

Earthquake Support Nepal

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Over 8 million people have been adversely impacted by the 2015 Nepal earthquake and an additional 982,000 people (3.5% of the population) are now below the poverty line.

Background

On April 25th and May 12th, two devastating earthquakes struck Nepal resulting in many casualties, large-scale damage to infrastructure, livelihoods and the natural landscape, and en-masse suffering of loss and trauma in the population. Over 8,800 people lost their lives, 22,300 people were injured and 605,000 houses were fully damaged. A post-disaster needs assessment study has revealed that 6.7 billion USD are needed to help the country to recover according to the principle of “Build Back Better”.

Disaster Response

The day after the first earthquake, the government-led and UN-supported emergency response thematic clusters were triggered into action as per their contingency plans. This provided a platform for information sharing and coordination between organisations to be able to target immediate emergency relief and subsequent recovery efforts towards those in need as efficiently as possible.

While the thematic clusters served as the primary mechanism for dedicated humanitarian agencies to plan their response, they were also useful in guiding other interested organisations and individuals to fill in the numerous gaps. Here, we organised a team of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) professionals working with the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) as a volunteer group to respond to immediate needs of local communities in Lalitpur District of Kathmandu Valley.

In coordination with the WASH emergency cluster, our volunteer group approached Lubhu and Khokana settlements and began work as per the priorities identified by the communities, joining hands with other organisations where possible. The basic purchasing for this immediate response was done through individual contributions.

Table 1: Immediate emergency response activities. We carried out activities as per needs identified by the communities in coordination with other actors.

	Khokana Settlement	Lubhu Settlement
Emergency response activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarpauline sheets for shelter (25 families) Consumables: bitten rice (100 kgs), noodles (10 kgs), soap (144 pcs) Establish drinking water storage and treatment system (7 tanks) Establish emergency toilets (25) together with Oxfam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish drinking water storage and treatment system (2 tanks) Vector control for external environment (160 L medicine)
Expenditure	149,900 (NPR)	42,400 (NPR)

Team of Volunteers



Ratan



Hari



Nadira



Raju



Krishna



Bhim



Kailash

Interest for Donations

As the consequences of the earthquake became visible and more widely known, we were contacted by concerned individuals in different countries who were looking to provide financial support that would directly benefit people affected by the earthquake.

We were therefore able to engage with the hard-hit community of Khokana, where the majority of people had lost their homes and were living in cramped conditions under tarpaulins, and plan for medium-term measures to support the vulnerable populations.

Support to Vulnerable Populations in Khokana

Khokana settlement is located in the lap of Chandragiri Hills, close to the Bagmati River, in Lalitpur District of the Kathmandu Valley and has approximately 5000 inhabitants. It covers 2.7 km² of land comprising a central residential area which was dominated by traditional architecture, interspersed by public spaces for cultural events, and surrounded by agricultural fields. It was described as a “unique village which can be taken as a model of a medieval settlement pattern with a system of drainage and chowks” (UNESCO World Heritage).

Before the earthquake, Khokana settlement, a small Newari village where culture and tradition of indigenous groups remained intact, had been nominated as a World Heritage Site

Photos 1: Khokana settlement before the earthquake. The settlement maintained its tradition and culture in spite of the rapid urbanisation in its vicinity and was referred to as a living museum.



Photos 2: Khokana settlement after the earthquake. Most of the inner parts of the settlement became uninhabitable; families moved to the peripheries and took refuge in temporary shelters.



Local Leadership and Planning

Supporting the vulnerable populations in Khokana has been possible owing to the dedication, honesty, and visionary planning of the local leadership and social organisers of the community

Khokana is blessed with a committed cadre of social leaders and community organisers who naturally took charge of facilitating their community in surviving the earthquake and its aftermath as well as in planning and preparing for the future.

These community workers played a central role in coordinating the emergency relief efforts, juggling the numerous demands and matching them with the aid materials and services becoming available. This work was all the more commendable amidst the chaotic circumstances and continuing aftershocks.

Within a short period, the community leaders were looking towards the future. Their primary aim focussed on helping families settle into transitional shelters (2 years) in the land surrounding Khokana so that the heritage town could be rebuilt with earthquake resistant structures while retaining the traditional architecture.

Needs Identified to Assist Recovery

Many families were able to relocate to their own or to relatives' land surrounding the settlement, in the vicinity of their damaged houses. They received materials from various organisations or the government to help them build shelters. The families who did not have access to land, however, did not have any place to go and remained in crowded conditions in temporary shelters. Some shifted to small rented rooms, an unaffordable option for the longer-term.

