination among local stakeholders.

The project has established a strong foundation for improving disaster preparedness and community resilience in Ilam District. The lessons learned and partnerships developed through this intervention provide a clear direction for future programming. An additional funding should focus on expanding community-based disaster preparedness to all high-risk wards, strengthening ward- and village-level disaster management committees, training local volunteers in first aid and search and rescue, improving school safety, enhancing early warning and communication systems, pre-positioning rescue equipment closer to vulnerable communities, and strengthening municipal disaster management systems. These investments will help local governments and communities respond more quickly and effectively to future disasters, reducing the loss of lives, protecting livelihoods, and building safer, more resilient, and more inclusive communities.

3. Background

The project was developed in response to the devastating floods and landslides that struck Ilam District between 3 and 6 October 2025. Continuous heavy rainfall triggered widespread flooding and landslides, causing severe damage to infrastructure, agriculture, public services, and local livelihoods. The disaster also had a significant impact on the district's economy, with an estimated loss of NPR 11.81 billion. Due to the severity of the disaster, the Government of Nepal declared Ilam a disaster crisis zone.

According to official reports, the disaster resulted in 39 deaths, 26 injuries, and 1 missing person. A total of 276 families were displaced, 132 houses were completely destroyed, and 401 houses were partially damaged. Roads, bridges, drinking water systems, schools, agricultural land, public infrastructure, and community assets were extensively damaged, disrupting transportation, basic services, and livelihoods across the district.

Among the affected local governments, Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality were among the hardest hit. Maijogmai Rural Municipality recorded 8 deaths, the highest in the district, while Suryodaya Municipality recorded 5 deaths. Heavy rainfall, landslides, damaged roads, and difficult mountainous terrain delayed rescue and relief operations, particularly in remote settlements of Maijogmai, where many affected communities could not be reached on time. The disaster highlighted the need to strengthen local disaster preparedness, emergency response capacity, and community resilience, especially in remote and high-risk areas.

In response to these challenges, Group for Technical Assistance (GTA) implemented the project "Strengthening Resilience through GEDSI-Based Disaster Preparedness and Response for Landslide and Flood Risks in Two Municipalities of Ilam District" from January to June 2026 in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality. The project aimed to strengthen local disaster preparedness and response capacity through inclusive, gender-responsive, and community-based disaster risk reduction approaches

4. Project Goal and Objectives

4.1 Overall Goal

The overall goal of the project was to strengthen the resilience and preparedness of communities in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality against floods and landslides. The project aimed to build the capacity of local governments, selected schools, and communities through GEDSI based disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities so that they can better prepare for, respond to, and recover from future disasters.

4.2 Specific Objectives

To achieve the overall goal, the project focused on the following specific objectives:

1. Strengthen Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs) by improving their knowledge, coordination, planning, and disaster response capacity.
2. Improve first aid and search and rescue capacity by providing practical training to local responders, health workers, youth, and community leaders.
3. Strengthen school disaster preparedness by supporting schools to develop safety plans, conduct disaster awareness programmes, and organize mock evacuation drills.
4. Increase public awareness on disaster preparedness and early warning through community awareness programmes, IEC/BCC materials, awareness videos, and hazard signboards.
5. Promote Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) in disaster management by ensuring the meaningful participation of women, persons with disabilities, youth, and marginalized communities in disaster preparedness and response activities.
6. Improve emergency preparedness by providing emergency rescue equipment, household emergency kits, WASH kits, and support for restoring damaged drinking water systems.
7. Strengthen practical emergency response capacity by conducting hands-on rescue equipment training and multi-stakeholder simulation exercises to improve coordination and preparedness for future disasters.

5. Implementation Approaches:

5.1 Regulatory and Municipal Approvals

The project was implemented with the regulatory approval of the **Social Welfare Council (SWC)** and using a participatory and community-based approach with close collaboration among District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), local government, Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs), ward offices and community stakeholders throughout the project period. Before implementation, **Letters of Support** were obtained from **Maijogmai Rural Municipality**

and **Suryodaya Municipality**, confirming their commitment to collaborate and support the project.

