

# ICA Nepal's response to the devastating earthquake so far and prospective future actions

June 2015



Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal  
Kriti Marg, Koteshwor  
Phone: 01-460 2005

[www.ica-nepal.org](http://www.ica-nepal.org) | [info@ica-nepal.org](mailto:info@ica-nepal.org)

## **Context: Devastating earthquake hits Nepal on April & May 2015**

*25 April, 2015 occurred to be one of the most unfortunate days for the Nepalese, as the massive earthquake of 7.8 magnitudes hit Nepal affecting almost 30 districts including Kathmandu followed by deaths of nearly 9000 people and 18000 injuries. Mainly, 14 districts are the worst hit districts namely Sindhupalchowk, Gorkha, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Dhading, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Rammechap, Kavre, Dolakha, and Dhading. More than 2 lakhs households were damaged, hundreds of villages flattened and almost 5000 schools were severely affected. Continuous aftershocks; mainly the strong aftershock of second day measuring 6.7 magnitude and of 18<sup>th</sup> day measuring 7.1 magnitude, worsened the situation and added up more casualties. People resided under tarpaulin and tents for over a month. Rescue and relief tasks were conducted immediately after the disaster with the support of various countries all over the world.*

*Nepalese Army, government and youth associations were seemed most active during the disastrous time.*

*Another major threat for Nepal in present day's context is monsoon. With the arrival of monsoon, the threats of serious landslide have increased. Geologists and environmentalists have already warned for the inexorable landslides in various parts of Nepal. Already poor country where the rural community were struggling for food, transportation and other facilities has been severely affected the earthquake. The earthquake is so powerful to ruin the national economy.*

### **ICA's response to the devastating earthquake**

ICA Nepal, started out on relief activities right after the second day of the earthquake by visiting various affected areas of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur. Activities like blood donation and distribution of drinking water bottles were immediately undertaken in the areas of Bhaktapur and Bungamati (Lalitpur). Post-earthquake activities were carried out in different phases beginning with immediate relief works. ICA reached out to hands of various people in different villages like Challing, Nala, Sangla, along with most affected districts like Gorkha and Dhading with the relief materials. Mostly food packages, tarpaulins, clothes, medicines and blankets were distributed by ICA Nepal team.

Along with the relief works, training and facilitation programs were organized for the local community and school/colleges for coping with psychological and emotional trauma caused by the earthquake. Social Artistry training for the trauma relief purpose was conducted in village of Changu Narayan and two educational institutions in Kathmandu.

Also, with the help of national and international volunteers from India and USA, ICA Nepal constructed a house using earthbag technology for 82 years old partially blind man in Changu Narayan.

ICA Nepal is currently working on reconstruction and rehabilitation of the earthquake victims in coming days. Exploring all the potential support to the victims, ICA Nepal, supported NGOs, individuals and schools. Described below are all the activities of ICA Nepal post-earthquake in detail.

### **Ist Phase: Immediate Emergency Relief**



*Earthquake Survivors gathered in Gorkha district for relief materials. The 25 April earthquake is also called as Gorkha Earthquake. The epicenter of the 7.8 magnitude of earthquake was Gorkha.*



*ICA Team distributed drinking water bottles in Bhaktapur and Bungmati, Lalitpur. ICA Nepal was supported by volunteers from of Rotaract Clubs (Manohara, Rudramati and Rudramati Babarmahal) in distributing the relief materials to the earthquake victims*



*Basically the food package worth Rs. 1500 were distributed to each household. The package consisted of rice, mixed daal, salt, soybean, cooking oil, beaten rice, masala (chili, cumin powder, and turmeric powder), biscuits, noodles, steel plate, spoon, bucket, plastic jug, sanitary napkin, drinking water bottles.*



*Local Community taking away relief materials provided by ICA Nepal in Changu Narayan. We supported more than 100 families in Changu Narayan. Similarly, relief materials were distributed in Sangla, Nala, Dhading,*

### ***Support to People Living with Disabilities (PWDs)***

People with disabilities (PWDs) are among the most vulnerable groups even before the earthquake. They are most marginalized and vulnerable in terms of from basic facilities of proper food, shelter and employment. Deprived of basic needs, the situation of PWDs got worse after the earthquake. ICA Nepal has been working with some of the local organizations providing basic accommodation and food for blinds, autistic, physical disabled, orphans. We immediately contacted them and tried to help them in whatever way was possible.



### ***Support to Entire Power in Social Action***

*An organization named Entire Power in Social Action (EPSA) operated by and for women living with disabilities. There are currently 17 women with physical disabilities employed in this organization. The organization is started by Ms. Sangita Pant who is herself is a disabled. Her one hand in the body does not work. All the women in the EPSA belonged to economically marginalized families. EPSA makes handmade decorative items.*

### ***Support to Disabled Service Centre (DSA) and Nepal Integrated Blind Development Association (NIBDA)***

*Disabled Service Center is located at Balaju which has 20 people with severe disability living in a harsh condition. Ever so in need of food and proper shelter, there situation too had worsen by earthquake. The building to which they pay 1500 per room rent is not no safer to stay and due to their physical imparity, they cannot move properly to a safer place. ICA Nepal has been providing food materials, clothes, and medicines timely. ICA Nepal is seeking financial help t build a permanent shelter for them*

*Similarly, ICA Nepal supported group of visual impaired children living under the care of Nepal Integrated Blind Development Association (NIBDA) at Balaju.*



## II Phase: Recovery

ICA Nepal welcomed our International volunteers from the USA and India. ICA Nepal, with the help of volunteers entered to the second phase-Recovery phase. Our enthusiastic and vibrant volunteer with their initiation of building Earthbag houses was introduced. The pilot project was launched at Changu Naryan, with the dedication and commitment of the volunteers, community member and ICA Nepal it is a moment of astonishment to have built an earthbag house for a single, senior citizen who is partially blind.

