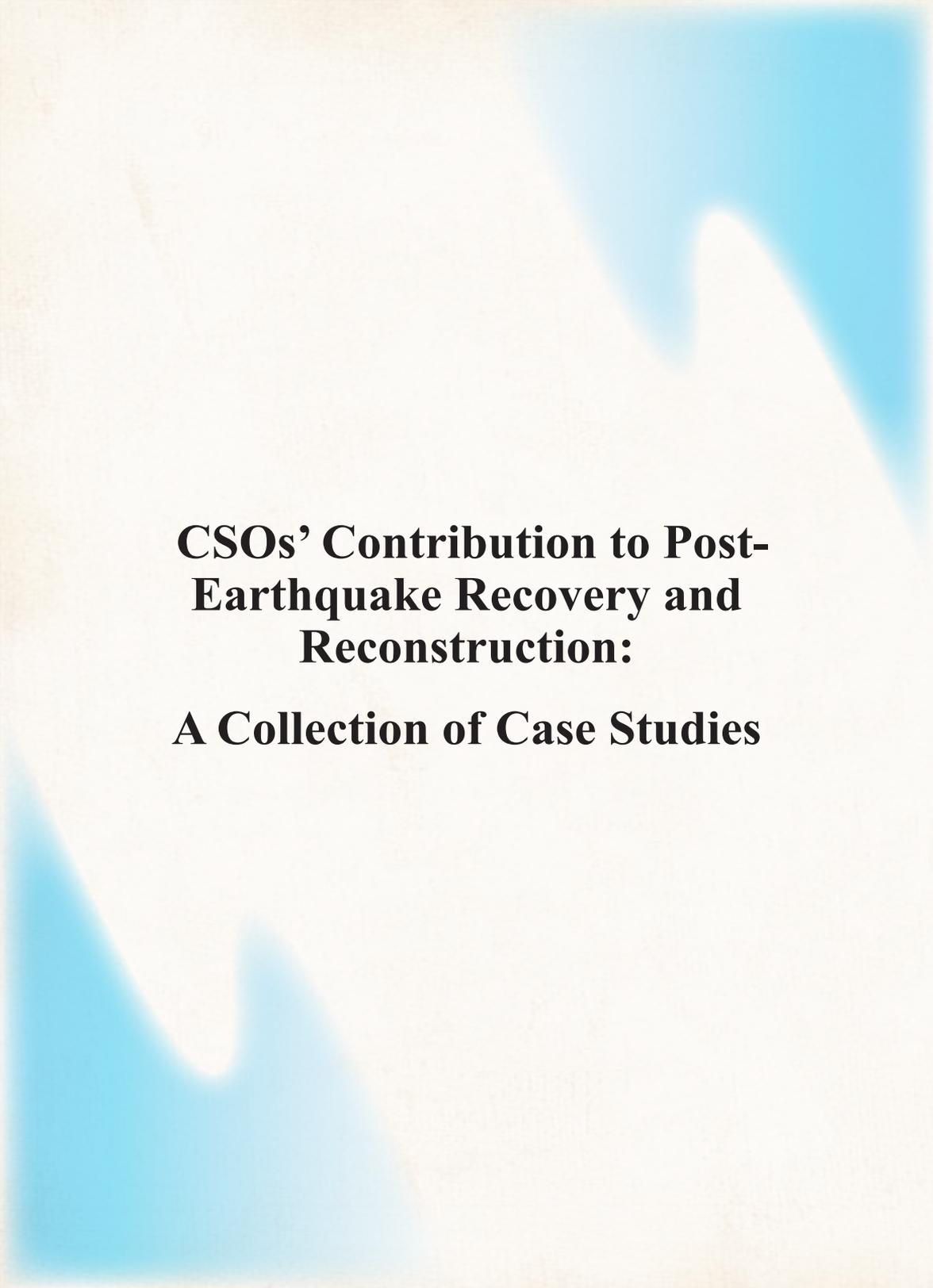




**CSOs' Contribution to Post-Earthquake  
Recovery and Reconstruction:**

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**A Collection of Case Studies**



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Reconstruction:  
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# Preface

In the aftermath of the devastating Gorkha Earthquake in 2015, thousands of NGOs, CBOs and CSOs came together to support the affected families for relief, rehabilitation and in the later stage for reconstruction. A comprehensive assessment and documentation of such organizations' role and contribution to post-earthquake disaster response in Nepal has not been done yet but would be an interesting endeavour to demonstrate. In fact, NGOs work with the families and communities and are often the first responders to disasters but their importance tends to be overshadowed at other times.

With this realization, NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN) initiated a collection of some representative cases that show the involvement of NGOs helping families emerge from the 2015 earthquake. This collection has only 29 case studies and do not reflect the true scale of the contribution and engagement but these cases definitively provide a glimpse or a window to have look at how NGOs' small initiatives have been helpful in bringing changes in the lives of the people affected by the earthquake disaster.

We are thankful to all the contributors who have helped us to collect these cases. We are also thankful to the team of Dr. Raju Thapa from SBR Innovation for their expert contribution in the orientation, guidance and technical support to the case study collectors. NFN team who have made a lot of efforts in coordination, editing and bringing this publication in this shape deserve due recognition.

Finally, this collection was possible with supports from Fondation de France and Forus International. We are grateful for their financial supports to NFN for its initiatives to disaster risk reduction and management in Nepal.

Jitram Lama

President, NGO Federation of Nepal

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# Will to Live



April 25<sup>th</sup> 2015, was an incredibly difficult and desperate time for the people of Nepal. The Nepal earthquake (also known as the Gorkha earthquake) left an indelible mark on the communities, infrastructure, and landscape of our nation, killing nearly 9,000 people, leaving 22,000 injured, and causing \$10 billion USD worth of damage.

Daily life in the aftermath of this earthquake became chaos for 2-3 days following, as people were left to save themselves and their families from the immediate dangers and further long-term ramifications of the damage caused. Homes and businesses were destroyed leaving many without income, food, or shelter.

Sahyatri Samaj Nepal has been working against gender-based violence and towards women's access to justice since 2007. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake our focus remains in line with these targeted issues. The destruction of the earthquake left the country in chaos ;women, and specific targeted aid, have been largely neglected. Our attentions therefore were directed towards aid and relief for women and children, as they prove to be most at risk in the event of natural disaster, in particular pregnant and maternal women.

The dire circumstances created by the earthquake left many members of these more vulnerable groups at significantly heightened risk as they have been forced into situations without guaranteed access to food, shelter, or necessary medicine, having to sleep in temporary shelters or often in the open air. In response to this we have built safe spaces in 5 places in the Dhading district for refuge and care of these groups. We have invited pregnant women and midwives to come to these safe spaces to be provided with hot water, food, shelter, and appropriate care. Alongside this we have also distributed instant food, temporary shelters, and cloth packages for pregnant and maternal women.

While distributing this relief we reached Katunje VDC of Dhading where those affected, including pregnant and maternal women, were coming to receive aid. Among those women was Sani Maya (name changed), a mother who had just given birth to her child on the same date as the earthquake. The houses in her village, including her own, had been destroyed during the tremors and aside from some clothes she had managed to pull from the rubble she and her newborn were entirely without shelter. Completely exposed to the elements, as well as recurring tremors, Sani Maya was forced to fashion a makeshift shelter in her yard out of clothing, between a wall and a shed, to avoid the rains. They remained sheltered this way for 12 consecutive days. When we met her, her hands and feet were swollen, and her newborn was suffering from pneumonia. When asked, in regard to this situation as well as others, about the lack of relief so far provided, VDC representatives replied that 200 tents of tarpaulin sheets have been sent by the district administration office, but due to the scarceness of this relief, issues of dispute would undoubtedly arise from uneven distribution. When further questioned about distributing relief to risk groups such as pregnant women, people with disabilities, or senior citizens could be prioritized, their answer was the scale of the disaster and the destruction it has caused had created great difficulty for all. Thus, relief would not be distributed until they had received

sufficient provisions for everyone. Listening to this response, it was apparent that Sani Maya’s swollen body parts, and the condition of her newborn child evoked no extra sense of responsibility in the representative.

In response to this discovered inability to provide relief to affected groups we spoke to the Chief District Officer of the Disaster Management Committee about Sani Maya’s circumstances, and those of many others like her. We asked him to immediately determine the group for prioritization of relief distribution and issue a circular. We made the decision from the Protection Cluster and the Disaster Management Committee and lobbied for its implementation. It was successfully implemented in some places, although not very easily.



The experienced gained working during this disaster conveys that the effects and severity of such widespread natural disaster are largely universal, in that they can affect everyone. However, we have learnt a great deal about which groups are most at risk and how to be more adequately prepared in future to provide them with adequate and rapid aid and relief. Disasters such as the Nepal earthquake have proven to be incredibly deadly to human life and health, therefore those taking the lead in future disaster management need to be able to identify these vulnerable groups and be prepared in advance so as to effectively minimize the cost to human life.

*Collected By: Radhika Sapkota, Dhading*

## Dilemma of Eating



The earthquake of 2015 was devastating to say the least. Places of work and homes were destroyed, people were killed and injured, and hospitals were full as a result. Due to the destruction, many of those injured were having to be transported via helicopter to the district hospital from various places within the district. Upon arrival the majority of patients had to be given immediate treatment and discharged due to the lack of capacity. Many injured people from the northern region were brought in without anyone to care for them. Most of these patients had broken legs, arms, and ribs and were consequently helpless without anyone to assist them during their stay at hospital, as well as after being hastily discharged.

Volunteers made efforts towards aiding the circumstances of these people, sending injured people to the Nilkantha Resource Centre where they could be fed and cared for by a few organisations. These efforts however could not be effectively sustained for long and news of lack of access to food for those injured began to emerge. Sahayatri Samaj Nepal prioritised women and children, working to give them aid primarily as a more vulnerable group, however the emerging news of a lack of sufficient food could not be ignored. We visited the Resource Centre and the condition of the place compelled us to quickly mobilise additional aid to so that we could do something to help.

