2026

RAPID RESPONSE COMMITTEE ADVOCACY WORKSHOP REPORT

Okhaldhunga District

निर्देशक

स्वास्थ्य कार्यालय ओखलढुङ्गा

FOREWORD



Mr. Sagar Prasai
Act. Director, Health Directorate
Koshi Province

It gives me great pleasure to present this comprehensive report on Municipal Level Rapid Response Committee & Rapid Response Team Advocacy Workshop conducted in Okhaldhunga District, Koshi Province, in 2026. This workshop signifies an important step forward in strengthening our collective capacity to prevent, detect, and respond effectively to public health emergencies and disasters at the district level.

Okhaldhunga, being disaster disaster-prone district, has underscored the urgent need for preparedness, coordination, and rapid response to health emergencies. In line with the National Guidelines for Rapid Response Team, this workshop was designed to update the Municipal Level Rapid Response Committee/Team, clarify roles and responsibilities, and reinforce coordination mechanisms among local governments and health institutions.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Ministry of Health, Koshi Province, WHO Nepal, Pandemic Fund, Health Office Okhaldhunga, and municipalities of Okhaldhunga for their valuable contributions to the success of this workshop. Through active participation and dialogue, the workshop successfully established a shared understanding of emergency response structures, bottlenecks and promoted a culture of readiness at the district and local level through proactive strategies.

The discussions and presentations during the sessions provided valuable insights into strengthening health system resilience, improving intersectoral collaboration, and ensuring timely and coordinated responses to future health emergencies. The collective commitment and enthusiasm of all stakeholders demonstrated throughout the workshop are commendable and reflect our shared vision of safeguarding public health and community well-being. As we move forward, the lessons and recommendations outlined in this report will serve as a practical guide for enhancing preparedness and response systems across the Okhaldhunga district.

It is my firm belief that the continued implementation of the RRT and RRC frameworks, coupled with strong local ownership and multisectoral engagement, will significantly strengthen our capacity to respond timely and effectively to any public health emergency.

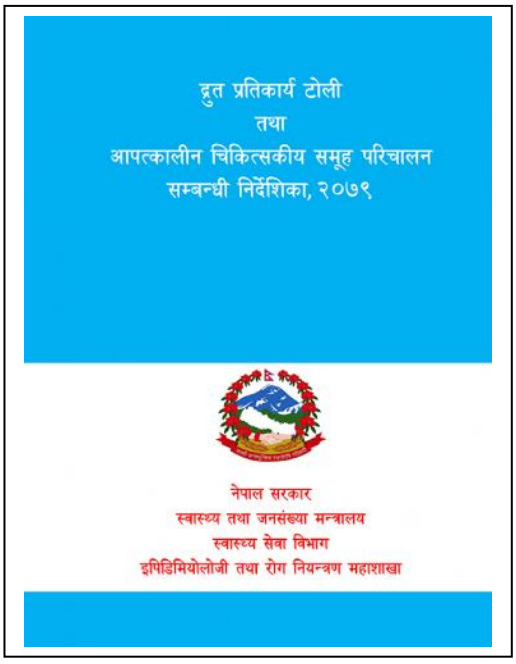
.....

Mr. Sagar Prasai
Act. Director निर्देशक
Health Directorate, Koshi Province

CamScanner

Rapid Response Committee Advocacy workshop

Okhaldhunga District



Background: In Nepal, the Rapid Response Team (RRT) and the Rapid Response Committee (RRC) play crucial roles in managing and mitigating the impacts of emergencies and disasters. The RRT, composed of health workers and technical experts, provides immediate response and investigation during crises like natural disasters or public health emergencies, including medical aid, shelter, and food distribution. It operates at the central, provincial, district and local level, coordinating with various stakeholders and conducting rapid assessments. The RRC, a higher-level body, oversees strategic and operational aspects of emergency responses at the central, provincial or municipality level. It ensures coordination among response units, manages resources, and makes critical decisions to address the crisis effectively. Together, these entities enhance Nepal's capacity to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies. The guidelines for the Rapid Response Team (RRT) and Rapid Response Committee (RRC) in Nepal were endorsed in **2022 AD**. These guidelines were developed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency responses by providing a structured approach to managing and coordinating efforts during crises and disasters.

