

No Short Cuts

Tourism Recovery and Rehabilitation in four districts along the Great Himalaya Trail

Assessment of earthquake related damage and loss, and tourism related recovery and rehabilitation in Dhading, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha districts

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Note: We titled this Rapid Appraisal Framework document ‘No Short Cuts – Tourism Recovery and Rehabilitation in Four Districts along the Great Himalaya Trail’. This title refers to a sustainable redevelopment of trekking trails itself. Short cuts sometimes result in increased erosion of the trail and environmental damage. It also refers to the centeredness of the GHT as ‘thread’ to link tourism development and sustainable livelihoods in four districts. Finally it refers to the short, medium and long term recovery aims of the results of this assessment. Concepts like ‘build back better’ and sustainable livelihoods for people in the four districts need to be included for long-term sustainability.

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1. Background

On Saturday, 25 April 2015 at 11:56 local time, a 7.6 magnitude earthquake as recorded by the National Seismological Centre (NSC), struck in Barpak in the historical Gorkha District, about 76 km northeast of Kathmandu. The earthquake was the strongest since the Bihar-Nepal earthquake of 1934. The catastrophic earthquake was followed by over 500 aftershocks that were greater than magnitude 4.0 (as of Sept 2015). Four aftershocks were larger than magnitude 6.0, including a strong 6.9 magnitude on 26 April and a second earthquake of magnitude 6.8 (magnitude 7.3, USGS) occurring 17 days later, with its epicentre near Mount Everest, 80 km northeast of Kathmandu. According to the National Reconstruction Authority (2016), almost 8800 people died and over 22,000 people were injured by the quake; more than 500,000 houses and over 2,600 government buildings were completely damaged.

The tourism sector has sustained significant physical damages in the affected districts:

- About NPR 16 billion worth of hotel properties were fully or partially damaged in the affected areas of Nepal.
- Tourist accommodations of different types were either fully or partially damaged in the areas of Langtang, Gorkha-Manaslu, Khumbu, Charikot, Kalinchok, Jiri, Dhanding, and the Rolwaling area. A few hotels in the Kathmandu valley (including Nagarkot) were damaged completely, while a majority of hotels developed minor cracks.
- A portion of key tourism monuments and heritage attractions were turned to rubble.
- With respect to tourism infrastructure, about 150 km of trekking trails were significantly damaged. Another 200 km require maintenance and repair since access to rural areas is impeded.

The tourism industry will be suffering major economic losses over the next two or three years as a result of the earthquake. It is important to note that the overall impact of the earthquake on the tourism sector goes beyond the 14 affected districts to well-known tourism destinations like Chitwan and Pokhara in terms of a sharp fall in the number of tourists. The negative repercussions of the disaster are likely to translate into a reduced number of tourist arrivals over the next two or three years. Other nations that have experienced similar disasters have generally taken several years to recover fully with regard to tourist arrivals. It is estimated that the overall impact of the earthquakes on the Nepali tourism industry will be a reduction of about 40% on average over the next 12 months, and a 20% reduction in the next 12 to 24 months. There is a reduction of tourist expenditure from US\$43 to US\$35 per day, according to industry sources, which will significantly affect overall tourism revenues.

Short term and long-term economic benefits of tourism include the expansion of business opportunities for the poor, expansion of employment and wages by ensuring commitments to local jobs and training of local residents, and the development of collective community income. Non-economic benefits include capacity building, training, improved access to services and infrastructure (such as health care, telecommunications, water supplies, and transportation through trail improvement, etc.), and mitigation of environmental impacts and natural resource conflicts. Many of the physical and environmental benefits may have been motivated by tourism development, but they indirectly benefit local communities. It is obvious that a tourism

intervention that builds upon the existing foundation of cultural heritage, respects social and cultural traditions, minimizes economic losses caused by un-even income distribution among the value chain actors, and adheres to pro-poor tourism development strategies is likely to produce economic benefits that contribute to food security in rural mountain areas in Nepal. The four districts to be covered by this scoping study, present significant opportunities for the development of local livelihood and improving food security situation through strengthening of short-term and long-term economic linkages between tourism and other sectors.