Therefore, the recovery support planned for Khokana primarily targeted these landless vulnerable families. Some additional support was extended to address gaps for other basic needs in the settlement.

Community contribution is an essential part of creating ownership for the assistance received

The planned support to assist recovery in Khokana is as follows:

- 1) Establishment of three camps on leased land with transitional shelters (2 years) for 33 vulnerable families, with the following facilities in each camp:
 - Materials for one shelter per family (corrugated iron sheets, bamboo)
 - Electrical wiring
 - One toilet block with two male and two female toilets and hand washing stations (one additional toilet for Camp C)
 - One urinal for males attached to a urine collection and storage system for use in agriculture as urea fertiliser
 - One bathing and clothes washing space
 - Water supply system for drinking and hygiene purposes

Community contribution is as follows:

- Construction of the shelters
 - Payment for electricity charges
 - Maintaining toilets in clean condition
- 2) Providing materials for shelter construction to 11 families having land adjacent to the camps but not having any construction materials.
 - 3) Providing materials to Camp A for establishment of 2 additional shelters for community gathering and housing guests, respectively.
 - 4) Providing, on average, 1.5 bundles of corrugated iron sheets to an additional 60 families in other parts of the settlement who did not have enough materials to be able to complete their transitional shelters.
 - 5) Upgrading water supply pipeline in Bus Park area to enable 60 additional families staying in shelters to have access to municipal drinking water supply services. The beneficiary families are contributing approximately 40% of the cost of upgrading.
 - 6) Hiring 2 social mobilisers (1 male and 1 female) for five months to facilitate implementation of planned activities and undertake hygiene promotion in the camps.

Khokana Team

Leader-	Nepal Dangol
Coordinator (A)-	Dashram Dangol
Coordinator (B)-	Krishna Dangol
Coordinator (C)-	Budhikrishna Dangol
Social mobiliser-	Sachin Maharjan
Social mobiliser-	Mayaju Maharjan

Photo 3: Nepal Dangol (far left) with Dashram, Mayaju and Sachin. Next to hanging dried chillies outside a shelter in Camp A.



Table 2: Activities with estimated costs and funds mobilised. The activities will assist recovery of vulnerable populations and fill gaps for basic needs (note: NPR to Euro exchange rate varied from 112 to 123 NPR: 1 Euro from Jul-Aug 2015).

Activity	Estimated Cost (NPR)
1) Lease of land for two years for 3 camps	200,000
2) Materials for 46 complete shelters (44 residential, 2 community places)- corrugated iron sheets, bamboo, electrical wiring- and CGI sheets for additional 60 families to complete their shelters	2,161,000
3) Toilet blocks, urinals, and bathing and clothes washing areas for 3 camps and one additional toilet for camp C	682,000
4) Water supply systems for 3 camps	315,000
5) Upgrading drinking water supply pipeline in Bus Park area for 60 families	100,000
6) Hiring 2 social mobilisers for five months	100,000
TOTAL COST	3,558,000
FUND MOBILISATION	
Private donor	1,000,000
Singapore fund raising event/Barclays- 1st payment	743,000
Additional funds required	1,815,000

Implementation of Recovery Measures

The first step in implementing the activities to assist recovery was identification of the most vulnerable families for the three camps and their endorsement by community elders; this was followed by signing of letters of commitment by the beneficiary families.

Arranging construction supplies proved to be very challenging owing to the shortage of goods in the market. Therefore, initially sufficient materials could only be sourced for shelters in camp A and the beneficiary families were quickly able to construct their shelters and move into the camp (while using toilets and water sources in further away areas). Unfortunately, as the rest of the materials had to be ordered and could not be obtained before the monsoon rains, the remaining construction was delayed by two months. Apart from the obstruction due to rains, families were not available for construction as they were busy in planting rice to ensure food availability in the coming months.

The progress until the end of August has been:

- 33 shelters completed in 3 camps with 14 families moved in (toilets, bathing spaces, and water supplies are in process of being set up; meanwhile families are using facilities in further away areas),
- 11 shelters completed for families having land adjacent to the three camps and all families moved in,
- 60 families provided with an average of 1.5 bundles of corrugated iron sheets to enable them to complete their shelters in other parts of the settlement,
- Pipe material purchased for upgrading water supply network in bus park area,
- Social mobilisers active since end of May.

Gallery

Under construction shelters



Transforming into a home, community, and livelihood