We found two female volunteers to help in this effort and asked the Chief District Officer for food supply. The volunteers began preparing, feeding, and taking care of the injured. After 2 days of helping them, we went to the Resource Centre and one of our volunteers informed that an injured woman there had not eaten for two days. After speaking with this woman to find out why she had not been eating and after at first saying nothing, tears ran down her cheeks as she began to weep. We consoled her and was stunned after hearing her reason for not eating these past two days.

*She said to me “Didi, I have plaster on my leg because I have a broken leg. There is a toilet here, but for that I have to sit on the floor, which I’m unable to do. There is only one toilet in the Resource Centre and it is very dirty. If I eat and drink water, I’ll need to go to the toilet, so I have avoided it”.*

We were left confused at this, as while our efforts had been single tracked, directed only at providing food for these people, this problem was indeed multilayered and far beyond what we had initially imagined. We were deeply upset by this and presented with a dilemma as to what our next steps should be. I immediately called my colleagues and discussed this issue, and what our next approach should be. We spoke with Nirjala Ji from Nepal Disabled Women’s Association and recounted to her the whole story, asking for disability-friendly toilets to be sent in aid of this. She gave me the contacts of a group who built such disabled friendly toilets, and they assured me they would come the very next day.



They came the following day and built 5 disability-friendly toilets. We were overwhelmed with joy as all the injured were blessing me for my efforts. We asked the previously injured women if she would eat now and she exclaimed that she would now eat all she could.

*Collected By: Radhika Sapkota, Dhading*

## Brightness After a Dark Night

Mr Purna Bdr Magar, resident of Jwalamukhi, is a 53 years old man, belonging to a financially weak family. His family being from a lower economic background, their livelihoods depend upon daily wages. Mr Magar is a farmer and works in the paddy field. He has two brothers, among who he is the youngest. He grew up gaining skills such as masonry and carpentry when he was young, then started working as a carpenter in his own and neighbouring communities which he did happily for several years.



Unfortunately, he suffered a fall when he was working on the roof of a house in 1996 and ended up in hospital as a result. After the fall, he suffered from a spinal injury, his body was not like it used to be. The hospital in Kathmandu was able to give him treatment but suggested his family take him to India for further treatment, however due their financial situation this was not possible, so he was just prescribed medicine for the pain. Upon returning home, all he was able to do was lay down on a mat, unable to work, earn money, or partake in physical activity. After some time, as a result of his injuries and forced idleness his family members began to ignore him and eventually his brothers and mother lived separately. He said “I tried to leave the world but even my body did not support me... I cry a lot and scold myself thinking what sin I did”. As time passed by, he stayed in a small cottage constructed with the support of his friend. Some of his friends used to come and stay, but no one would be by his side at night. Simple tasks such as going to the toilet, fetching water, and washing clothes all became farfetched dream for him to do on his own, says Mr Magar.

On the day of the earthquake he was laying on the floor of the cottage. His body started to shake, and the roof of his cottage fell down over his body leaving him covered in the debris. He tried to escape but was unable to remove the materials over him. After some time, some of the neighbours arrived and helped him remove all the debris from his body and took him to safety. His cottage was completely destroyed. He was forced to stay on the floor outside exposed to open skies, wind, and rain. A few days later he received a tarpaulin sheet from FOCUS Nepal, Dhading which provided some much-needed relief. However, even one year after the Nepal earthquake Mr Magar was still living inside the tarpaulin sheet in Jwalamukh, 7 Dhading. When we went to meet him; he was lying on his mat. We said Namaste Purna Dai than he looked towards us and said, “Please support me to register for the process of my name in National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) housing list because NRA hasn’t registered my name in the reconstruction housing grant”. We asked him why NRA had not mentioned his name, and he listed his health condition, food availability, support of the community people, etc. We spoke with him for a while and promised him we would talk to the ward office and NRA, after which he expressed that he was burden for this earth, neither can he live nor could he die.



We went to the ward office of Jwalamukhi 7 and informed them about the dire circumstances faced by Mr Magar, as well as requesting Christian Aid Nepal to provide support on Model house construction. FOCUS Nepal, Dhading played a vital role in supporting Mr Magar with the construction of a new house. Christian Aid Nepal, implementing this project in partnership with FOCUS Nepal, decided to

construct 6 Model houses (Prototype in its project areas for vulnerable people). We informed the ward office of our support on Model house construction and of the status of some disadvantaged people along with Mr Magar. Mr Magar

was chosen as a beneficiary and we went to meet Mr Magar to inform him of the support he was going to receive. We informed him that Earthquake Recovery Program Nepal (ERP) was being implemented by FOCUS Nepal in partnership with Christian Aid, knowing of his difficult condition and had agreed to support with the construction of a model house. He was elated upon receiving the news and expressed his gratefulness to the organization. “I do not have more things to say, fate cheated me, but you and your organization appear as gods to help me”.

A two-roomed house, with fencing around a yard, and a comfortable toilet was constructed for Mr Magar. Many of his neighbours took part in the construction of his house. The organisations contributed NPR 293,000 towards his new house. After construction, his mother came to live in his house with him. He makes use of his



two rooms as a bedroom and a retail and tea shop. He now sells goods (noodles, biscuits, chocolates, cigarettes etc.). Five months ago, during our visit to Mr Magar, he thanked us and asked that we continue to support other vulnerable people like him. He now earns four to five hundred rupees a day from his retail/te shop and has become a source of inspiration for several other vulnerable individuals in his area. We can conclude from this story that FOCUS Nepal & Christian Aid in these hard times have added immensely to the quality of lives of vulnerable people of society through their work.

*Collected By: Dhruba Gyawali, Dhading*

# Farmers Engaging in Commercial Farming

Like many other places, a Venighat Rorang village, comprised of predominantly Tamang and Chepang communities; it was also subject to the devastating effects of the 2015 earthquake. Immediately afterwards, in support of the urgent need for temporary housing (alongside other reconstruction efforts) trees were cut down haphazardly leaving hills around the village bare. Therefore, there was fear of possible landslides, flooding, soil erosion, and other further calamities.

In response to this, Prayas Nepal and UMN Dhading cluster organised the Disaster Risk Reduction Plan Program with the aim to identify and rehabilitate such areas in the aftermath of the earthquake. Alongside this they took the opportunity to use this program to simultaneously work towards other wider issues, such as the impact of climate change and global warming, by coordinating tree planting efforts within local community forests.

In order to encourage plantation, upon selecting appropriate forests where this initiative could be carried out we provided 7 days of nursery management training to the community forest members. Following this training period Prayas Nepal helped provide seeds, poly bags, plastic, and other necessary materials as well as continuing to give necessary advice and suggestions where needed.

Vishnu Prasad Sedhai, a member of the Siddhakali Community Forest and a trainee in nursery management, is one of the recipients of our assistance in nursery production. He reports that the training provided by Prayas Nepal has helped significantly in establishing the nursery. He says that he has been actively involved in this work, with special interest in the environmental policy that if you cut down one tree, three new plants need to be planted.



“Prayas Nepal has helped me in this work, and I have been working day and night to make this successful. I was unable to produce more than 50%, perhaps because of the quality of the seeds, but I am still satisfied as I have still been able to grow 10,000 of the targeted 20,000 saplings. Agriculture is the main source of income for my family. One of my family members also works as the chairperson of Siddikali self-reliant women’s group. As I have had other work to do, I have hired some people to collect soil and fill the bags.” Vishnu Prasad Sedhai explains.

When asked, in regard to the visits from the heads of Prayas Nepal and UNM to the nursery, what they said and how he felt, he replied “I am very happy. They gave me advice and encouragement and I have learned a lot from them”. His efforts have also been appreciated by Mr. Tank Thapa, the chairman of Siddhakali Community Forest and the current ward chairman, who suggests he take the initiative in the long run, offering to provide the support.

Many people from the community make visits to the nursery, including various members of self-reliant women’s groups, illustrating the success of the program so far and the subsequent support from the surrounding community. One villager has even offered to grow 4,000 Chiuri saplings for him and in return he would manage the planting material. Vishnu Prasad Sedhai says he is very happy with this, and if Prayas Nepal continue to provide aid in this endeavor, it would assist him in being able to run a long-term business, while benefitting the surrounding environment. He elaborates in regard to this that he has a great internal desire continue in these efforts as he is contributing to his own livelihood on the business side, but also to a greener environment, to the advantage of both his local community and wider community of Nepal.

To conclude, he said “I would like to thank Nepal Dhading from the bottom of my heart for its efforts in providing training, advice, suggestions, and support for the production of plants to help protect the global environment”. He is filled with hope and expectation that they continue in this fruitful relationship to carry out such work in the future.

*Collected By: Renuka Rupakheti, Dhading*

# Khaniyakharka Water Supply Scheme



The Khaniyakharka Small Scale Irrigation Scheme is located at Siddhalek RM ward number 1, Dhading and is roughly 12 kilometers from Dhading Bensi, the district headquarters. The community comprises mostly Janajati groups. There are altogether 16 households including Magar, Ghale, and Tamang in Khaniyakharka with a total population of 62 (31 men and 31 women). Almost every household was displaced from the northern mountainous area of Dhading as a result of the 2015 earthquake.

We visited this community a year ago, during the implementation of the Sampanna Resilient Nepal program, and the local community of Khaniyakharka expressed to us the problems they faced regarding drinking water and irrigation facilities. In spite of having nearby water sources and fertile land, due to a lack of water facilities and proper irrigation, the people of this community lived in hardship; (most people earned their income selling local alcohol at the market in Dhading Bensi). People are forced to walk two hours daily to fill buckets with water which is subsequently affecting the health and education of local children.

Our teams conducted discussion with people within the community and then informed the ward office of the overall status of the community. Alongside this some members of the community took it upon themselves to independently report to the ward office the current scarcity of water facilities. In addition, we conducted meetings in the presence of the ward office and, based on these reports, made an official decision to aid in supporting provision of drinking water and irrigation facilities.