Acknowledging the potential of tourism sector towards significant contribution in sustainable development, economic upliftment, food security and social benefits to the Earthquake affected communities along the tourism trails and routes in **Gorkha, Dhading, Nuwakot, and Sindhupalchowk** districts, Oxfam is commissioning an assessment to look at earthquake related damage in the four districts and what possibilities for recovery and rehabilitation are possible in those districts. Outcome of this study and a comparison of the situation in these districts before and after earthquake through secondary sources will suggest possible strategies to link up tourism with livelihood and food security enhancement of rural communities in these earthquake hard-hit regions.

To assess the damage and appraise recovery needs a rapid appraisal approach has been developed.

2.Objectives and deliverables

The overall aim of the study is to carry out an assessment of the impact of the earthquake in the adventure tourism sector and define a relief (immediate) and recovery (longer-term) strategy from restoration of livelihoods, economy and services to rehabilitation and reconstruction while ensuring resilient recovery.

The objectives of the study therefore are:

- To assess the damage of the earthquake to the tourism sector (services, like trekking companies; accommodation, like tea-houses, lodges, campsites, home stays; and trails, cultural monuments, information centres, etc.) in Dhading, Gorkha, Nuwakot and Sindhupalchowk districts;
- To identify priority needs for affected tourism entrepreneurs with a particular focus on resilient recovery, reconstruction and new building activities like tea-houses, lodges, homestays, etc. with indicative costs;
- To assess the current status and identify short term measures to help improve communities with their food security during the recovery phase, as well as medium and long term measures in the post disaster reconstruction phase, reflecting the concept of “build back better”; and
- To identify most potential areas (for future considerations) of livelihood development and recovery interventions in the context of Post Disaster Needs of the communities in those districts of Nepal.

The scoping exercise will result in a concrete set of support measures providing: (i) an assessment of the damage and recovery needs in the affected tourism sector and 4 districts, (ii) a socio-economic analysis of the impacts of the earthquake in those region, (iii) a summary of priority recovery and reconstruction needs in tourism and livelihood sector in terms of economy recovery for short medium and long term; iv) a long-term recovery strategy which seeks to address these needs as well as reduce disaster risks and promote resilience.

The study will identify key local stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of possible interventions to be formulated, designed and implemented capitalising on local potentials for viable livelihood improvement and recovery initiatives in those districts. A dissemination workshop for key stakeholder in Kathmandu to present and discuss the initial report with concrete actions plans, anticipated resources required and implementation modalities (local partners, national coordination, collaborations, etc.).

3. Assessment Approach: Phases, Tools and Timeline

The Assessment Framework includes a range of tools to assess the situation in the districts and within the sector, like desk research, secondary data collection, key stakeholders consultation and interviews, survey formats, and workshops in the districts and at national level. The approach is based on triangulation of information, methods, at different levels, and across disciplines. The assessment has the form of a rapid appraisal and is by no means academic. However, together the approach and tools used will provide saturating evidence to analyse the current damage and loss, and provides sufficient robustness to support recovery strategies and development proposals.

The Assessment Framework follows the identified deliverables of the Terms of Reference, and involves five phases:

1. The Inception Phase

- Document review and review of who does what in the four districts
- Visits to other (I)NGOs on their recovery work
- Visit to private sector and business membership organizations to understand the impact of the damage in the four districts on their businesses and their need for services and products from the four districts
- Development of the assessment framework
- Initial report

2. Field Level Assessment Phase

- Assessment of Damage and Recovery Needs
- Socio-economic analysis

3. Prioritization and Validation at District Level Phase

- Initial write-ups at district level, indicating main damage and recovery needs
- District level workshops to validate the summary report, prioritization of recovery and reconstruction needs, and initial activity planning

4. Long-Term Strategy Development Phase

- Summarizing assessments of the four districts; develop initial plans
- Initial strategy based on all work done
- National level workshop to validate the assessments and recovery plans and initial strategy, and agree on idea of developing project proposals for donor agencies

5. Report Preparation and Finalization

- Report developed.

3.1. The Inception Phase

The PDNA restricts tourism development to 'a part of the wholesale and retail or commerce sector' and further to 'accommodation' and 'food and beverage services', while Oxfam is more focusing on tourism as a 'livelihood component'. This assignment positioned itself in the middle. It is about a convincing competitive, sustainable and inclusive development. As such the assessment used part of the PDNA set-up, but also included other work, like the documents of the original Great Himalaya Trail Development Project.

During the assessment, secondary sources were gathered that suggested possible strategies to link up tourism with livelihood and food security enhancement of rural communities in these earthquake hard-hit districts, to be able to support the proposed recovery strategies and development plans. Also information was gathered on “build back better”. The assessment did not only focus on damage and loss in the tourism sector, but also looked for convincing arguments for tourism to be viable and worthy of support.