You can also visit the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbFUGaVjMDw> to know more about ICA Nepal's effort on building the earthbag house.



*Earthbag house is one of the permanent housing methods which is build up entirely by sacks and recycled materials like sand and rubbles. In a picture, we can see the volunteers of ICA Nepal is building the house at Changu Narayan.*



*Earthbag house completed by a collective efforts of our volunteers, local community and ICA Nepal team in 15 days*

## Training and Facilitation

With the help of Jean Houston Foundation and other supporters, ICA Nepal is carrying out various psycho-social trainings to local community, individuals, and school/college teachers for overcome the trauma of the earthquake. The training focuses on strengthening the mind and concentration level.



*These trainings are so designed that it could be applicable to individuals of different background. Trainers effectively engages the participants and builds their will power and capacity to overcome the trauma and also help others for the same.*

### **III Phase: Reconstruction and Rehabilitation**

After completing the immediate emergency relief activities ICA Nepal is now focusing on long term reconstruction and rehabilitation activities in response to the devastation caused by the earthquake. For a time being ICA Nepal will continue its training and facilitation program as an intervention for recovery and to overcome the trauma, stress and grief created by the earthquake.

#### **3.1 Leadership Development Program**

In coming days, we will mobilize local community through Leadership Development Program for recovery and rehabilitation. Twenty people will be trained as facilitative leaders and further they will be mobilized to implement 100 challenge projects. For challenge project, priority will be given to single women, orphans, and socially and economically marginalized groups. Tentative challenge projects will be on:

- Improving health and sanitation in the area
- Re-establishing local health posts
- Improving communication system in the health post
- Constructing temporary and permanent housing
- Providing relief materials
- Rebuilding and supporting schools in rural areas
- Teacher's Training (enable them help children overcome earthquake traumatic experience)
- Support PWDs through income generating activities and building permanent shelter

#### **3.2. Micro Grants Project through Social Artistry Leadership Program**

ICA Nepal will continue social artistry leadership trainings for psycho-social recovery in a massive scale. In addition, ICA Nepal will implement the micro grants project through trim tab initiatives. We are aiming to implement more than 100 such projects in the affect areas.

Through social artistry leadership activities we will focus on various issues such as organizational development and strengthening. We will focus on building schools and providing training to community leaders and school teachers and students.

People and children who have lost their houses are just left with the clothes they were at during earthquake. Schools that are in a good condition want children to get back to school life, but as the houses have been demolished kids do not have their school uniforms, text books, stationeries to head back to school. They are in crisis of basic necessary items that a person should hold while going to school, hence the denial to go to school by children have made the attendance low. Therefore, ICA Nepal would like to channelize the efforts in order to provide school going children with all the required materials that they are in need of while going to school.

### **3.3 Sustainable Village Development Initiatives**

Nepal has faced cumulative losses worth Rs 700 billion (\$7 billion) due to the April 25 earthquake and its aftershocks, a post disaster needs assessment (PDNA) report reveals. The report finalised by a full meeting of the National Planning Commission (NPC) chaired by Prime Minister Sushil Koirala on Friday stated that the earthquake s caused damage worth Rs 513.38 billion (\$5.13b) to property in various sectors. The economic losses are estimated at Rs 187.08 billion. The loss means the impact on the economy due to the slowdown in economic activities in the aftermath of the earthquake . According to the report, Rs 666.3 billion (\$6.66b) will be required in the rebuilding and new building process.

In response to need of reconstruction and rehabilitation, ICA Nepal has selected three villages namely: Changu Narayan (Bhaktapur District), Nala (Kavre District), and Sukute (Sindhupalchowk district). We are aiming to build 100 permanent shelters to each location and provide basic facilities including health, education, drinking water etc. We propose to construct 300 shelters and provide facilities to more than 10 thousand people in total. We start the process by developing the community strategic plan following the ToP process and enabling the community to make their own communities themselves. Our role will be merely as facilitators and logistics provider.

The sustainable village development initiatives will be carried out as follows:

1. Assessing the community and affected people
2. Group facilitation and psycho-emotional capacity building
3. Leadership Development Training
4. Organizing Participatory Strategic Plan and Task Group Formation
5. Encouraging the community to implement the plan
6. Empowering people to be innovative and entrepreneur and start micro enterprises
7. Exploring national and international support to implement projects and activities.

The tasks will be completed with a period of five years. We envision that within this period the community will be developed as a self sustained village.

ICA Nepal proposes to rebuild not only houses but communities and their histories and identities by allowing the communities to re-occupy the space these ruins and turning back them into useful space. Through this initiation, we want to strengthen the lives of most vulnerable communities such as single women, orphans, and low caste group.

In Changu, we need to renovate the ICA Learning Centre for Women and Children. The Centre was built for women and children with the realization that women's development is the key of the advancement of the community. The earthquake has severely damaged the Centre.