In response, we formed the Small-Scale Schemes Construction Committee, comprised of seven members under the leadership of a female member. The Sampanna Resilient Nepal program was funded by Christian Aid and implemented by FOCUS Nepal in Khaniyakharka. We then constructed a collection chamber, constructed RVT (11,000 liters), repaired an RVT (10,000 liters), and supported with the distribution pipelines. The Sampanna Resilient Nepal project spent NPR 300,000 towards completing construction efforts.

After the construction of this scheme each Household in Khaniyakharka gained access to water supply and irrigation facilities. “I used to only be able to bath once a week before the construction of the water supply scheme, but now I can bath daily” Mr. Mahendra Ghale told us. The implementation of the scheme



supported access to drinking water, feeding animals, growing vegetables etc. Farmers in the village started tunnel farming, made possible by the support from Sampanna Resilient Nepal. As a result, the people of the community are very happy and busy with agricultural work, producing vegetables inside and outside the plastic tunnel. The health and education of the villages children as also improved considerably as a result.



“I sold more than one lakh of vegetables just within this year” says Mr. Mahendra Ghale. We also spoke to Mrs. Sunita Ghale who expanded on this change in livelihood, saying “I used to make local alcohol and sell it to the market for my livelihood and it was very hard to stay safe from police and government authorities, but now fresh vegetables are

growing in the farm which I can take to the market without fear”.

It is evident that this project has been completed to the significant benefit and fortune of the community. The people are much happier as a result of the project and the subsequent organisation and mobilisation toward meaningful and successful work within the community. The Khaniyakharka Small Scale water supply and irrigation scheme therefore acts as an example of how the right actions can bring about significant and meaningful change.

*Collected By: Dhruba Gyawali, Dhading*

## The Elderly's Attempts at Reconstruction



69-year-old Shree Maya Tamang and her 75-year-old husband live in a small cottage in Satyavedi VDC Ward no. 8, Dhading. They have nobody there to help or support them and their only daughter is unemployed.

Being financially weak, they were unable to construct a toilet and in the absence of appropriate toilet facilities the norm used to be to go out in open areas (such as the jungle). However, following the orientation meeting on the sanitation material distribution program conducted by OXFAM and COSOC after the 2015 earthquake, Shree Maya Tamang was inspired, and began digging their own toilet pit alongside her husband the following day. Despite her age she was very energetic and the two of them undertook this endeavor, and began the construction of a toilet structure, utilizing locally available stones and mud.

The two of them were able to complete construction of their toilet within seven days of the scheduled sanitation material distribution program. To support these types of family, OXFAM and COSOC Nepal distributed support for toilet construction (for those without toilet access) and repairs, according to types of damage under the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene program. Shree Maya Tamang's family were one of the families who received such aid for toilet construction. We provided pan, pipe, rod, cement, binding wire, plain sheet tower bolt, handles, nails, and hinges.

Due to the scarcity, and subsequent cost of manpower to construct toilet facilities, the husband and wife worked hard day by day, on their own, toward the eventual construction of their own toilet in an impressively short period of time. As of today, their initiative and perseverance serve as an inspiration for others in their village, and wider society. Despite both their ages they adopted a positive attitude towards the independent construction of their toilet, encouraging other villagers to do the same, promoting a culture of striving towards improving one's own circumstances.

Now a day's water buckets and soap can be seen outside of their home conveying their adoption of hygienic habits such as washing their hands before eating, after household/field work, and using their new toilet. Their hygiene, and therefore health and quality of life, has changed considerably as a result of their newly constructed toilet. Now there is no open defecation in Satyadevi VDC and the newly educated community now makes sure to cover their drinking water and regularly wash their hands. Shree Maya Tamang happily accepted and said with a smile on her face that hand washing practices help to protect them from disease. She and her family have served as an example in the Satyadevi VDC, propelling the efforts of OXFAM and COSOC to improve hygiene and sanitation in the area.

*Collected By: Dhruva Gyawali, Dhading*

## Overjoyed By Temporary Shelter

Mr Purna Bdr Magar, resident of Jwalamukhi, is a 53 years old man, belonging to Balatol of Changunarayan Municipality (originally Tathali VDC), situated in the northeastern part of Bhaktapur district, is about 4 kilometers from Chyamasingh, Bhaktapur on the Puryanala road, falling to the north of Tathali Bridge. Many people from the Newar community live here, where agriculture is the main occupation. Samar Bala, 75, is one of the people living here in this community. He says he owns 4 acres of land, a small house made of mud, and earns his living by manual labour. He has only one daughter, who is married, and his wife died, so he lives alone.

The catastrophic earthquake that struck Nepal on April 29, 2015 destroyed the house built with his life savings. In the aftermath of the earthquake he no longer had shelter, food, support from family, and was already too old and weak so earn a sufficient living to earn and support himself. As a result, he was forced to take shelter in a neighbor's house and was left in a miserable condition in his old age, evoking great sadness in all those around him.

To his fortune however, Rupantar Nepal, located in Magar village of Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, an NGO affiliated to Bhaktapur District Branch of Nepal (with the support of Lutheran World Federation) selected an earthquake-damaged settlement in Balatol of Tathali under the temporary housing construction program. This program was directed specifically towards people with very low income. Upon the construction of temporary houses, 18 other temporary homes, including one for Samar Bala, were constructed in the area. Many people like Samar Bala have benefited significantly from this and the entire settlement has become a newly residential area.

All those affected by the 2015 earthquake and its disastrous aftermath were elated with the provision of temporary accommodation, none more than Samar

Bala. He proudly declared “This temporary house is no less than a palace for me. I was not in any condition to build a house. The people who built this house have done so much for me that I could repay them in a lifetime”.

Following the time it has taken thus far to recover from the dire circumstances put upon many by the 2015 earthquake, walking through these type of settlements today, happiness lines can be seen on the faces of those like Samar Bala, as a direct result of the much needed support offered by these temporary housing programs.

*Collected By: Sarmila Lawaju, Bhaktapur*

## Water Canal after the Earthquake

Mulkharka Village of Pinda VDC, located 12 kilometers uphill from Adamghat Highway is a model agricultural village. The village is home to 32 households and house about 300 ropanis (38 acres) of irrigable land. A farmer, Kumar Subedi, says that the damage of the earthquake was not limited to just their homes and cowsheds, but also the irrigation canal that served these 300 ropanis of agricultural land.



While the issue of destroyed homes and the need for shelter was managed, the damage done to the irrigation canal posed significant long-term difficulties, as it would significantly hinder any future agricultural production in the wake of the earthquake. Another farmer, Thakur Pandit, told us of efforts towards remedy of this problem saying, “We made a ditch by putting lime and sapwood on top of the wood”. Prayas Nepal and United Mission to Nepal organized a Disaster Management Program, providing the village with rods, cement, and wire. With this much needed aid they were able to construct a 70-meter RCC ditch in the landslide area with the material provided and resolve the water problem. Where before it took a week to irrigate the fields, after the help of Prayas Nepal it now takes only two days. There is now hope that the paddy production will be able to rise back up, eventually to pre-earthquake levels. In addition to this we were also able to start a self-reliant women’s group. The villagers were incredibly grateful for the aid provided by Prayas Nepal and thanked them with the expectation of continuous support in the days to come.

*Collected By: Renuka Rupakheti, Dhading*

# Youth Led Community Development



*“We being the young generation feel shy and hesitate to participate in development activities, sometimes this participation determines the construction work and development.”*

This statement is of youth who has been continuously working for the Dadagaun water supply scheme in Dhading district, without saying, for days and nights for village development. A 32-year-old youth Mr. Ramu Timilsena is working with full power and positive energy, while encouraging and gathering other youths for the construction of a water supply to end the water scarcity. These youths came together to start the work with different tools (*JYAWAL and Level*) in their hands. He says, being the younger generation, they often feel shy and hesitate to participate in development activities, because they fear of slowing down the development of society and failing the construction work. He wanted to change this hesitant outlook and started with himself.

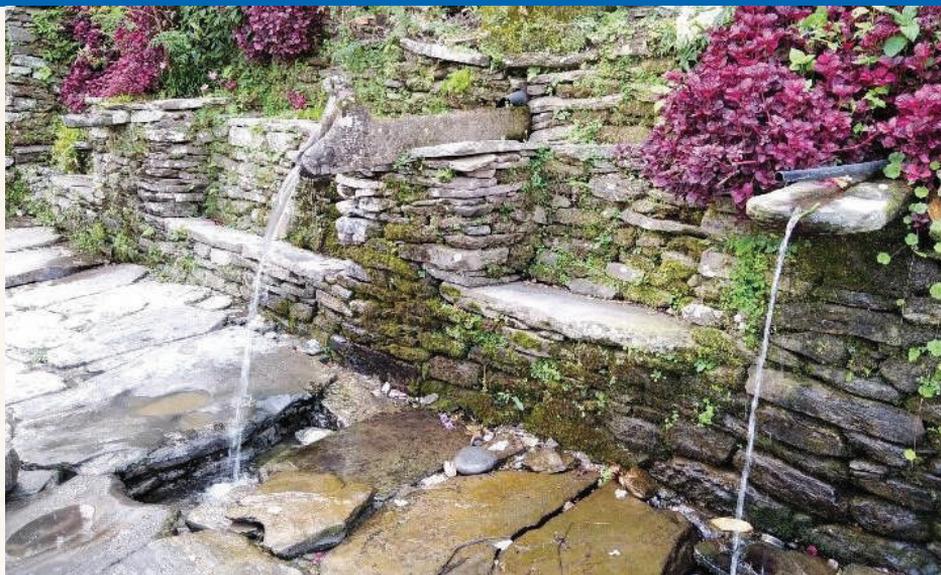
April 25, 2015 brought the devastating earthquake that affected thousands of people, in particular in the district of Dhading. Following the earthquake, an emergency response carried out by COSOC Nepal, in partnership with OXFAM, implemented a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene program. Under the WASH program, the Dadagaun Water Supply Scheme is the biggest project of Tripureshor VDC, having a total estimated project cost of around NRs. 280,000. Mr. Ramu Timilsena, along with other youth, adults, and elderly people started to work together towards the Dadagaun Water Supply Scheme.