Visits to governments and (I)NGOs included a review of the work of Oxfam itself. After the discussions with Oxfam, the National Reconstruction Authority was consulted about the main organizations involved in the recovery work, and the most important documents, guidelines, formats, etc. to follow. Some recovery NGOs in Kathmandu to get a good overview of the work done, manual, guidelines, calculation systems, etc. used.

The study also included information gathering at the major tour operators and travel agents from Kathmandu who undertake tourism activities in the four districts. Private sector membership organizations working on tourism in the area (associations like the Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal, the Association of Travel and Tour Operators of Nepal, the Hotel Association of Nepal, and the Nepal Tourism Board) were visited.

In total 18 companies filled-out a questionnaire to study the impact of the damage in the four districts on their businesses and their need for services and products from the four districts (see Annex 1).

3. 2. Field Level Assessment Phase

The framework and definitions in this assessment were loosely based on those developed by international agencies like the World Bank’s Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction (GFDRR/WB), the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Union, among others (Torrente, 2012).

The assessment team conducted relevant field visits. Oxfam and local partners provided support in the districts (e.g. gathering documents, interviewing stakeholders, arranging field visit, etc.). The team gathered secondary data relevant to the districts and the VDCs studied. These documents provided necessary data to support the study.

The trail damage data collection was done by enumerators (two per district). They walked along the trail with a GPS which marked the trails surveyed and indicated damaged sections. The

enumerators also noted down what kind of trail has been assessed (kind of pavement, existence of drainage, etc.). They noted trail specifics, like existence of porter resting places or – missing – signposts. With this information costs of rebuilding or maintaining the trails could be estimated. Major elements along the trails and in communities which were of heritage value to both tourists and local people were assessed, including temples and *Gompas*.

The private enterprises damage assessment was done through a field survey, collecting data on damaged enterprises and the cost of value at present value and also calculated lost revenue due to damaged property, and fewer tourists. The developed formats had two main elements– one element addresses the physical damage and one on the socio-economic damage to the tourism industry along the trail. All damage to private enterprises was assessed place by place, so enumerators had to travel along the main trails. The study focused on new (quake resistant/local/eco-friendly) materials in buildings, but also looked at better facilities along the trail (helipads, porter shelters, snow poles, huts on passes, etc.).

In the case of the private enterprises socio-economic loss information, it is not only about lost revenues to business owners. Also information was gathered that showed how many people in the districts benefitted from tourism, lost their economic linkages to the tourism industry, and through the recovery strategy (and projects) can be included again, and even expanded on.

3.2.1. Assessment of Damage and Recovery Needs

In the damage assessment, first general data at national level and district level is collected. Enumerators visited the DDC office, and other governmental offices in the district, first. Also NGOs will be visited to gather secondary information.

The assessment included the main GHT VDCs and will try to get as much overlap as possible with the Oxfam VDCs. Local enumerators assess physical damage to tourism enterprises, facilities, monuments and trails. The assessment focused on the main GHT trails (next to Nuwakot Durbar and Tatopani), and included trail facilities (*Chautaras*, porter shelters, snow poles, sign posts, etc.) and trail monuments (*Gompas*, *Mandirs*, *Chortens*, some *Chautaras*, etc.).

To assess the damage on and along the trails the PDNA framework was used. In Annexes 2 and 3, damage assessment forms are presented which were applied by the enumerators in the field. They estimated the recovery needs of tourism enterprises, and assessed key trail monuments and tourism infrastructure/trails.

3.2.2. Socio-economic analysis

In the socio-economic analysis a few important issues came together. First of all, the general socio-economic situation before and after the earthquake needed to be appraised in general terms at district and VDC level. Also the loss of tourism businesses (and suppliers) along the trekking trails in the four districts had to be assessed.

The assessment also wanted to contribute to sustainable livelihoods in the VDC along the trekking trails. According to the UNWTO this can be achieved through seven different ways (see

below). The first four ways contribute directly to households, the other three benefit larger parts of communities.