Context: Okhaldhunga District at Koshi Province, eastern Nepal, cover approximately 1,074 square kilometers. The district is characterized by rugged hills, river valleys, and high-altitude landscapes, with elevations ranging from the lower foothills to the mountainous areas. Siddhicharan serves as the district headquarters. The district is bordered by Solukhumbu, Khotang, Ramechhap, Udaypur and Sindhuli, and is traversed by important rivers and streams that support local agriculture and settlements. Okhaldhunga has a diverse population comprising Rai, Tamang, Magar, Chhetri, Brahmin, Newar, Gurung, and Dalit communities, among others. Nepali, Rai languages, Tamang, and other local languages are commonly spoken. The local economy is largely dependent on agriculture and livestock farming, with major agricultural products including maize, millet, wheat,



potatoes, vegetables, and various fruits. Cattle, goats, poultry, and other livestock are also important sources of livelihood for rural households.
The district has considerable potential for tourism due to its natural beauty, cultural heritage, and mountainous landscape. Attractions include Siddhicharan Municipality and its surrounding areas, historic and religious sites, scenic viewpoints, forests, rivers, and trekking routes leading toward the Everest and other Himalayan regions. Okhaldhunga also holds cultural significance as the birthplace of renowned Nepali poet Siddhicharan Shrestha. Road connectivity and other infrastructure have gradually improved in recent years, although many remote and hilly settlements continue to face challenges related to transportation, communication, and access to basic services. Education and healthcare facilities are expanding across the district, contributing to improved access to essential services. Overall, Okhaldhunga is a culturally diverse and naturally rich district with significant potential in agriculture, tourism, and local economic development within Koshi Province.

Objective of the workshop:

- **To Form and or update the Municipal-Level Rapid Response Committee/Team**: If the committee/team has not been formed according to the guidelines, it should be reorganized.
- **To Discuss the Roles, Duties, and TOR**: Discuss the roles, duties, and powers of the municipal rapid response committee and team.
- **To encourage the Formation of a Health sector preparedness and response plan**: Motivate the municipality to develop an emergency action plan for the health sector.

The Health Directorate Koshi and Ministry of Health, Koshi Province, organized the workshop with financial assistance from **The Pandemic fund** and technical support from **World Health Organization**. The WHO Health Emergencies Programme (WHE) team Field Medical Officer, stationed at the Provincial Health Emergency Operation Center (PHEOC), Koshi Province, coordinated with the Health Office Morang and the Health Section Chief of different Rural/Municipality to plan and schedule the workshop on the designated date. Additionally, the team played a key role in ensuring the successful execution of the program and the achievement of its objectives.

Sunkoshi Rural Municipality

Venue: Sunkoshi Rural Municipality Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 20 April 2026
Participants: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Ward chairpersons, PHO, Sr AHW, Sr ANM, Lab personnel, Disaster focal person and FCHVs

District Presentation



Pic: District RRT focal person of Okhaldhunga delivering his message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

District RRT focal person, Mr. Rakesh Patel from the District Health Office, Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. He outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. His presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Weak data collection, reporting systems, and information-sharing mechanisms compromise evidence-based planning, situational awareness, and coordination during emergencies.
- Low community awareness and limited engagement in health preparedness reduce the effectiveness of prevention and response measures at the grassroots level.
- Insufficient simulation exercises, mock drills, and practical training limit the readiness and confidence of Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and other stakeholders to respond effectively during actual emergencies.

Lessons Learnt

- The Chairperson highlighted significant gaps in health-focused disaster management, stressing the need to prioritize health preparedness in all emergency planning and response activities.
- Effective disaster management depends on strong collaboration and coordination among municipal leadership, ward representatives, health workers, and Rapid Response Teams (RRTs).
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders are essential to ensure timely, organized, and coordinated action during emergencies.

Recommendations

- Strengthening the capacity of Rapid Response Team (RRT) members through regular training programs, workshops, hands-on simulation exercises, and scenario-based drills to ensure readiness for a wide range of emergency situations.
- Ensure consistent logistical support from provincial and central authorities, including medical supplies, transportation, communication tools, protective equipment, and other essential resources, to enable prompt and effective response operations.
- Provide comprehensive Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to support community awareness campaigns, public participation, and effective dissemination of health-related information during emergencies.