The seemingly impossible undertaking of such a large project has made incredible progress, as they completed almost 50% of the work in just 2 months. Now, with the leading role played by the group of youths, they have now unexpectedly completed the Dadagaun WSHS. Around 50 households have benefitted from the scheme, now having easily accessible water facilities, including drinking water. Alongside this work, OXFAM Nepal and COSOC Nepal has additionally complete 4 WSHS and constructed WASH facilities at 4 schools.

*Collected By: Dhruba Gyawali, Dhading*

## Prosperity Came by Connecting Taps



Tamakoshi village municipality war number 2, Kharidhunga, has 68 houses. Water scarcity is a serious and prevalent issue in this area. Even after travelling half an hour for drinking water, villagers had to wait in line to get their water, allowing little chance to use it for their fields. It was the norm for villagers to walk great distances to fetch water for sanitation purposes, carry heavy loads to the river to wash clothing, and to be forced to use rivers and streams as toilets

Furthermore, during the 2015 earthquake which heavily affected the area, nearby water sources were destroyed. On top of the destruction of homes, sources of water were made less accessible and taps were deteriorated. Nar Bahadur Karki, (Chairman of Jaya's Dhara Drinking Water and Sanitation Schemes' Consumer Committee), said that a drinking water project had been constructed for the first

time in the region with the help of Dandapakhar, a densely populated hilly area in 1984. However, according to him, neither government or non-governmental sectors had invested in the drinking water project in the village. As a result the people of Kharidhunga whose taps and water pipelines were damaged in the earthquake five years ago were left without any water supply.

Following the earthquake and the damage it caused to water taps, locals temporarily started using water by making taps and appealed to the then Jhule VDC, District Development Committee Dolakha and various organisations for the implementation of the drinking water project. Unfortunately, government bodies could not invest as the then local bodies had limited resources. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that came for relief distribution following the earthquake could also not work in this area as they were prioritising more vulnerable areas elsewhere. However, three years ago, after time had past since the earthquake and initial waves of relief, a survey of drinking water projects was carried out under the Dolakha program of integrated shelter, climate adaption, and disaster risk reduction program in partnership with Christian Aid and Community Development Forum. Raju Thapa, the Chairman of the Community Development Forum, said that the local level Tamakoshi municipality has also mobilized resources as per the request made for the implementation of the plan as there is dire need for drinking water the area. In Tamakoshi village municipality ward number 2, drinking water taps have been connected to the house of Kharidhunga in Savik Jhule VDC.

Hem Kumar Karki of Kharidhunga Patle said, “For the first time in my life, I have been able to drink clean water from the house itself”. Every house here has running water with the meter connected near the stream. “When the water falls from the tap, the meter also rotates. The more water is spent, the more money is raised”, said Sushila Karki. “Now it is easier for sanitation and even for livestock”. She is confident that she will be able to spend time planting vegetables and attending to other work instead of travelling to fetch water. She recollected, “In the past, we had to go far away for the water and it took at least half an hour to fetch it”. With the financial support of Christian Aid and Community Development Forum Nepal, water has reached every household through the local consumer committee.

In total 68 taps have been constructed from Jay’s drinking water project and

408 people have benefited from this. Chairman of the Drinking Water and Sanitation Consumers Committee Nara Bahadur Karki stated that cash donation have reached NPR 2,853,000 and NPR 345,000 in manpower, amounting to NPR 3,198,000. New technology has been used to distribute water from RVT to households and Mr. Karki has said that the new drinking water project has finally been constructed after 36 years.



Similarly, Chairman of Paripakha Drinking Water and Sanitation Project Consumer Committee Santosh Karki informed that 28 taps have been constructed from this project. He said that the grant from the supportive organization has been increased to NPR 1.18 million, NPR 3 million from the village municipality, and NPR 1.68 million from the consumers. He said that 2 intakes, DT 1, DT RVT 1 and 2 thousand 398 meters of pipeline have been completed. He said that even though water meters have been installed in every household, additional plans are being made for its sustainable operation. A maintenance fund has also been set up for both the projects and the Consumer Committee is ready to charge regular fees from the consumers for regular maintenance.



After the construction of water taps in households, the locals have started using the time to fetch water to earn income. They have begun increasing vegetable production by irrigating Karesabari after water was made accessible to their houses. Local, Ram Kaji Kafle said that they have started selling vegetables such as potatoes and greens in the market. After the water scheme, now everyone has a toilet in their house. Sanitation is also available. Finally, locals as a result are also involved in commercial animal husbandry and vegetable farming.

*Collected By: Dil Bahadur KC, Dolakha*

# Entrepreneurs with Disabilities

Bhumlichowk village in Ward No. 6 of Gandaki is a village inhabited by Chepang, Gurung, Magar, Chhetris, and Bahuns. With only sloping, limited land the agricultural situation is dire. Even if they were to cultivate all year round, they're crops are still exposed to wildlife, such as monkeys, that destroy the crops. Despite these



difficulties abled people have found ways to get by, people with disabilities like Bhakta Bahadur Rana in this village lives an extremely difficult life.

Bhakta Bahadur's dream is to be able to support and live by himself. He was in pain because of his disability, but also as a result of the harsh and discriminatory words of his neighbours and relatives. However, he did not lose hope or courage, and thought

*"If I had some money in my hand, I would be able to do something myself".*

Unification Nepal Gorkha, conducts a project that aims towards vulnerable people. They sent staff into the field to identify those with disabilities and those at risk. While the organisation was collecting data of two Wards of the Municipality/Rural municipality, it became aware of many people like Bhakta Bahadur. However, unlike many others suffering from their disabilities, Bhakta had the incredible passion to make use of the skills he did have to try and support

himself. From a young age, he was skilled in weaving ‘Doko’ with his hands. He eventually decided that he would be able to support himself and manage his household by collecting bamboo in the village and weaving ‘Doko’. This profession not only matched his skillset but made sense for him as he did not have to go far to find a market for ‘Doko’ as Thumse is nearby.



The SAHAS project, implemented in partnership with Unification Nepal Gorkha and Dan Church Aid (DCA), selected Bhakta as a beneficiary and helped to develop his business plan. The project analysed investment opportunities, raw materials, production cost, market, and it was found that weaving had good financial potential.

The organisation arranged for a grant of NPR 30,000 to be received by Bhakta through a cooperative in the village to ensure his financial access (divided into several instalments according to stages of the business plan). His work would be monitored and supervised and he would be provided with additional loans on the basis of the progress.

Bhakta Bahadur, who has received the instalments of his grant, has so far earned more than NPR 50,000 from his business. He also claims that he has the raw materials to make around 50,000 more at present and states that he also received love and support from his family who helped to run his household. Program Coordinator Chandra Devkota expressed his happiness as the success of Bhakta’s dream. Ward Chairperson Jeevan Gurung also says that the organisation has continued working to select people from marginalised or vulnerable groups and has been able to focus on other physical infrastructures.

*Collected By: Hari Devkota, Gorkha*

# Desire to Become a Successful Entrepreneur

Out of the 77 districts of Nepal, Bhaktapur is a small district located in the Bagmati Province. This district in particular was subject to significant damage during the devastating Earthquake of 2015. Of the four municipalities of Bhaktapur district, Suryabinayak municipality falls in the east, home to Sanjay Bhandari, 22, son of Krishna Bahadur Bhandari of Ward No.4. Sanjay lost his father at the age of 10, embraces the notion that grief should be channeled and turned into strength. He lives with his mother in a two-storey house made from raw mud; they live off wages and struggle with financial problems.

However, during the earthquake of 2015, catastrophe struck and their house was destroyed leaving them homeless. Following this, he, along with his mother and sister, lived in a neighbor's house. Realising the direness of his current circumstances, the Bhaktapur chapter of NGO Federation of Nepal recommended to him three-months of culinary training which through a NGO, Rupantaran Nepal. After completing these three months of training as a cook, he was sent to Hotel Araniko in Dhulikhel in the Kayre district to undertake an internship. Upon the completion of internship, if his performance was up to the standards of the hotel, he would be paid a monthly salary of NPR10,000.

According to Sanjay, he succeeded in becoming financially independent by acquiring useful professional knowledge, imparted to him through the training program. Many of his family's current challenges are of financial nature, and so with his new found skills and occupation he hopes to someday build a home for his family, educate his sister and dreams for a better future.

*Collected By: Narayan Prasad Neupane, Bhaktapur*

# Graffiti Learning: Educational Murals for School Children

In wards 2 and 6 of Gandaki Rural Municipality, there are a total of 16 schools, in Tanglichowk and Bhumlichowk. Most of the children from the marginalized tribal Chepang Community attend these schools. Although these schools have developed and attempted to implement various schemes aimed toward improving the quality of studies, the expected improvement has proven difficult to achieve. Despite the successful increases in awareness surrounding the importance of education and the more widespread notion that one should focus on their education, the means of teaching in schools remain ill equipped to effectively support this new enthusiasm.



The school improvement plan aims to promote extracurricular activities and alternative means of learning in classrooms. Thus, the village municipality has formulated various schemes for the improvement of education and schools in the village.

The SAHAS project run in partnership with Denmark Smiling, Ekikaran Nepal Gorkha, and financially supported by DCA, has endeavoured to help students

by bringing ‘graffiti’ to the classroom, in an attempt to transform their learning environment. Where children before were taught in bare walled classrooms, they now learn within a creative space that helps to deliver areas of their learning through artistic visual means. Mr. Laxman Thapa Magar, a teacher from Dalyanyang Primary School, said that the children have been encouraged by this to study in their spare time upon arriving at school and in between lessons. As a result of educational murals created by this project the general knowledge of students has been observed to have improved, according to the Principal Mr.