Seven ways poor can benefit from tourism (adapted from UNWTO, 2004)

1. Employment of poor in tourism enterprises (working in a lodge, trekking staff, pack animal drivers, porters)
2. Supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by poor or by enterprises employing poor (agriculture products and cottage industries)
3. Direct sales of goods and services to visitors by poor (informal economy – selling handicrafts from home)
4. Establishment and running of tourism enterprises by poor – e.g. MSMEs or community-based enterprises (formal economy – teashops, grocery shops, camping sites)
5. Tax and levy on tourism income or profits with proceeds benefiting poor (e.g. trail tax in Humla)
6. Voluntary giving/support by tourism enterprises and tourists (e.g. donations to schools and monasteries in different parts of Nepal)
7. Investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting poor in locality, directly (investments of the different Nepal governments in tourism destinations)

The socio-economic analysis was partly based on existing documents and data (at VDC and DDC level, like VDC profiles, etc.), but also needed interviews in the affected areas (see the damage and loss of individual tourism enterprises format in Annex 4).

3.3. Prioritization and Validation at District Level Phase

3.3.1. District level workshops

A summary of priority recovery and reconstruction needs for short term and medium term was part of a workshop at district level. Initial findings of the damages assessment and socio-economic analysis needed to be shared, and recovery needs needed to be prioritized in a participatory process. Among others exercises in the workshop were based on ‘Facilitating Sustainable Mountain Tourism’ and the ‘Manual on Tourism and Poverty Alleviation – Practical steps for destinations’ (see references).

3.4. Long-Term Strategy Development Phase

To implement the ‘build back better’ concept in the tourism sector along the GHT in the four affected districts and at the same time improve livelihoods of more people in these districts a long term trekking tourism strategy for the districts is necessary.

This strategy is based on three pillars – to promote the GHT in the four districts, to develop a trekking platform at national level to improve on sustainable development frameworks in the country and support sustainable and inclusive development along the GHT in the four districts.

3.4.1. Develop initial strategy based on all work done

A long term recovery strategy which promotes resilience – this strategy seems to coincide with proposed strategies of GHTNA to keep on supporting tourism destinations along the trail (trail grants and tourism enterprise loans).

3.4.2. National level workshop

For this workshop government organizations (e.g. MOCTCA), the Nepal Tourism Board, private sector membership organizations (e.g. TAAN, NMA), UN organizations (e.g. WFP, UNDP), (I)NGOs (e.g. CRS, People in Need), projects (e.g. SAMARTH), donor agencies (WB, EU, DFID), etc. were invited. The national workshop had around 60 participants.

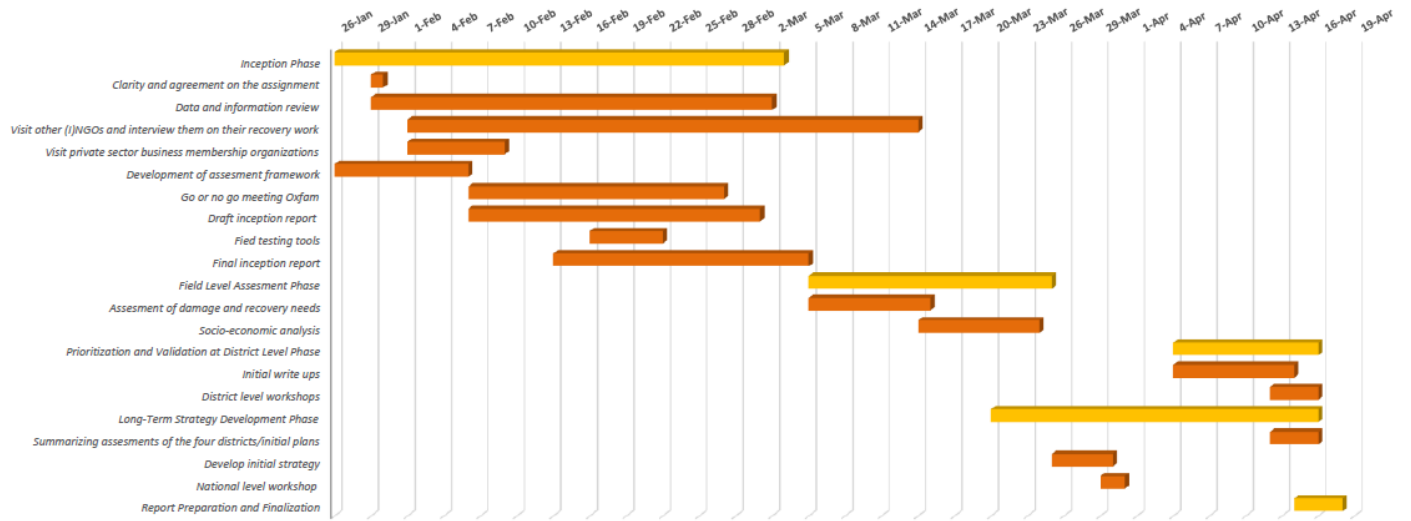
The workshop presented the assessment of the four districts, highlighting the damage assessment, socio-economic analysis and recovery needs in relation to tourism. Also the long-term strategic ideas of Oxfam/GHTNA were presented. Feedback was requested from the different organizations present.