Pic: Chairperson of Sunkoshi Rural Municipality delivering his closing remarks

Overall comments and conclusion

The Chairperson of Sunkoshi Rural Municipality highlighted the key challenges faced by the area during emergencies, particularly the difficulties posed by poor road conditions, which often delay the delivery of essential supplies and medical equipment. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of previously established committees and teams in successfully managing past health crises. Looking ahead, he emphasized that the newly formed committees, structured in line with national health guidelines, will play a pivotal role in strengthening preparedness, enhancing coordination among stakeholders, and ensuring a more organized and efficient response to future health emergencies. He also stressed the importance of continuous training, adequate resource provision, and active community engagement to build resilience and improve overall emergency response capacity.

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
11	10	21

Champadevi Rural Municipality

Venue: Champadevi Rural Municipality Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 21 April 2026
Participants: Deputy Chairperson, AO, Ward chairpersons, Sr AHW, HA, Lab personnel, Police Personal, Disaster focal person and FCHVs

District Presentation

Mr. Rakesh Patel, the District RRT focal person from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. He outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. His presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.



Pic: FMO Dr. Samyam Mahat delivering his message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Weak coordination between local, provincial, and central government levels often leads to fragmented efforts, delays in response, and inefficient use of available resources.
- Inconsistent, delayed, or unclear communication from higher authorities regarding disease surveillance, guidelines, and control measures hinders timely decision-making and effective action.
- Shortages of trained personnel, coupled with frequent staff turnover at the local level, reduce continuity and weaken the efficiency of emergency response operations.

Lessons Learned

- The Deputy Chairperson's focus on swift responses and coordination highlights the importance of prompt, organized action in reducing the impact of crises. The quicker and more coordinated the response, the more effectively the municipality can manage and lessen the consequences of disasters or outbreaks.
- Well-defined and organized guidelines and protocols are crucial to ensure that everyone involved, from health workers to the RRC and RRT, is clear about their roles and responsibilities. Standardized procedures guarantee a unified response and help avoid confusion in emergency situations.

Recommendations

- Support in logistic items from province and central government
- Regular sensitization by central and provincial government at local level for preparedness and response of health-related events/outbreaks

Overall comments and conclusion

The Deputy Chairperson highlighted challenges during emergencies, particularly poor road conditions that delay delivery of supplies. Despite these obstacles, the community actively participated in managing COVID-19 and other outbreaks. She acknowledged the role of past committees and emphasized that newly formed committees, following national guidelines, will enhance preparedness, coordination, and timely response. She also stressed the importance of continuous training, community engagement, and adequate resources to strengthen emergency readiness.



Pic: Deputy Chairperson of Champadevi Rural Municipality delivering her closing remarks

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
12	9	21

Likhu Rural Municipality

Venue: Likhu Rural Municipality Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 23 April 2026
Participants: Chairperson, CAO, Ward chairpersons, Disaster focal person, PHI, Sr AHW, Sr ANM, HA, Lab personnel, Animal Health Personnel, Education Officer and FCHVs

Province Presentation



Pic: District RRT focal person of Okhaldhunga delivering his message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Mr. Rakesh Patel, the District RRT focal person from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. He outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. His presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Gaps in technical capacity, including limited training on disease prevention, surveillance, and outbreak response, constrain preparedness and operational efficiency.
- Limited budget allocation for preparedness activities restricts the municipality's ability to implement comprehensive health emergency plans.
- Logistical challenges, such as inadequate transportation, lack of essential medical supplies, and insufficient equipment, delay rapid response and service delivery.

Lessons Learned

- Strengthening logistical planning, including transportation, supply management, and emergency stockpiling, is necessary to ensure rapid deployment of resources during crises.
- Establishing inter-sectoral coordination platforms, involving education, security, and social service departments, enhances a multi-faceted and effective emergency response.
- Investing in digital surveillance systems and real-time reporting tools, such as SORMAS, improves situational awareness, outbreak detection, and response efficiency.

Recommendations

- Foster inter-sectoral collaboration with education, security, social services, and local NGOs to ensure a multi-faceted and coordinated approach to emergencies.
- Encourage peer learning, knowledge-sharing, and experience exchange among municipalities and districts to replicate best practices and strengthen collective preparedness.
- Incorporate mental health and psychosocial support strategies for frontline responders to maintain resilience, motivation, and overall well-being during prolonged emergencies.