Laj Kumari Thapa. The Graffiti writing program under the SAHAS project has made educators realise its utility and effectiveness as an educational tool. As a result, the same project has been continued in the nearby Makaipur Primary School through the initiative of Mr. Sahan Shrestha, Chairman of Ward No.7 of Shahid Lahkan Village Municipality of the Gorkha District. The pictures above and below were taken at the Makaipur School.

Lalita Adhikari, vice-chairperson of the rural municipality, says that the graffiti work through Ekikaran Nepal Gorkha has been successful in creating a positive impact in school learning. On top of this Mr. Krishna Bahadur Koirala, Chariman of Ekikaran Nepal Gorkha, said that the initiative has been very effective and satisfied the demands of schools.

*Collected By: Hari Devkota, Gorkha*

## Bishnu Maya: Pathway to Permanent Shelter

In the wake of the 2015 earthquake and the damage it has caused to housing, the Indian government has supported Nepal's Housing Reconstruction Project, Gorkha, and it has been able to achieve milestones in socio-technical facilitation in the first years of its implementation. Actively working on cases of vulnerable households after the earthquake, the project team has shown commendable effort, supporting these households in administrative, social, and technical ways.



Amongst such facilitations, Bishnu Maya Sarki, from a vulnerable household in Padelithok, Gorkha Municipality-5, is an example of this project's success; she has been successfully relocated to a newly constructed house as a result of the project. The completion of the new house has also resulted in the reunion of her family, as her son,

daughter-in-law, and grandchildren have been able to return from Chitwan to

live permanently with her. Bishnu Maya, in her old age was able to live happily in her new house with her son and family.

The house owner was finally shifted from temporary shelter to the newly reconstructed houses on June 4, 2019, in the presence of Mr. Ram Kumar Thapa, the Chairman of the respective Ward Mr Sitaram Shrestha, Executive Director of NGO partner SSICDC Gorkha. Settlement Chairman, and members of the cluster team. The local government has been highly appreciative of the reconstruction efforts to vulnerable households and has committed to offer continued support to the project in future.



Later on, reviewing the vulnerability status of Bishnu Maya, the cluster team asked the ward if it could support her further through additional construction as the house space was not enough to accommodate seven members. Subsequent to this, as per the commitment from the Chairman, he agreed to donate a CGI sheet to extend a flexible kitchen room adjacent to the house which would be fenced with bamboo sidewalls.

CGI sheet and labour charge amounting NPR 10,000 was supported by the ward and the team facilitated transport and handing over. The ward Chairman has stated how impressed he has been with the socio-technical facilitation the project has been carrying out over the district and is committed to coordinate and support on further needs and projects.

*Collected By: Sitaram Shrestha, Gorkha*

## Inclusion in Policy Formulation

Established in 1996, DPNet-Nepal is a network of national and international agencies working in the field of disaster risk reduction and management across four thematic areas: knowledge management, coordination and networking, capacity building, and policy advocacy. The network is also working as a secretariat of National Platform for the DRR, chaired by the Chief Executive of National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority.



DPNet-Nepal has coordinated and raised the basket fund from INGO's, through the Association of International NGO's Task Group on Disaster Management and Climate Change, for the formulation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (NDRRP) 2018 and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategic Plan of Action (NDRRSAP 2018-2030. During the consultation process, one NDRRP and NDRRSAP finalization meeting, two sub national consultation workshops, six district consultation workshops, 12 thematic working group meetings, and 12 steering committee meetings were organized. In order to maintain gender and social inclusion the network has tried to ensure the participation of women, people from ethnic minority/marginalized groups, and people with disabilities in all of the consultation programs and meetings.

The network has also tried to ensure that the venue of the program is accessible to people with disabilities. IEC materials like digital talking book and braille versions of the draft policy and strategic action plan were also developed for the consultation programs. Translators/Interpreters and braille script were used to interact and deliver the contents with participants with disabilities in sub national consultation workshops, which were helpful to disseminate the information to people with disabilities and make them feel comfortable sharing their concerns and issues in response.

*Collected By: Luna Khadka, Kathmandu*

## Insight into Commercial Farming

My name is Rabina Tamang. I live in Konjyosum Rural Municipality Ward Number 5 (former-Bhardeu, Ward Number 2). I have a family of 8 members consisting of my two daughters, two sisters-in-laws, grandfather, grandmother, my husband, and myself. My husband makes metal sculptures for a living and for one year I have been taking care of a poultry farm in Nallu. The earthquake destroyed our home and left us living in a temporary shelter. Fortunately, at a ward level meeting I found out that I had been selected to participate in RICOD's agricultural training program. I was familiar with the organization and its work in our community before the earthquake.

The training taught me a lot about commercial farming techniques such as off-season farming, the use of drip irrigation system, mulching techniques, mushroom farming, preparation of compost manure, and pest management using organic methods. Before the training I used to do off-season farming on a small scale, but now I can do vegetable farming in a more effective way. I have started making plastic tunnels to increase yields. Similarly, I received knowledge on how to use limited water effectively to water the vegetables through drip irrigation. This training has also taught me about mulching techniques that help me manage weeds; further I learned mushroom farming, mushroom preservation, its health and economic benefits and methods to sun-dry other vegetables. I learnt about making compost manure at home, which saves money and time as it is difficult to get manure on time during farming seasons in my village. On the last day of the training, I got the opportunity to participate in an exposure visit to an organic farm in Lele. I was able to see organic farming in practice and learn more about efficient and effective farming methods. Along with the training, RICOD gave me plastic sheets to make tunnels and local seeds which have helped me start my own commercial farming business.

The training motivated me to start the commercial farming business. Additionally, the exposure and visits with other farmers to Bandipur, Ghasikuwa, Kaski, Lumle, and Hemja gave me valuable skills and practical knowledge in commercial farming. The visit also gave me an opportunity to discuss farming techniques with other farmers that participated in the training. We discussed tunnel farming and its challenges, as well as strategies for marketing our products.

To begin with I constructed one bamboo tunnel but after some encouragement from the project team members I have now constructed three tunnels. Since then, I have been growing off-season vegetables, using organic pesticides and composting manure which has increased my yearly income. I can sell vegetables and manure from my farm and now make an average income of NPR 180,000 annually, additionally making approximately NPR 250,000 per year from poultry farming which is enough to cover all my expenses.

In the future I plan to install at least 20 plastic tunnels with insect nets in these tunnels. I hope to expand my business and become a more successful farmer. The trainings gave me insight into commercial agricultural farming and motivated me to expand my farming business. The trainings allowed me to improve my and my family's living standard by increasing my income substantially. The biggest impact is that the livelihood of my family has been the increased, we have improved living condition and are now able to provide better education to my daughters.

## Pain and Happiness



After the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, the aftershocks and tremors, felt months after, left people traumatized and distressed. Many were left with no homes and were bound to live in temporary shelters. The story here is about Kanxi Lawaju from Bhaktapur Metropolitan Ward Number 3, Durbar Square. She is 55 years old and has a family of six.

Prior to the earthquake she was living with her husband, daughter, and two sons along with their wives and two grandchildren. They sustained themselves through farming and manual labour. During the 2015 earthquake, a collapsed wall resulted in the death of her husband and grandson. Despite mourning the loss of her family members, Kanxi began to start a small teashop in order to make a living. During these difficult times, her landlord supported her and even levied her rent with further assistance from The Red Cross Society Nepal. Through hard work and perseverance this enabled Kanxi to become a happy, independent and, self-sustaining woman. Her landlord still supports her while she works in her tea shop and her children sustain themselves.

*Collected By: Dipana Sharma, Lalitpur*

## Safe Shelter



I am Rabindra Khatri. I live in Koniayosom Rural municipality, Ward Number 5, Bhardeu, Lalitpur. We now have 3 members in my family: my wife, my 4-year-old son and, myself. I was lucky to have been selected as a beneficiary for RICOD's top-up support at a ward citizen's forum. I was familiar with their work as they have implemented a health and nutrition project in Bhardeu.

The 2015 earthquake completely destroyed my house, killing my two daughters. I was out of Nepal for work when the earthquake happened. When I returned

home I was informed by my family that RICOD has distributed relief materials which helped my family manage and adjust to the destruction caused. My family has received food along with temporary shelter supplies which has largely helped as we would otherwise have no food and be homeless. I soon found out that the government was providing subsidies for house reconstruction. However, since I am illiterate, I found the procedure very difficult to complete and was unable to finish it alone.



The peer educator in my ward assisted with my understanding of the process: helping me fill out paperwork, completing bank forms and, other necessary formalities and documentation that enabled me to receive the housing subsidy. Unfortunately the government subsidy was not enough for me to construct my new home

entirely but encouraged me to start construction. I was given a top-up support from the RICOD which included 185kg of iron rod, 25 bags of cement, and 3 bundles of CGI sheets. In addition, the project team members frequently visited my house during the construction period. They guided me and the team is constructing my house so that it was earthquake resistant. With their guidance and monitoring, I have now constructed an earthquake resistant home for me and my family. I am confident that my new house will be able to withstand another earthquake, keeping my family safe. In addition to housing reconstruction, I was provided with one goat and 3 days of goat farming training. I am very thankful for their support during this very difficult time. I now live in an earthquake resistant home and have 3 kids. In the future, I plan to focus on goat farming to increase my income.

*Collected By: Rachana Maharjan, Patan*

## Happy To Move from Barn

Aitimaya Rai, 79, of Bhirkot in Bakaya Gaonpalika Ward Number 7 of Makwanpur is an old woman affected by the earthquake. She cannot hear well and needs assistance and physical gestures to communicate. As a result she is categorized as disabled in the earthquake risk groups. The earthquake destroyed her house and she has since been living in



a barn. She now, however, has her own house ready and has been living there for some time. She received some assistance from the Child Welfare Society Makwanpur through the SERB project run by Mercy Corps Nepal to help build her house. Aitimaya has forgotten the pain of those days when she had to live a miserable life in a cowshed after the earthquake destroyed her house.



