



Nepal's food crisis

A story from early 2008 and still relevant...

Nepal has had a nutrition emergency throughout 2008

The fact that 41 per cent of the population haven't been getting enough to eat and half of Nepali children are underweight is the story from the UN's World Food Program (WFP) and Nepal's National Development Research Institute.

Rising prices have made this underlying emergency worse. By mid-year:

- 2.5 million people in rural Nepal needed emergency food aid
- 3.9 million people also looked like needing help if food prices kept increasing
- 19.2 million people will also be affected by shortages and price increases, although they are a little better off than the desperate poor.

In other words, a third of Nepalis have been living below the poverty line and this could increase to half the population.

Cooking oil, coarse rice and kerosene are the market products that saw the sharpest price increases in the first half of this year – between 13 and 30 per cent.

We have been waiting to see if the WFP's efforts have been able to relieve this crisis in recent months. Politically, the WFP fears the crisis could affect the new government elected early this year.

In such a national crisis, Dharmik Australia – as a new charity – has concentrated on supporting those children it can so they will be capable of making their contribution to Nepal's future.