Overall comments and conclusion

The Chairperson of Likhu Rural Municipality highlighted the challenges faced by the area, particularly during emergencies, noting that poor road conditions significantly impede the timely delivery of logistics and essential equipment. Despite these difficulties, the community demonstrated strong commitment and active participation in responding to COVID-19 and other disease outbreaks. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of previously established committees and response teams in effectively managing past crises. Looking ahead, he emphasized that the newly formed committees, structured according to national guidelines, will play a pivotal role in strengthening preparedness and ensuring a more organized, efficient, and timely response to future health emergencies.



Pic: Chairperson of Likhu Rural Municipality providing his remarks during closing of RRC

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
15	12	27

Khijidemba Rural Municipality

Venue: Khijidemba Rural Municipality Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 23 April 2026
Participants: Chairperson, CAO, Ward chairpersons, Sr AHW, Sr ANM, Lab personnel, Disaster focal person, Education Officer, Police Personnel and FCHVs

District Presentation

Mr. Rakesh Patel, the District RRT focal person from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. He outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. His presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.



Pic: FMO Dr. Samyam Mahat delivering his message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Weak coordination between local, provincial, and central government levels often results in fragmented efforts, delays in response, and inefficient use of resources.
- Inconsistent, delayed, or unclear communication from the central government regarding disease surveillance and control impedes timely decision-making and action.
- Shortages of trained personnel and frequent staff turnover at the local level undermine continuity and reduce the effectiveness of emergency response operations.

Lessons Learned

- Effective disaster management relies on strong collaboration and coordination among municipal leadership, ward representatives, health workers, and Rapid Response Teams (RRTs).
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders are critical to ensure timely, organized, and coordinated action during emergencies.
- Standardized guidelines and protocols help reduce confusion, maintain a unified response, and improve operational efficiency.

Recommendations

- Enhance the capacity of Rapid Response Team (RRT) members through regular training sessions, workshops, and practical simulations to ensure they are well-prepared for diverse emergency situations.
- Ensure consistent logistical support from provincial and central governments, including essential supplies, transportation, and communication equipment, to facilitate timely and efficient response operations.
- Provide adequate Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to support awareness campaigns, community engagement, and effective dissemination of health-related information during emergencies.

Overall comments and conclusion



Pic: Chairperson of Khijidemba Rural Municipality providing his remarks during closing of RRC

The Chairperson of Khijidemba Rural Municipality highlighted the challenges faced by the area, particularly during emergencies, noting that poor road conditions significantly hinder the timely delivery of logistics and essential equipment. Despite these difficulties, the community demonstrated strong commitment and active participation in responding to disease outbreaks and other health emergencies. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of previously established committees and response teams in effectively managing past crises. Looking ahead, he emphasized that the newly formed committees, structured according to national guidelines, will play a pivotal role in strengthening preparedness and ensuring a more organized, efficient, coordinated, and timely response to future health emergencies and related challenges.

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
19	4	23

Molung Rural Municipality

Venue: Molung Rural Municipality, Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 24 April 2026
Participants: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Acting CAO, Ward chairpersons, Doctors, Nurses Sr AHW, Sr ANM, Lab personnel, Disaster focal person, IT officials, and FCHVs

District Presentation

Mr. Rakesh Patel, the District RRT focal person from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. He outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. His presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.



Pic: FMO Dr. Samyam Mahat delivering his message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Limited budget allocation for preparedness and response activities restricts the municipality's ability to implement comprehensive health emergency plans.
- Logistical challenges, such as inadequate transportation, lack of essential medical supplies, insufficient equipment, and poor storage facilities, delay rapid response and service delivery.
- Low community awareness and limited engagement in health preparedness reduce the effectiveness of prevention and response measures at the grassroots level.

Lessons Learned

- Strengthening logistical planning, including transportation, supply management, and emergency stockpiling, is necessary to ensure rapid deployment of resources during crises.
- Investing in digital surveillance systems and real-time reporting tools, such as SORMAS, improves situational awareness, outbreak detection, and response efficiency.

Recommendations

- Conduct capacity-building initiatives to ensure teams are prepared for diverse emergency scenarios.
- Ensure consistent support from provincial and central governments in providing essential logistical resources, including medical supplies, transportation, and communication tools.
- Enhance coordination mechanisms among local, provincial, and federal authorities to streamline response efforts.