The construction of the house was complete after the Nepal Reconstruction Authority (NRA) provided NPR 50,000. Aitimaya is living with her husband Ram Bahadur Rai, 80, supporting and keeping each other company in old age. Ram Bahadur said he felt helpless after the earth-



quake destroyed his house. “It seemed that all our support was lost after the earthquake destroyed the house where we were living,” said Ram Bahadur. The funds for the construction of their house were given in two instalments, as it was not certain when the house would be built without financial and technical support from the project.

Despite having two sons, the couple is struggling to make ends meet. They are grateful, however, that they can reside in an earthquake-resistant two-room house as a result of the help of this project. Without their aid, the couple believes they would still have been living in that barn. Ram Bahadur said, “I wonder who would look after the bereaved but we are grateful that you helped us build a home.”

*Collected By: Prakash Khatiwada, Makwanpur*

# The Goat Farming and the Livestock Rearing Business

My name is Ram Chandra Khadka and I am 51 years old. I live in the Godawari Municipality Ward Number 6 (Lele), Kalitar Lalipur. There are four members of my family: my wife, our two children, a son and daughter, and I. My son has gone overseas for higher education while my daughter is a recently certified lab technician. My wife is a housewife, while I use to work at a hotel as a cook. I worked for 23 years and earned around NPR20,000 per month. My income was somewhat sufficient to cover our monthly expenses but not enough for other miscellaneous expenses or savings. I quit my job and began working as an agriculture and livestock farmer. I was rearing goats but was unable to earn as much as anticipated. Unfortunately, the 2015 earthquake destroyed my home and we were unable to rebuild it. I am grateful to RICOD for their support alongside government subsidies, so that my family and I were able to construct and live in a new home.

I was selected to participate in the livelihood program as part of the EQ Recovery Project. I received three days of goat raising training in Lele. The training gave me knowledge in raising goats, such as methods of providing care to the goats at different stages of their life, their dietary requirements, methods of managing their sheds, disease prevention (i.e. Vaccinations), and other skills. We were taught about diseases that can be transferred from goats to humans known as zoonotic disease,s and how to be cautious to avoid it spreading. I also learnt about different breeds of goats and selecting the right breed for the environment we live in. As part of the training, I was allowed to visit a goat farm in Chitlang. From this visit, I gained further knowledge in goat rearing practices and was able to see what we had learned in practice.

When I completed the training, RICOD gave me an improved breed of goat along with its two kids, Urea Molasses Mineral Block (UMMB), and fodder

seeds. To date, the goat has given birth 4 times. Since receiving the training and the goat I have sold 8 male goats for NPR 120,000. I have used that money to pay the loan I had taken to pay for my son's studies. I am also able to sow the grass seeds provided to feed the goats.

The training has taught me that my previous farming techniques were quite primitive. It has made me aware of new, more effective techniques. The training improved my confidence and motivated me to continue in the livestock rearing business. I have since registered for a goat farm and am constructing a new one that will house the 25 goats I currently have. I plan to purchase more goats when the new farm is completed and hope to motivate fellow farmers to continue working hard as well. My income is now approximately NPR 65,000 from agriculture and livestock farming. I have been deworming and vaccinating my goats regularly, at least three times a year as I have learnt from the training. Goat rearing has given me more knowledge that I can use in my fields. I was also selected for a four-day livestock exposure visit and this provided me with more opportunities to learn about livestock rearing. The organization also started providing support for getting insurance for the goats I received, which is a good way of providing security against losses in case the goat dies.

I am very thankful to them for providing me and other farmers with the opportunity to learn and grow. The training and material support has increased my income and changed my life. I hope RICOD will continue to provide training like this to other small farmers like me.

*Collected By: Rachana Maharjan, Patan*

## Happiness for the Pair



With a collapsed house and physical illness, the life of Dhurba was nothing but a nightmare. Dhurba Adhikari, a resident of Ambhanjyang VDC-3 Dhading has been suffering from polio since the age of 12. He has a family of 5: his wife, two sons, and a daughter in law and they live together. The eldest son works in a private firm while the younger son studies in a college at Hetauda. Dhurba was a teacher at the primary level in Dhading Higher Secondary School he was not a permanent teacher at that school, he was being paid by a trust created by a development organization with consideration of his disability. As he is a person with a physical disability, he needs crutches to support him when walking.

The condition of the family worsened after the 2015 earthquake which destroyed his house. With a collapsed house and his disability, the time following the earthquake was very tough for Dhurba and his wife.

The family received NPR 15,000 from the government to reconstruct the house. With that money, they were hardly able to make a small house on their land. Life was not easy for them, schools shut down and he could not do any physical work to make money. Thus, reaching out to those in need, a local partner CCDN Nepal supported the pair with furniture that included desks, benches, and a whiteboard. With these materials, Dhurba planned to run a tuition center in his house so that he could sustain an income and livelihood. In comparison to the past situation, his condition is better now. Along with a job in a school, he is running his own tuition center. “This help from the SF project has become a boon in our family. I feel so confident today” he said.

Despite everything, this pair was worried about repaying the loan taken from the landlords and villagers for the reconstruction of the house. Additionally, they wished for the Government’s support to provide some skills developing training to his son that would assist him in finding his own employment opportunities.

During the project team visit, his wife Sita had expressed to the project team that she would be happy to receive training in advanced technology for vegetable and livestock farming that enhances production despite minimal land. Additionally, Dhurba was very confident that he will overcome his debts. He continued that the harsh phase of his life taught him to be confident, more patient, and hardworking. He wishes to clear his debt and also, continue to teach the children of his village making them independent and strong.

After some time, the organization provided Sita with five days of training in vegetable farming, a quintal of potato seed, chemical fertilizer, and pesticides. Eventually, she started potato farming, providing the family with some more income. Meanwhile, their elder son started a mobile shop in Narayangarh and the younger son now runs a stationery shop in Hetauda. With great satisfaction and a happy heart, Dhurba says, “Although I have some loans, I can cover them in some years as my salary has been raised and my wife earns from farming.” They are very much thankful to the organization for helping them to overcome their poverty and get through their hard days.

*Collected By: Kamal Kumar Bishwakarma, Makwanpur*

## Towards a Better Future



A resident of Kanchanthali, Aambhanjyan VDC -3, Samjhana Sunar is a 14-year old girl who has been through a lot in life. Daughter of Bhim Bahadur Sunar, Samjhana was living a normal life until the earthquake hit Nepal in 2015.

Bhim Bahadur is a blacksmith as it was their family business, completely relying on his income to sustain livelihood. The devastating earthquake of 2015 had a great impact on their life. Their house was completely destroyed and so was the iron machinery that her father used. Everything in the house including clothes, food, utensils, and more was buried and ruined. In addition to this, the earthquake left lasting mental health issues, traumatizing Samjhana. The scene of everything getting destroyed by the massive earthquake in front of her was so fresh in her mind that fear consumed her. She was mentally disturbed by that event and became scared of that recurring memory of the earthquake killing her family members. She used to keep yelling and tried to run away. “She was so

scared that even when we were all asleep during the night, she tried running as she felt the earthquake”, shared her father, who has been through a very hard time spending nights in an open tent with his family.



Samjhana has had PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) for almost 5 months while her parents faced other issues, that involved looking for shelter and food for the family. Sunar, then, received NPR 15,000 from the government, he used the aid in reconstructing his house, and to purchase CGI sheets. His *Aaran* (iron making room) was without a roof which hindered his tools from making business in the rainy season. However, in the meantime, CCDN (Partner of Stromme Foundation) supported Bhim Bahadur’s family with a bundle of CGI sheets, working tools, and a quintal of raw iron. He has layered the CGI sheets to continue his *Aaran* business. In the past, there was a *Balighare* (Giving fixed kinds especially crops in terms of wages on yearly basis) system in their village but it was almost eradicated and the villagers paid a certain amount while sharpening their iron tools. He added that the support from the SF project has helped him make iron tools every season. “Before, I could not work during

rainy seasons and had a difficult time. But my problem was solved because of SF supported project” shares Sunar. He earns approximately NPR 18,000 to 20,000 per month including his labour contribution. He spends 15 days of a month making tools and the other 15 days selling them.

Sunar had also been able to treat his daughters’ mental health issues. After gaining some money, he took her to a doctor for medical treatment where she was prescribed medication and received counselling. The counselling worked very well and with time her PTSD became manageable. Her very



close friend, Saraswati Sunar who faced the same problem as Samjhana, is also able to live a normal life today. Samjhana said, “I take medicines during common headaches and I do not get scared anymore like I used to”. Both girls have received counselling and know how to be alert and protect themselves. They had been studying in Dhading Higher Secondary school, Amabhanjyan, and are living a normal life, similar to life before the earthquake.

Later, Bhim Bahadur’s family received support from the National Reconstruction Authority for rebuilding their collapsed house. Now, they are living in the new house and Samjhana is studying in 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the education faculty. She says that she wants to be a teacher after completing a bachelor’s in education, but she fears that she will not be able to continue her studies because of her family’s poor economic condition. Her father is getting older day by day and can not work as he used to. She has a flicker of hope of getting help from an organization so that she can easily complete her study and achieve her aim in life.

*Collected By: Kamal Kumar Bishwakarma, Makwanpur*

## Junkiri's Tomato Farm

At the age of 63 years, Junkiri is no less energetic than any youngsters. Junakiri, who grew up working in the fields with her parents, has continued farming for a living. Junakiri from Kalika Rural Municipality ward 2, Gairaghar, Rasuwa, who had previously only been cultivating traditional crops, has begun growing tomatoes, using tunnels, in her old age. She was overjoyed after earning NPR 60,200 in one season selling the tomatoes she managed to grow from two tunnels. Laughing, she says, ‘Really, the work of intellect is more victorious than the work of force. The hands are the same and the area to cultivate is the same yet cultivating tomatoes is far better than planting traditional crops.’”