5.2 Needs Assessment

The project began with a rapid needs assessment to identify the most disaster-affected communities, major disaster risks, existing preparedness gaps, and priority interventions. The assessment was conducted in consultation with municipal officials, Disaster Focal Persons, community leaders, schools, and other stakeholders. The findings were used to identify target beneficiaries and finalize project activities.

5.3 Planning and Coordination

An inception and coordination meeting were conducted with the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) before project implementation. Regular coordination meetings were also organized with municipal governments, Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs), ward offices, schools, and community stakeholders to review progress, solve implementation challenges, and ensure effective coordination throughout the project period.

5.4 Distribution of Preparedness and Emergency Rescue Kits

Based on the needs assessment, the project provided emergency search and rescue equipment to both municipalities to strengthen local emergency response capacity. A total of 10 equipment sets were provided to Maijogmai Rural Municipality and 13 equipment sets to Suryodaya Municipality, which were distributed to municipal offices, ward offices, and selected schools. Household emergency kits, WASH kits, and HDPE water pipes were also handed over to the municipalities to support vulnerable households and restore damaged drinking water systems.

5.5 Orientation and Training

The project conducted a series of capacity-building activities in both municipalities, including:

- Local Disaster Management Committee (LDMC) Training
- Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) Training
- Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Training
- School Management Committee (SMC)/Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Training
- Basic First Aid, Search and Rescue Training

Practical demonstrations on the operation and maintenance of emergency rescue equipment were also conducted to improve the emergency response capacity of local responders.

5.6 Community Awareness

The project implemented several Information, Education and Communication/Behaviour Change Communication (IEC/BCC) activities to increase community awareness of disaster preparedness. These included:

- Development and distribution of 6,000 IEC materials (booklets and flyers)
- Production and dissemination of a GEDSI-integrated disaster preparedness awareness video through social media, municipal offices, ward offices, and community events
- Installation of 10 disaster awareness signboards (5 in each municipality) focusing on landslides, floods, earthquakes, and fire safety

These awareness activities reached approximately 20,000 people directly and indirectly and promoted safer behaviour, early preparedness, and inclusive disaster risk reduction within the target communities

5.7 Monitoring and Supervision

A strong monitoring and supervision carried out to ensure the quality and effective implementation of the project.

The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and heads of relevant municipal departments from both municipalities actively participated in project planning, coordination, implementation, monitoring, and review. Their active involvement ensured that project activities were aligned with local priorities and community needs.

Municipal representatives supported participant selection, venue management, coordination with ward offices, and regular monitoring of project activities. Field visits and coordination meetings were conducted throughout the project to review progress, identify challenges, and make timely improvements.

The senior management team of GTA Nepal also regularly monitored the project. The Project Director and project team conducted field monitoring visits to ensure that activities were implemented effectively and in accordance with the approved work plan and project guidelines. In addition, GTA senior management held review and coordination meetings with both municipalities to assess progress, maintain implementation quality, and ensure that project objectives were achieved.

The close coordination between GTA Nepal, the municipalities, and other stakeholders helped complete all planned activities successfully. It also increased the commitment of the local governments to continue disaster preparedness activities in the future.

6. Achievements

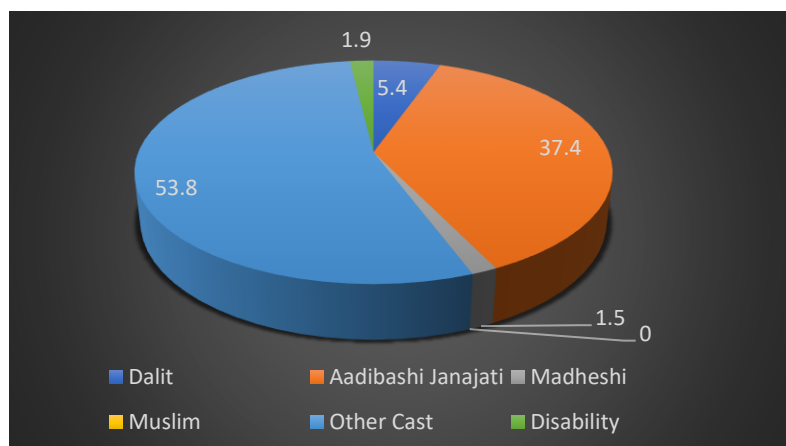
The project completed all planned activities in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality through close collaboration with the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), local governments, schools, and community stakeholders.