Overall comments and conclusion



Pic: Chairperson of Molung Rural Municipality providing his remarks during closing of RRC workshop

The Chairperson of Molung Rural Municipality highlighted the challenges faced during health emergencies, particularly noting that poor road conditions and difficult terrain hinder the timely delivery of medical supplies and essential equipment. He acknowledged the significant contributions of previously established health committees and Rapid Response Teams in managing past outbreaks effectively. Looking ahead, he emphasized that the newly formed committees, structured according to national health guidelines, will be critical in strengthening preparedness, improving coordination among health workers, and ensuring a more organized and efficient response to future health emergencies. He also stressed the importance of ongoing training, resource availability, and community engagement to enhance local health resilience.

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
14	11	25

Chisankhugadhi Rural Municipality

Venue: Chisankhugadhi Rural Municipality, Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 27 April 2026
Participants: Chairperson, CAO, Ward chairpersons, Sr AHW, Sr ANM, HA, Lab personal, Disaster focal person, Education section official and FCHVs

Province Presentation



Pic: District RRT focal person of Okhaldhunga delivering his message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Mr. Rakesh Patel, the District RRT focal person from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. He outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. His presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Mrs. Smriti Luitel, Public Health Officer from Provincial Health Directorate highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together the speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Weak data collection, reporting systems, and information-sharing mechanisms compromise evidence-based planning, situational awareness, and coordination during emergencies.
- Low community awareness and limited engagement in health preparedness reduce the effectiveness of prevention and response measures at the grassroots level.

Lessons Learned

- The Chairperson highlighted significant gaps in health-focused disaster management, stressing the need to prioritize health preparedness in all emergency planning and response activities.
- Effective disaster management depends on strong collaboration and coordination among municipal leadership, ward representatives, health workers, and Rapid Response Teams (RRTs).

Recommendations

- Strengthening the capacity of Rapid Response Team (RRT) members through regular training programs, workshops, hands-on simulation exercises, and scenario-based drills to ensure readiness for a wide range of emergency situations.
- Ensure consistent logistical support from provincial and central authorities, including medical supplies, transportation, communication tools, protective equipment, and other essential resources, to enable prompt and effective response operations.

Overall comments and conclusion



Pic: Chairperson of Chisankhugadi RM providing his remarks during closing of RRC workshop

The Chairperson of the Municipality expressed sincere gratitude to the provincial government and WHO for organizing the program, acknowledging its critical role in enhancing local health emergency preparedness. He shared that during a recent outbreak in one of the municipality's wards, the response teams faced significant challenges due to limited resources and unclear guidelines, which slowed the delivery of essential services and coordination among health workers. He noted that providing logistical support or emergency kits for the newly appointed teams would have greatly improved their readiness and efficiency during such situations. Drawing from this experience, he emphasized the importance of regular and ongoing training opportunities for the Rapid Response Team (RRT). Continuous capacity-building initiatives, including simulation exercises, refresher trainings, and hands-on workshops—are essential to strengthen the teams' skills, enhance coordination, and ensure rapid and effective response to future health emergencies.

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
13	6	19

Siddhicharan Municipality

Venue: Siddhicharan Municipality, Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 28 April 2026
Participants: Deputy Mayor, Acting CAO, Ward chairpersons, Disaster focal person, Agriculture section head, Nurses, Sr AHW, Lab personnel and FCHVs

District Presentation

Mrs. Manisha Moktan Tamang, the District Health Office Chief from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. She outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. Her presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.



Pic: District Health Office Chief of Okhaldhunga delivering her message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Foster inter-sectoral collaboration with education, security, social services, and local NGOs to ensure a multi-faceted and coordinated approach to emergencies.
- Encourage peer learning, knowledge-sharing, and experience exchange among municipalities and districts to replicate best practices and strengthen collective preparedness.
- Incorporate mental health and psychosocial support strategies for frontline responders to maintain resilience, motivation, and overall well-being during prolonged emergencies.

Lessons Learned

- Community engagement and awareness-raising are essential to promote local participation and enhance resilience during health crises.
- Timely and accurate information sharing between wards, health offices, and higher-level authorities supports evidence-based decision-making and rapid interventions.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of preparedness activities help identify gaps, improve response strategies, and ensure sustainable emergency management practices.