She observed how well she earned in 9 months from 2 tunnels with 6 acres of land and wondered why people go abroad to make a livelihood when, if effort is applied at right places, a lot of opportunities are present at home. Junakiri, who has suffered a lot in life, says that even such a small success still brings her great happiness.



Born in Nuwakot, she was married to Kulnidhi Lamichhane, a man 23 years older, when she was eight years old. In time they had 3 sons and 2 daughters, one of whom sadly died young.

Speaking about farming, she said, “My life was spent in the fields. My parents used to earn a living from farming, but the person I married was very poor, as there was little land to cultivate, and there was no other option to earn a living.”

Tears welled up in her eyes as she as she added, “I spent nights in the neighbourhood begging for millet flour to eat.” They eventually began to acquire land through their wages, but the land was purchased with any certification. Without a certificate, she involved herself in the village’s land rights forum to make the land her own and participated in the movement and campaign. Her daughter-in-law was a teacher and her son was a member of the Nepal Army, but she continued worked hard in the fields. She said that she was sad because she was not able to spend her time wherever she wanted.

In regard to her new-found tomato farming, she said, “Life was going by and there was an earthquake on 25 April 2015 and like everyone else, my house collapsed. I was worried about making a living”. She added that she was happy that an organization helped those affected by the earthquake, and that the Belabhumi Adhikar Manch and Atmanirbhar Kendra had helped them build temporary houses, vegetable farms and provided them with food supplies.

This is how she remembers getting involved in her business. One day she heard, in a meeting held at ‘Chautaro’, that people affected by the earthquake interested in cultivating vegetables would be helped. She recalls some of the sisters from the village cultivating potatoes, some onions, other garlic and cauliflower. Her neighbour had been farming tomatoes in the tunnel 3-4 years ago. She told her that tomato farming was more sustainable than other farms and that it was easy to earn money on a daily basis and cover household expenses.



The self-reliant center provided her with the technical knowledge on needed to grow her tomatoes (nursery keeping, planting, sewage and weeding, pest management, and pesticide training). Not only that, the technicians came to the house and offered advice,

suggestions, and encouragement. They informed her that in order to know whether her business was profitable or not, she had to calculate the investment and income, thus increasing the income by reducing the investment as much as possible and learn how to keep an account.

Since then she has sold 1260 kg of tomatoes; she gave away about 100 kgs to neighbours, family and she used some in her own kitchen. She figured out that she had earned NPR 60,200 by adding the same account. She added that the organization had also provided them with seeds, manure, water filling tanks, fertilizers, plastic for tunnelling, and pipes. With this aid, she worked hard, and her self-esteem grew as soon as there was unexpected income. Enthusiastically, she added, “I was very good at growing tomatoes, so the organization asked me to visit, but I could not as I suffer badly from car sickness, so my daughter-in-law helped me by going in my stead. She too learnt and went to places like Lalitpur, and found shops to buy good seeds. ”

Even though her son and daughter-in-law’s income was enough to support the household, she insisted on cultivating her own income, as it has helped her to gain financial freedom, cover her household expenses and holidays, and also pay for her grandchildren’s schooling expenses - helping her son and daughter in laws to save their own money. She is happy to not only survive her old age, but also to be independent.

*Collected By: Binod Lamichhane, Rasuwa*

## Our New House

Shyam Maya Ghaleni lives in Uttargaya rural municipality ward 5, of Rasuwa district. She is 42 years old and has a total of 5 family members that include her son, daughter, daughter-in-law, and husband. She migrated to Uttargaya-5, Bogatitar only a few months ago, having previously lived in ward 4. However, she and her fellow villagers have been relocating to other parts of the country because of the 2015 earthquake, as well as the landslide that occurred due to heavy rains on August 6, 2017 which has turned it into a dangerous area.

In April 2015, a catastrophic earthquake struck Nepal which destroyed their house. Afterwards, she and her family were living in a makeshift shelter near their collapsed house while waiting for government relief to build a new house. Soon, another disaster struck, and the village was at significant risk of landslides. There was a landslide on the night of August 16, 2017. She remembers the incident and said that a big landslide came from above their house and buried it in rubble. They had two TVs, a fridge, NPR 60,000 in cash, three goats, and a buffalo inside, all now buried; four people were buried in her neighbouring house. The incident was shocking and as a result 119 families from the village, including Shyam Maya's, were displaced immediately.

Tharka Bahadur Ghale is Shyam Maya's husband. She says, later they bought 1369 sq. feet of land in a new safer place, they were going to build a new house and live there, ." They received NPR 200,000 from the National Reconstruction Authority to the purchase the land and soon after jointly bought the land. Currently, Shyam Maya's family has built a two-roomed house and are living together in the same house. Although, house does not provide enough space for the family, they feel grateful just to have such a safe place to live. They built the new house at the cost of NPR 500,000 and again received NPR

300,000 from the National Reconstruction Authority The 'Digo Samadhan' team facilitated the process of purchasing land for Shyam Maya. She explains the team helped in facilitating the land acquisition process and taking government grants, which made them feel more confident and comfortable.

Shyam Maya, the leader of the Land Rights Forum, has played a significant role in distributing and coordinating relief to the displaced villagers in this time of crisis. Land Rights Forum and Atmanirbhar Resource Centre facilitated the relief works, in the neighbouring district Nuwakot, Kispang rural municipality ward 5, the affected groups of earthquake and landslides were settled in the colony (housing site) of Trishuli 3A Hydropower Company in Shanti Bazaar.

Shyam Maya says that immediately after the landslide, with the assistance of Atmanirbhar Resource Centre geologists were brought to the village to study the and made it quicker and easier for them to get certified on the Beneficiary List of Risky Areas. Only then, were they on the migration list and on the list to get relief assistance to buy land. Shyam Maya is a farmer and her family are engaged in farming and agricultural labor all year round. She has 32856 sq. feet of farm and 8214 sq. feet of vegetable farm in her village. Shyam Maya says that the food



produced from the farm is the livelihood of the family alongside the income from her husband, who is also a skilled housebuilder and carpenter.

*Collected By: Binod Lamichhane, Rasuwa*

## Building Safer Houses

Dorkumari Dahal, 70 years of age, lives alone and still works hard for her livelihood. She has been living alone for 25 years now in Sunkoshi rural municipality ward 7 at Sindhuli. Her house, which looks deserted and surrounded by bushes was also destroyed in the 2015 earthquake. Her name was included in the list of



beneficiaries for house construction but because of the problems of construction, procuring materials, lack of labourers, and many other issues she had given up on the idea of building a new home.

After her name was included in the list of earthquake-affected risk groups, technicians for the projects run by the Community Development Program Sindhuli and Mercy Corps Nepal went to her house looking for Dor Kumari Dahal. Her damaged house was in a deserted area and after asking her neighbors, they found out that she had gone to the nearby forest to cut grass. In regard to building a new house Dorkumari Dahal said, “How can an underprivileged person like me build a house? My hope of building a new house is over.”

After being informed about the Rehabilitation Assistance Program (SERB Project) for earthquake-affected households providing the technical assistance and an additional 50,000 grants, she stated that she wanted to build a two-roomed house. The construction work was monitored from time to time by the



project alongside offering help with the initial layout for the construction of her house.

An agreement was reached for the additional NPR 50,000 from the project and another NPR 25,000 was provided after the first DPC. During the monitoring, the project technicians also provided information and technical assistance to the earthquake-affected masons working on the construction of these houses. In addition, after the first DPC, they went to the ward office and filled out the form for the second installment from the Government of Nepal. After the roof of the house was installed, the remaining NPR 25,000 out of the NPR 50,000 received from the project was handed over to her in the presence of Hon'ble State Assembly Member Lekhnath Dahal on February 4, 2019. Dorkumari Dahal said that she had already received the last installment from the Government of Nepal and the SERB Project has succeeded in bringing Dorkumari Dahal, to an earthquake-resistant house. She is now living happily in her new home.

*Collected By: Janak B.K, Sindhuli*

## Conservation and Psycho-Social Support Programs

Rita B.K, a woman from a family in financial crisis, currently resides in Golanjor Rural Municipality ward 6, Sindhuli. She and her family of four, including her husband and two children, felt condemned to lead a miserable life following the 2015 earthquake and her family not being included in the post-earthquake reconstruction project. She exclaimed that she was not involved in any government or non-government program and went to governmental and non-governmental bodies for a long time without her words being listened to. Consequently, she became frustrated. However,



Sarokar Samaj Sindhuli served as relief to Rita by facilitating the solutions to many of her problems. Discussions took place with the team members working in the protection and psychosocial sector of this organization and finally Rita was included in both the goat rearing group and for the construction of her house. The organization coordinated with the Reconstruction Authority and put her on the list of earthquake affected citizens, under which her house was eventually built.



Rita and her husband were very diligent and in search of opportunities, so they kept in touch with and consulted experts in agriculture and animal husbandry. After some time, the BK couple started a vegetable farming business by renting 27380 sq. feet of land. Through the animal husbandry group, they also started earning

by enlisting help for construction and management of goat shed along with two goats from the organization. The B.K couple is now engaged in vegetable farming with their investment, earning NPR 200,000 annually from vegetable farming and NPR 500,000 annually from the sale of goats. Rita has become an exemplary figure within the group of farmers, motivating others. On top of this, she has even taken part in the pickle making training conducted by the organization and, following her example, many of the local women are now also registering for the fragrant pickle industry and taking the product to the market and selling it.

*Collected By: Laxman Ghimire, Sindhuli*

## Happy to Read Again

Sagar Bomjan loves coming to school these days. He studies in grade five at Shree Tin-kaniya Pra Vi Tapkedada School, Pipalmadi VDC, Sindhuli.

Sagar states that, “The earthquake was an extreme terror for us. A large number of lives & natural resources were destroyed, but luckily, I survived. My house was partially collapsed. I cried a lot and sat with my parents. Later I helped my parents in clearing the debris and rubble from my house. I couldn’t even think of going to school. While removing the debris, I found my books and copies, but they were worth nothing. At that moment, I thought of my school, studies, and friends but still feared from the disaster.