The project implemented a range of training and capacity-building activities to strengthen the disaster preparedness and response capacity of municipalities and communities. These activities improved local knowledge and skills in disaster planning, coordination, emergency response, school safety, and inclusive disaster risk management.

A total of 13 events were successfully conducted as below;

S.N.	Activity	No. of Events	# of Participants	Major Achievement
1	LDMC Training	2	67	Strengthened municipal disaster planning and coordination capacity.
2	CDMC/CBDRR Training	2	71	Improved community disaster preparedness and response capacity.
3	SMC/PTA Training	4	126	Strengthened school disaster preparedness and school safety planning.
4	GEDSI Training	2	75	Promoted inclusive disaster risk reduction and participation of vulnerable groups.
5	Basic First Aid & Search and Rescue Training	2	67	Developed practical emergency response skills among local responders.
6	DDMC Coordination Meeting	1	41	Improved district-level coordination and project oversight.

Overall, 462 participations were recorded across all project events, involving municipal officials, community leaders, health workers, teachers, youth volunteers, Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), and local responders. The project ensured inclusive participation, with 41% women, 5.41% Dalit, 37% Aadibashi/Janajati, 53.89% other



cast, 1.9% persons with disabilities, and 1.5% Madhesi participants. This inclusive approach helped ensure that disaster preparedness and response activities reached diverse and vulnerable groups within the target communities.

The project improved emergency preparedness by strengthening the knowledge and practical skills of local responders. Rescue equipment was provided to both municipalities, enabling faster and more effective emergency response. School disaster preparedness was also strengthened through school safety planning, orientation programmes, and mock evacuation drills, helping schools become better prepared to protect students and teachers during emergencies.

Community awareness of disaster preparedness was enhanced through awareness campaigns, localized IEC/BCC materials, disaster awareness videos, and hazard signboards installed in high-risk areas. In addition, emergency household kits and WASH kits were distributed to vulnerable families, damaged drinking water pipelines were restored, and municipal simulation exercises improved coordination and emergency response readiness among local governments and communities.

The project successfully integrated Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) across all activities, ensuring meaningful participation of women and vulnerable groups in disaster preparedness and decision-making. This has contributed to more inclusive and equitable local disaster management systems.

Before the implementation of the training programmes, the project developed training manuals through consultations with technical experts, workshops, discussions, and review meetings. The manuals were customized to meet the project objectives and align with relevant government policies and guidelines. They were reviewed and approved by GTA Nepal management and will continue to be used as reference materials for future disaster preparedness and capacity-building programmes.

6.1 Local Disaster Management Committee Training

To strengthen the capacity of local governments for disaster preparedness and response, the project conducted two Local Disaster Management Committee (LDMC) trainings, one in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and one in Suryodaya Municipality.

The trainings brought together 67 participants (53 males and 14 females), including municipal executives, elected representatives, ward chairpersons, municipal staff, security personnel, community leaders, and LDMC members. The training also ensured inclusive participation, with 5 Dalit participants, 22 Aadibashi/Janajati participants, 2 Madhesi participants, 39 participants from other caste groups, and 2 persons with disabilities.

The training focused on the roles and responsibilities of Local Disaster Management Committees, disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM), disaster preparedness planning, emergency coordination, incident management, resource mobilization, relief distribution, and the implementation of local disaster management policies and guidelines. Practical discussions and

group exercises helped participants understand how to prepare and coordinate disaster response more effectively at the municipal level.