Recommendations

- Improve coordination mechanisms between local, provincial, and federal levels to ensure streamlined planning, decision-making, and resource allocation during health crises.
- Allocate dedicated budgets for emergency preparedness and response activities to ensure sustainability and prompt mobilization of resources when required.
- Promote community engagement initiatives to build resilience, enhance public awareness, and encourage proactive participation in emergency preparedness and response activities.

Overall comments and conclusion

The Deputy Mayor of the Municipality expressed sincere appreciation to the provincial government and WHO for organizing the program and enhancing local awareness on health emergency preparedness. He noted, however, that providing logistical support or emergency kits for the newly appointed teams would have significantly strengthened their readiness and operational capacity. Furthermore, the Mayor highlighted the critical importance of ongoing training opportunities for the Rapid Response Team (RRT). He emphasized that continuous capacity-building initiatives, including refresher courses, practical simulations, and skill enhancement workshops are essential to ensure that team members remain proficient, confident, and capable of responding efficiently to diverse emergency situations.



Pic: Deputy Mayor of Municipality providing his remarks during closing of RRC workshop

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
19	7	26

Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality

Venue: Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality, Hall, Okhaldhunga District
Date: 29 April 2026
Participants: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Ward chairpersons, PHO, Sr AHW, Sr ANM, HA, Lab personal, Disaster focal person, security personnel and FCHVs

District Presentation

Mrs. Manisha Moktan Tamang, the District Health Office Chief from the District Health Office Okhaldhunga, delivered a comprehensive presentation underscoring the vital role of Rapid Response Coordination (RRC) in addressing health emergencies. She outlined the key functions and responsibilities of the RRC, emphasizing its significance in ensuring smooth coordination and rapid action during crises. Her presentation highlighted how the RRC supports effective communication, resource mobilization, and prompt interventions critical elements for reducing health risks and managing emergencies efficiently.



Pic: District Health Office Chief of Okhaldhunga delivering her message on RRC, RRT and PHEOC

Additionally, Dr. Samyam Mahat from the World Health Organization (WHO) shared important perspectives on the function of the Provincial Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in disaster readiness and response. He explained how the PHEOC acts as a central platform for coordinating emergency actions, collecting and interpreting health data, and ensuring the effective implementation of preparedness strategies. Dr. Mahat highlighted the value of proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and the integration of surveillance systems to strengthen the overall disaster response framework. Together, both speakers emphasized the need for a well-organized and coordinated system to manage health emergencies and enable timely, effective disaster response.

Main Bottlenecks

- Limited budget allocation for preparedness activities restricts the municipality's ability to implement comprehensive health emergency plans.
- Low community awareness and engagement in health preparedness reduce the effectiveness of prevention and response measures at the grassroots level.
- Insufficient simulation exercises and drills limit the readiness of Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and other stakeholders to respond effectively during actual emergencies.

Lessons Learned

- Regular sensitization by central and provincial government at local level for preparedness and response of health-related events/outbreaks
- Clearly defined guidelines and structured protocols are crucial for ensuring all stakeholders understand their roles.
- Health workers, RRCs, and RRTs must have a clear understanding of responsibilities to act efficiently.

Recommendations

- Regular sensitization by central and provincial government at local level for preparedness and response of health-related events/outbreaks
- Conduct regular training, simulations, and refresher courses.
- Allocate dedicated budgets for emergency preparedness and response activities to ensure sustainability and prompt mobilization of resources when required.

Overall comments and conclusion



Pic: Chairperson of Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality providing his remarks during closing of

The Chairperson of Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality emphasized the difficulties encountered by the area during emergencies, particularly the poor road conditions that often delay the transportation of essential logistics, supplies, and equipment. Despite these challenges, community members showed strong dedication and actively participated in responding to disease outbreaks and other health emergencies. He also recognized the important role played by previously established committees and response teams, whose efforts contributed significantly to effective crisis management. He further highlighted that the newly established committees, formed in line with national guidelines, are expected to strengthen local preparedness and response capacities. Moving forward, these committees will be instrumental in promoting better coordination and ensuring a more systematic, efficient, organized, and timely response to future health emergencies and emerging challenges.

Participants Gender Analysis

Male	Female	Total
14	8	22