One day, I saw my school on the way to a nearby shop, which was also collapsed by the earthquake. I ran towards the school and went nearby the debris of my classroom. I saw Kapil Sir, my teacher, running a classroom in the ground. He saw me and asked me to come to school, but I couldn’t because I was stunned by that situation, I thought my classroom would never be built again, and I couldn’t come to school to study. I became very sad.

Almost a month later, I went to school and saw some people working there. I even saw my headteacher (Kapil Sir) in school. They were trying to rebuild some of the classrooms. This made me happy. Day by day, the structures were worked on, and finally, the classrooms were built, which were called the Transitional Learning Center (TLC).

The next day, the headteacher informed my parents that school had begun, and I should join. My other friends were also coming to school. I was very eager to meet my friends and teachers. I was extremely happy about going to school after such a long time of being away. There was a safe space for us to learn.

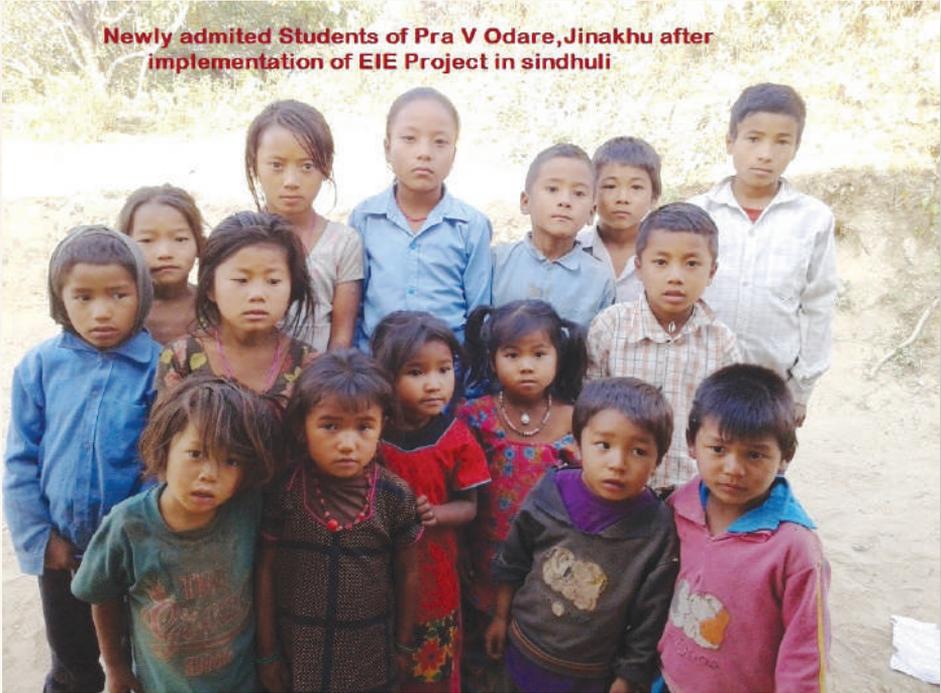
After a few days, I saw some people from the organizations. They were putting some banners outside of our classrooms, they were from Sahakarya Nepal and Finn Church Aid. They explained to everyone about the donors EU & UNICEF, who had helped in reconstructing our school. We all thanked them for their support in building TLCs to make sure that we could learn in a safe environment.

**Finally, I'm happy to study in the new TLC.”**

*Collected By: Anita Kumari Karki, Sahakarya Nepal, Gorkha*

# Real Happiness in Life

**Newly admitted Students of Pra V Odare, Jinakhu after implementation of EIE Project in sindhuli**



Dear reader, Greetings, my name is Sita Kumari Devkota. I work for Sahakarya Nepal, Sindhuli, as a Social mobilize, and have done since April 2016. This is a story of Sindhuli District located in the Central region of Nepal, it is about a school Education carries a lot of meaning in a person's life; it facilitates learning, knowledge, and skill. It completely changes and develops our minds and personalities, helping us to build a positive attitude and considered outlook on life. We must give importance to education, as one of the most important aspects of life, as it is one of the true sources of real happiness in our Life.

On April 15, 2015, the earthquake in Nepal resulted in a significant loss of life, infrastructure, and livelihoods. 90,000 people died, among which there were elderly, adults, and children; the people of Nepal are still feeling the deep trauma and shock of the disaster, even today. The European Union, and UNICEF in collaboration with Finn Church Aid, took upon themselves the responsibility to re-construct Government schools affected by the earthquake, in coordination with Sahakarya Nepal Sindhuli as an implementing partner in Sindhuli district.

Since the E.I.E Project was launched in the Sindhuli district, I have been responsible for the E.I.E project's social mobilization in Ambote and Jinakhu VDC. During my visits to the schools of those VDCs, I saw children playing on the ground with cattle grazing around, I interacted with those children and asked them a few questions about their education, they told me: "*Vuichalo le Padaita Sakiyo*" (the earthquake ended our education). I found out that they had not gone to school since the earthquake; one of the children said that their school and home had collapsed and that now they had to work to support their parents. I was speechless at their situation, I was determined to help them go to school.

At first, I went to the school Pra Vi Odare, Jinakhu and spoke to the Vice Principal, Mr. Netra Kumar Paudel, to find out the number of students who stopped coming to school after the earthquake. Looking at their records, the school administration found that a number of students had stopped coming to school, and some were not attending regularly. I then went to the homes of students who were not attending school. I spent some time with the students' families and tried to understand what difficulties they were facing and encouraged the parents to send their children to school. I tried to focus on the essence of education and its importance in human life.

While doing this, I finally reached the homes of those children I had seen earlier; they were surprised to see me. I asked how they were and talked to their parents. Their parents came, and I spoke to them about essence of education in human Life and why they should educate their children. They said, "*K garnu dukha cha, afu le ta padna sakiyena eni haru lai chai padaunu parla*" (We didn't study but we will try to teach our children and send them to school).

They agreed to send their children to school, I asked the children if they wanted to go to school or not. They all said yes and so I asked them to come to

school tomorrow. The next day I went to Pra Vi Odare, school and facilitated their admission at the school. The children thanked me and said goodbye to me (smiling). This was the best feeling I have ever felt.

After few weeks I visited the school again for WASH & Hygiene orientation. The orientation on hygiene promotion & WASH facility maintenance included proper hand washing steps, menstrual hygiene, personal hygiene, surrounding sanitations, and water purification methods. The parents, students, and the school were oriented for 3 hrs. I thanked all who attended for coming to the orientation and asked to continue what they had learned.

I asked Mrs. Mangalu Tamang (Principal) about school's environment and its current status. She said, "everything is going well". She also mentioned that UNICEF kit materials (ECD, Recreation, School in box, and Story bags) were distributed to the students so that they can



play and learn. Subsequently, students' attendance has increased, and the school have had quite a lot of new admissions. She said that the students are excited to get these materials with orientation on its benefits and using procedures.

She also thanked UNICEF, FCA, and Sahakarya Nepal for their assistance in building schools and providing materials and hope for the continued support to children's education. They also thanked me for my effort in the school.

*Collected By: Sita Kumari Devkota, Sahakarya Nepal, Sindhuli*

## Beloved wife and Son: Please return home

Ratna Bhakta Shrestha is a resident of Helambu R.M, ward 4, Birtagaun. He says, “I do not remember the last time I laughed, sung, or danced.” He further elaborates that it has been so many years since he laughed with his heart.

Being born and brought up in a poor family he spent his entire childhood in poverty. He did not have sufficient land for agriculture and he had to struggle and work hard to get two meals a day. He explains that since early childhood he had problems with his health thus he has a poor physical condition. In pursuit of income, he travelled to Malaysia in 2003 A.D with a working visa, leaving behind his wife and two sons in their old house. He made a good amount of money and sent it all to his wife. They had a dream of building a new house, schooling their children in a boarding school to help them become successful, and finally for him to live happily with his family.

When he finally returned to the country four years later, he went directly to his house with new clothes for his wife and toys and chocolates for his sons. Upon reaching the house however, he saw the door was locked, there was garbage in and around the house and the compound was covered with bushes. There was nobody inside the house. It appeared they had left the house many years ago and he did not know where they had gone. There were two buffalos and five goats, on top of which he had also sent her a total of NPR 400,000, but he did not know what she did with all that money. Who would not want to cry in that kind of situation, the man who came back to his house after four years with old and new dreams? At that time there was no availability of smartphones and STD calling was only available in Talamarang, Chanaute, and Melamchi. Therefore, it took a long time to receive any information. At that same time, there was a great earthquake that collapsed the house and buried all the grains, materials,

and clothes on top of his health deteriorating, as he suffered from T.B (Tuberculosis). He was on the verge of death.

He had to spend his money on treatment for his T.B and so he had no other sources of income to construct the house. He had been living in a small cottage for the following three years and he had no idea how to take the instalments from the bank and construct an EQ resistance house.

One day, some people came to his house, who called themselves staff from HELVETAS and CDECF. They explained to him the overall process to receive the instalments from the bank by calculating the total amount of



money needed for the construction of a single room house. Afterwards he did DPC for the house and it cost a total of NRP 45,000. They took a photo of the house and filled out the form for the second instalment. They also informed him to withdraw the money for the second instalment as well as frequently visiting his house and helping and motivating him. They told him it was necessary to construct toilets for the third instalment. Therefore, after getting the second instalment he bought necessary items for both house and toilet construction and it was constructed in a short time. The CDECF and HELVETAS staff helped him to fill-out the form for the third inspection too and this was all possible with their help. He thanked the staff and the organization for providing these types of programs and also for motivating and encouraging him throughout the construction of his house. Finally, Shrestha stated, “I will finish the construction before the monsoon. I miss my wife and son very much. Please come to the new house, my wife and son, I want to spend the rest of my life with you in our new house. I will forget the past. Please come back, please do.....”.

*Collected By: Ichchharam Sapkota, Sindupalchowk*



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