The Chairperson of Maijogmai Rural Municipality and the Mayor of Suryodaya Municipality actively participated throughout the training and encouraged participants to strengthen disaster preparedness in their municipalities. Both municipalities highly appreciated the training, noting that this was the first comprehensive capacity-building programme on disaster management conducted for municipal representatives and LDMC members.

One of the most significant outcomes of the training was the improved understanding of the Local Disaster Management Fund. During the discussion, the Chairperson of Maijogmai Rural Municipality shared:

"Previously, we knew that our municipality had allocated a disaster management budget because it is required by policy. However, we believed the fund could only be used after a disaster to provide relief materials to affected families. Through this training, we learned that the disaster management fund can also be used for disaster preparedness, capacity building, awareness programmes, simulation exercises, and other risk reduction activities before disasters occur. This knowledge will help us use the fund more effectively. We sincerely thank GTA Nepal for this valuable support."

This feedback demonstrates the practical value of the training. It improved participants' knowledge of disaster governance, clarified the legal provisions for disaster fund mobilization, and increased the commitment of both municipalities to invest more in disaster preparedness rather than focusing only on post-disaster response.

Overall, the LDMC training strengthened the institutional capacity of both municipalities to plan, coordinate, and respond to disasters more effectively. The knowledge gained will support better utilization of local disaster management resources and contribute to building more resilient communities in the future

6.2 Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Training

To strengthen disaster preparedness at the community level, the project conducted Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) trainings, one in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and one in Suryodaya Municipality.

The trainings were attended by 71 participants (35 males and 36 females), including ward representatives, community leaders, Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), Nepal Police personnel, youth representatives, and members of community organizations. The project ensured inclusive participation, with 5 Dalit participants, 20 Aadibashi/Janajati participants, 46 participants from other caste groups, and 1 person with a disability.

The training focused on community-based disaster risk reduction, the roles and responsibilities of Community Disaster Management Committees, disaster preparedness planning, risk assessment, early warning, community mobilization, emergency response, and coordination with local

governments. Participants also learned about the importance of establishing functional ward-level disaster management committees and strengthening community participation in disaster preparedness and response.

The training was highly interactive. Participants actively took part in group discussions, practical exercises, and presentations. Each group prepared a community disaster preparedness plan and developed a hazard and resource map for their area, helping them identify disaster risks, available resources, evacuation routes, and priority actions for future emergencies.

During the training, the Disaster Focal Persons from both municipalities highlighted an important challenge. They explained that, according to the Government of Nepal's disaster management guidelines, each ward should have a functional Ward Disaster Management Committee. However, due to limited financial resources and technical support, these committees have not yet been formally established or strengthened.

The municipal representatives shared: *"According to the government guidelines, every ward should have a functional Ward Disaster Management Committee. However, due to limited budget and technical support, we have not been able to establish and strengthen these committees. If they are formally established with clear roles and responsibilities, they can play a vital role in disaster preparedness and emergency response. We request GTA Nepal and development partners to support the formation and capacity building of ward-level committees in all wards. This will enable trained local volunteers to respond quickly when disasters occur, especially in remote areas where external rescue teams cannot reach on time."*

This feedback highlighted the need to expand disaster preparedness beyond the municipal level. Strengthening ward- and community-level disaster management committees will improve local preparedness, increase community ownership, and ensure faster emergency response in remote and high-risk settlements. Overall, the CBDRR training enhanced the knowledge and confidence of community representatives, promoted community participation in disaster risk reduction, and laid the foundation for strengthening community-based disaster management systems in both municipalities.

6.3 School Management Committee (SMC)/Parent-Teacher Association Training

To strengthen school disaster preparedness and improve the safety of children during emergencies, the project conducted four School Management Committee (SMC)/Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) training programmes in four high-risk schools, with two schools in each municipality.

The schools were selected by Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality based on their high disaster risk and the impacts of the floods and landslides that occurred in October 2025.