3.5. Report Preparation and Finalization

The current report analysing the physical damage to the tourism sector, socio-economic damage and the recovery needs, analysing the tourism sector before and after the earthquake in four districts and suggests relevant interventions for the recovery of the tourism sector, identifying mid-term and long-term socio-economic economic and sustainable livelihood tourism opportunities, and relevant capacity strengthening needs among tourism stakeholder groups, has been prepared, based on all previous steps.

3.6. *Timeframe*

In a timeframe, all the phases and the different steps were as follows:



4. Findings of the Inception Phase

In the first weeks of this assignment information was gathered regarding approaches to damage, loss and recovery needs assessments, and all the work that is being done in the four districts under assessment in Nepal. Information was gathered at national level and district level.

At national level, recently the National Reconstruction Policy (2016) was approved. The Reconstruction Policy coordinates reconstruction initiatives of governmental and non-governmental agencies, private sector, community, and volunteers of demolished structures from the quake. The Policy helps plan, implement, and monitor the reconstruction and rehabilitation programs and projects.

The policy adopts a central policy but encourages decentralized programming and implementation. It supports the use of local materials (from Nepal), knowledge, skill, labour and *Vastu* (traditional engineering) in reconstruction. It adopted a Build Back Better concept.

The policy has six objectives. Tourism for local development can contribute to at least the first four of these objectives. The promotion and development of trekking tourism can contribute to (and benefits from):

1. Reconstruct, retrofit and restore the partial and completely damaged residential, community and government buildings and heritage sites to make them disaster resistant using local technology according to the need.
2. Reconstruct damaged cities and ancient villages keeping the original shape with improved structure.
3. Promote and preserve the people and community at risk in the quake affected districts.
4. Develop new opportunities by re-establishing productive sector for economic opportunities and livelihoods.

For the last objective the policy observes several strategies to achieve that objective, like organizing productive livelihood programs; helping to restore small and cottage industries; restoring tourism services and facilities; creating opportunities for self-employment; and implementing skill development and training programmes for the quake affected women, differently able people, children, senior citizens, marginalized and poor people.

The policy proposes specific procedures to achieve its objectives. It wants to provide loans, and support ease on loan repayment for entrepreneurs, including tourism entrepreneurs. The policy also focuses specifically on the restoration of tourism infrastructure and services. It states:

- The people and families involved in hotel, home stay, tourist lodge and tourist guide businesses would be provided loan at subsidized interest rates.

- Necessary infrastructure for the tourist spot, restoration and maintenance of trekking routes would be done. One multipurpose community building would be constructed in a risk prone village for emergency purpose.
- Damaged heritage sites would be managed for safe sightseeing activities for the tourists.
- Various programs would be brought to restore Himalayan tourism porters who have become unemployed due to earthquake.

In the NRA ‘implementation concept and institutional structure’ (2016), it is envisioned that reconstruction will go hand in hand with economic revival. For this the planning divisions of the respective ministries/departments will play a key role. The district offices of the related ministries/departments will establish district level coordinating and implementing units according to the need, or appoint necessary experts directly to guide the locals in commercial agriculture, commercial livestock, tourism business, small businesses, or any other income generating activities to support local economic revival.

According to the document, on one hand, a community organization will be established to mobilize the locals in reconstruction, and on the other, locals will be encouraged to involve in cooperatives for the economic revival and income generating activities. Locals will be encouraged to be engage in commercial agriculture, livestock and birds, forest related industries, tourism, micro industries, through cooperatives for economic development.

These documents clearly show the importance the National Reconstruction Authority gives to tourism as economic opportunity and livelihood strategy.