The selected schools were:

- Maijogmai Rural Municipality: Saraswati Adharbhut School and Rastriya Adharbhut School
- Suryodaya Municipality: Himalaya Secondary School and Karfok Vidhya Mandir

A total of 126 participants (75 males and 51 females) participated in the four training programmes. Participants included School Management Committee (SMC) members, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members, teachers, parents, community representatives, ward representatives, and local stakeholders. The project also ensured the participation of women and members of marginalized communities.

The training focused on school disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, school safety planning, hazard identification, risk assessment, evacuation procedures, and the roles and responsibilities of schools, parents, and communities before, during, and after disasters. Participants discussed the importance of creating safe learning environments and strengthening coordination between schools, local governments, and communities.

A major component of the training was the School Safety Plan. Through group exercises, participants prepared draft School Safety Plans, identified hazards around their schools, conducted risk analyses, and developed community hazard maps. During the assessment, it was found that none of the four schools had a formal School Safety Plan before the project. The training helped participants understand the importance of developing and regularly updating these plans to improve preparedness and reduce disaster risks.

We also identified serious risks in Maijogmai Rural Municipality, where both selected schools are located in highly landslide-prone areas. Participants explained that if another major landslide damages these schools, many students would have to walk more than two hours each day to reach the nearest alternative school because of the municipality's remote and mountainous geography. Such a situation would affect children's safety, reduce school attendance, and disrupt their education. Therefore, protecting these schools and strengthening their disaster preparedness were identified as high priorities by the municipality and local communities.

The training also included a practical demonstration of the emergency rescue and safety equipment provided by the project. Participants learned how to safely use basic rescue equipment during emergencies and gained practical knowledge on its operation, handling, and maintenance. This hands-on session increased participants' confidence and understanding of how the equipment can support emergency response in schools and communities.

Participants actively engaged in discussions, group work, and practical exercises throughout the training. They demonstrated strong interest in improving school preparedness and committed to finalizing and implementing their School Safety Plans in close coordination with the municipal Disaster Focal Persons and relevant stakeholders.

Overall, the SMC/PTA training significantly strengthened the capacity of schools and communities to prepare for disasters. It improved awareness of disaster risks, promoted safer school environments, enhanced coordination between schools and local governments, and established a foundation for integrating disaster risk reduction into school management. The training also highlighted the urgent need for additional investment to protect schools located in highly landslide-prone areas, particularly in Maijogmai Rural Municipality, to ensure the continuity of children's education and safety during future disasters.

6.4 First Aid, Search & Rescue Training

To strengthen local emergency response capacity, the project conducted two Basic First Aid, Search and Rescue trainings, one in Maijogmai Rural Municipality and one in Suryodaya Municipality. Each training was conducted three days to provide both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

A total of 67 participants (41 males and 26 females) successfully completed the training. Participants included youth club members, community leaders, elected representatives, Nepal Police personnel, health workers, Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), and local disaster response volunteers. The project also ensured the participation of women and members of marginalized communities.

The training was facilitated by experienced and certified trainers with expertise in disaster response and emergency rescue. The course combined classroom sessions with practical demonstrations and field exercises to ensure that participants gained hands-on experience in emergency response.

The training covered key topics including basic first aid, casualty assessment, bleeding control, fracture management, CPR, safe patient transportation, evacuation procedures, search and rescue techniques, rope rescue, emergency communication, and the safe use of rescue equipment. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) principles were integrated throughout the training to ensure that emergency response considers the needs of women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups during disasters.

Practical exercises were a major part of the training. Participants practiced first aid techniques, search and rescue operations, casualty evacuation, and the proper handling of emergency rescue equipment provided through the project. These practical sessions significantly improved participants' confidence and preparedness to respond effectively during emergencies.

At the successful completion of the training, certificates were awarded to all participants in recognition of their newly acquired knowledge and practical skills.

The training received highly positive feedback from participants and local government representatives. Many participants shared that this was the first comprehensive First Aid and Search and Rescue training ever conducted in their municipalities. During the closing ceremony, Ms. Prabina Rai, Vice-Chairperson of Maijogmai Rural Municipality, remarked: *"This is not only the first time such training has been conducted in our municipality; it is the first of its kind in Ilam District. No organization has previously provided this level of practical disaster response training in our municipalities. We are very grateful to GTA Nepal and Myriad USA for providing this valuable opportunity to strengthen our local disaster response capacity."*

Overall, the training significantly strengthened the practical skills and confidence of local responders. It enhanced the municipalities' ability to respond quickly and effectively during disasters and established a trained group of local volunteers who can provide immediate life-saving support before external rescue teams arrive, particularly in remote and high-risk communities where timely emergency response is often difficult.

6.5 Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Training

To promote inclusive disaster preparedness and ensure that vulnerable groups are not left behind during emergencies, the project conducted two Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) trainings, one in Majjogmai Rural Municipality and one in Suryodaya Municipality.

A total of 75 participants (19 males and 56 females) attended the trainings. Participants included women, Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), persons with disabilities, representatives of marginalized and disadvantaged communities, youth groups, municipal officials, ward representatives, and community leaders. The training ensured meaningful participation of women and socially excluded groups to strengthen their role in disaster preparedness and decision-making.

The training focused on the Government of Nepal's GEDSI policies and guidelines for disaster risk reduction and management, highlighting the importance of inclusive planning and response. Participants learned how disasters affect different groups in different ways and discussed practical approaches to ensure that women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities are included in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and decision-making processes.

The training also included practical sessions on GEDSI-based disaster planning, community hazard mapping, risk assessment, and preparedness planning from an inclusion perspective. Through group discussions, exercises, and interactive games, participants explored common barriers faced by vulnerable groups during disasters and identified practical solutions to address them. These participatory methods encouraged active learning and helped participants better understand inclusive disaster management.

Special emphasis was given to equitable relief distribution, beneficiary prioritization, accessible communication, and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in emergency response planning. Participants discussed how emergency shelters, relief materials, rescue services, and recovery support can be made more accessible and inclusive for all community members.

By the end of the training, participants demonstrated a clear understanding of the GEDSI approach to disaster risk management and recognized the importance of integrating inclusion into municipal disaster plans and community preparedness activities. They expressed their commitment to applying these principles in future disaster planning and ensuring that no one is left behind during emergencies.

Overall, the GEDSI training strengthened the capacity of municipalities and communities to implement more inclusive and equitable disaster risk reduction and management practices. It also encouraged greater participation of women, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities in local disaster governance, contributing to more resilient and inclusive communities.

6.6 Equipment/Materials Handover

To strengthen disaster preparedness and improve emergency response capacity, the project provided 23 sets of emergency search and rescue equipment to Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality.

A total of 13 equipment sets were handed over to Suryodaya Municipality, including 10 sets for Ward offices, 2 sets for schools, and 1 set for the municipality. Similarly, 9 equipment sets were provided to Maijogmai Rural Municipality, including 6 sets for Ward offices, 2 sets for schools, and 1 set for the Rural Municipality Office.

Each emergency rescue kit included essential equipment such as safety helmets, gumboots, ropes, folding stretchers, first aid kits with medicines, fire extinguishers, torches, tarpaulins, hammers, pickaxes, shovels, spades, hand tools, pliers, hacksaws, whistles, reflective safety jackets, stainless steel storage boxes, and safety glasses. These items were selected to support immediate search and rescue operations and improve the preparedness of local governments during emergencies.

Before the handover, practical orientation sessions were conducted to demonstrate the proper use, handling, and maintenance of the rescue equipment. Municipal officials, local responders, and ward representatives gained practical knowledge and confidence in using the equipment safely during disaster response operations.

To improve household preparedness and support vulnerable families during emergencies, the project also provided 100 Household and WASH Kits to each municipality, benefiting a total of 200 households. The kits were officially handed over to the respective local governments, which committed to distributing them to disaster-affected and vulnerable households based on need during future emergencies.

Each Household and WASH Kit included essential emergency supplies such as a bucket with lid, tap and mug, tarpaulin, handwashing soap, sanitary pads, water purification solution (Piyush), nail cutter, toothpaste and toothbrushes, mosquito bed nets, blankets, and towels. These items will help affected families meet their immediate shelter, hygiene, and personal care needs following disasters.

6.7 BCC Activities

To increase public awareness of disaster preparedness and promote safe behaviours, the project implemented a range of Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) activities in both Maijogmai Rural Municipality and Suryodaya Municipality.

As part of the awareness campaign, the project developed a disaster preparedness awareness video incorporating Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) perspectives. The video highlighted key messages on landslides, floods, earthquakes, fire safety, early preparedness, inclusive evacuation, protection of women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and

other vulnerable groups during disasters. The video was shown during project trainings and community programmes, shared through social media platforms, and provided to municipalities, ward offices, and elected representatives to further disseminate the messages within their communities.

The project also developed, printed, and distributed 6,000 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, including booklets and flyers, containing practical information on disaster preparedness, early warning, household safety measures, emergency response, and community participation. The materials were distributed during project activities and handed over to both municipalities for continued public awareness activities.

To improve public awareness in disaster-prone areas, the project installed 10 disaster awareness signboards (5 in each municipality) at strategic public locations. The signboards displayed important safety messages related to landslides, floods, earthquakes, and fire hazards, helping community members recognize disaster risks, understand evacuation procedures, and take early action during emergencies.

Through these BCC activities, the project directly and indirectly reached more than 20,000 people across the two municipalities. The awareness campaign increased community knowledge of disaster preparedness, promoted inclusive disaster risk reduction, encouraged safer behaviours, and strengthened the participation of all community members, including women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Municipal representatives appreciated the awareness materials and committed to continuing their use to promote disaster preparedness and community resilience in the future.

Overall, the project has strengthened disaster preparedness systems, improved institutional coordination, increased community awareness, and enhanced the capacity of local governments and communities to respond to future disasters. While important progress has been achieved, the project also highlighted the need to expand disaster preparedness to ward-, village-, and Tol-level committees in remote and high-risk areas. Strengthening local volunteers, pre-positioning emergency equipment closer to vulnerable communities, and building the capacity of community-level responders will be essential for ensuring timely emergency response in future disasters, particularly where difficult terrain and damaged roads may delay external rescue teams.

7. Challenges and Mitigation

Challenge	Mitigation Measures
Adverse weather conditions: During the project implementation period, heavy rainfall affected travel and field activities. As a result, some planned activities had to be postponed and rescheduled.	Flexible scheduling: The project team adjusted the activity schedule in close coordination with the municipalities to ensure that all planned activities were completed safely without affecting the overall project timeline.
Participant availability from remote areas: Many participants came from remote and hard-to-reach communities. This was particularly challenging during the 3-day Basic First Aid and Search & Rescue Training, as continuous rainfall, poor road conditions, and limited transportation made daily travel difficult.	Residential accommodation support: In coordination with the local governments, GTA arranged accommodation and meals for participants who were unable to travel daily. This enabled participants from remote areas to complete the full training programme and ensured effective participation throughout the three-day course.
Limited training opportunities: Due to budget and time limitations, the project could train only a limited number of participants. However, many wards requested similar capacity-building activities because they had been affected by the 2025 disaster and recognized the importance of disaster preparedness. Selecting participants from all interested wards was therefore challenging.	Priority-based participant selection: The municipalities led the participant selection process based on disaster risk, geographic vulnerability, and local needs. Each ward nominated representatives who could later share the knowledge and skills with other community members. This approach ensured fair representation and prioritized participants from the most disaster-prone areas.

8. Lessons Learned

Practical drills improve confidence: Hands-on training, simulation exercises, and practical demonstrations of first aid, search and rescue techniques, and emergency equipment significantly improved participants' knowledge, skills, and confidence. Practical learning proved to be more effective than classroom sessions alone in preparing local responders for real emergency situations.

Inclusive planning increases participation: Integrating Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) into all project activities encouraged the active participation of women, persons with disabilities, Dalit, Aadibashi/Janajati, Madhesi, and other vulnerable groups. Inclusive planning ensured that diverse community needs were considered and strengthened equitable disaster preparedness and response

Municipal leadership strengthens coordination: The active engagement of municipal leadership, including Mayors, Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Chief Administrative Officers,

and Disaster Focal Persons, strengthened coordination among municipalities, ward offices, schools, security agencies, and community organizations. Their leadership improved decision-making, local ownership, and the effective implementation of project activities.

Community-based disaster risk reduction should be expanded: The project demonstrated that strengthening disaster preparedness at the municipal level is valuable, but not sufficient for remote and high-risk communities. Future interventions should strengthen the capacity of ward-, village-, and Tol-level disaster management committees, local volunteers, and community responders, while pre-positioning emergency equipment closer to vulnerable settlements. Building on the lessons learned from this project will help scale up community-based disaster risk reduction and improve timely emergency response in future disasters

9. Recommendations

Recommendation from the Local Governments:

- 1. Expand Training and Capacity Building to Ward and Community Levels:** The municipalities recommended expanding disaster preparedness and response training to ward-, village-, and Tol-level communities. Due to the difficult geography, scattered settlements, and high disaster risk, training only a limited number of participants at the municipal level is not sufficient. Local governments emphasized that during disasters such as the October 2025 floods and landslides, external rescue teams often cannot reach affected communities on time. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of local volunteers, community leaders, youth groups, Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), and Ward Disaster Management Committees is essential to ensure timely rescue, first aid, and emergency response.
- 2. Provide Technical Support for Community-Based Disaster Management:** The municipalities requested continued technical support to strengthen local disaster management systems. While Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs) have been established, Ward Disaster Management Committees (WDMCs) and community-level disaster management committees are still not fully functional due to limited technical and financial resources. The municipalities recommended support for forming and strengthening these committees, developing their terms of reference, providing capacity-building training, preparing local disaster management plans, establishing community-based early warning systems, and improving overall disaster preparedness and coordination.
- 3. Support Disaster-Resilient Infrastructure and School Safety:** The municipalities highlighted the urgent need for investment in disaster-resilient infrastructure, particularly for schools located in high-risk landslide areas. During the project, it was found that several schools in Maijogmai Rural Municipality remain highly vulnerable to landslides. If these schools are damaged in future disasters, many students would need to walk more than two hours each day to reach alternative schools, affecting their safety, attendance, and education. Municipal leaders also explained that their financial capacity remains very limited because they are still recovering from the October 2025 disaster. The Chairperson of Maijogmai Rural

Municipality stated: *"Our municipality was also severely affected by last year's disaster. The municipal office was damaged by landslides, and many computers, furniture, and office equipment were destroyed. Due to limited financial resources, we are still struggling to repair and reconstruct damaged infrastructure. It is very difficult for us to invest in additional disaster mitigation and school protection measures without support from development partners."*

The municipalities therefore recommended continued support for disaster-resilient school infrastructure, awareness activities, emergency preparedness facilities, and other risk reduction measures to safeguard vulnerable communities and ensure uninterrupted access to education and essential public services.

Annexes

Annex 1: Support Letters

Annex 2: SWC Approval Letter

Annex 3: Equipment Receipt Notes

Annex 4: Training Attendance Sheets

Annex 4.1: Training Manual

Annex 4.2: LDMC Training

Annex 4.3: CBDRR Training

Annex 4.4: SMC/PTA Training

Annex 4.5: GEDSI Training

Annex 4.6: First Aid, Search & Rescue Training

Annex 5: IEC/BCC Materials

Annex 5.1: DRR Pocket Book

Annex 5.2: DRR Brochure

Annex 5.3: DRR Signage Board

Annex 5.4: Awareness Video

Annex 6: Media Coverage

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Annex 7: Photographs

Annex 8: Completion Letters

Annex 9: Case Study