Reading several of the assessments conducted in Nepal, it seems that there is a lot of understanding about damage and loss in agriculture, but that there is limited information about the tourism sector, and how the tourism sector is linked (has backward linkages) to the local economy. It seems that there is limited understanding of tourism in the local economy (damage, loss, recovery needs) and the backward linkages from tourism to agriculture (were the linkages between the tourism industry and local economic activities like vegetables, livestock, chicken and eggs, dairy, handicrafts, portering services, firewood, etc. *before* the earthquake, *at present*, and what do we expect in the *near future*).

One of the requests of Oxfam was to ensure in this assessment that ‘the tools for determining economic impacts of the earthquake on tourism and the recovery costs are sufficiently detailed’. Data on damage, loss, and recovery costs was collected during the field-testing. The field testing team described ‘the methodology/assumptions used for calculating the economic impacts of the earthquake (including reconstruction costs)’. During the field visit data was gathered on how the people interviewed calculated the figures they gave to the field testing team. The team has probed their answers.

4.2. Assessments done and work started by other organizations

A large number of NGOs are involved in damage, loss and recovery needs assessments. Oxfam and others, like Helvetas, UN organizations, the Children/Shelter Team are involved in the four districts. In tourism SAMARTH, ICIMOD and others studied the damage and loss of tourism after the earthquake. Already mid-2015, ICIMOD drafted a ‘Strategic framework for resilient

livelihoods in earthquake affected areas in Nepal’ and SAMARTH recently (December 2015) updated the national tourism strategic plan, including a chapter called ‘Post-earthquake recovery plan’. It is interesting to see that the main manuals and assessments discuss agriculture and sometimes tourism, but except for the work of ICIMOD, hardly tourism within rural economies/for sustainable livelihoods has been considered. In that sense this GHTNA assessment seems to be a bit different from most livelihood assessments.

Although in the last months of 2015 (the document was published in December),the ministry with support of SAMARTH updated the ‘national tourism strategy 2015-2024’ and included a ‘Post-Earthquake Tourism Recovery Plan’, implementation of the recovery plan has only recently started. The recovery plan states (MoCTCA, 2015: 169/170) that:

Understanding the tourism situation and trends before the earthquake is critical. Nepal was facing a declining market for its trekking product from classic source markets. These markets were mature and characterised by a well-travelled, individually minded consumer able to make his/her own travel choices. These markets were rapidly being replaced by arrivals from new (Asian) source markets characterised by less loyal group travellers. Spend per visitor was declining across the markets.

The mountain tourism market (trekking) has also been influenced by over-utilization of certain areas (during the season) and increased road building has opened new destination areas and reduce the appeal of existing areas. Recovery efforts should therefore target products and markets that have growth potential and are likely to sustain in years ahead.

Tourism being one of the significant economic sector, it is vital for Nepal to re-establish the destination image as safe and emphasize the recovery activities to restore the destination in traditional ‘pre-disaster’ tourism markets and products. Nepal also can’t ignore the opportunity earthquake brings along either in the form of new tourist segments or in tapping into the opportunity to improve service offerings and standards.

The recovery plan shows five major impact areas (MoCTCA, 2015: 170-172), namely 1. human collateral and economic loss, 2. unsafe destination image, 3. negative travel advisories, 4. a drastic fall in tourism arrivals, and 5. added economic costs for rebuilding.

The post-earthquake strategy includes three phases; a recovery phase, a redevelopment phase, and repositioning phase, each phase is approximately one year. In the recovery phase the focus is on providing good communication on the possibilities of tourism in Nepal, and an inventory on the supply and demand side of the tourism system in Nepal. Also a socio-economic assessment of the tourism system is proposed. This report contributes to that inventory and the assessment in the four identified earthquake affected districts. This phase also includes a relief package for the tourism industry to sustain tourism business in a time of crisis.

The redevelopment phase focuses on the rebuilding of the tourism system of both the supply and demand side. The plan states (ibid.: 174):

Implementation focus will be on the development of safe experiences for visitors, be it in trail network or enterprises or even heritage sites. For any re-construction works, focus

will be given to enhance quality of construction, brand products that provide measures and features that make tourism safer and an improved quality experience. These efforts will also form the core communication contents to the market in order to regain visitor confidence.

The plan also proposes to reposition Nepal as a safer and more sustainable trekking destination.

The recovery plan in the national tourism strategy also includes an action plan (ibid.: 175-179) in which coordination, communication, and the relief package for the industry are the initial elements. Also a 'safe building' and 'safe tourism trekking' systems are included in the plan, as well as assessing and rebuilding tourism sites and enterprises. An important element is the 'Restoration marketing for rebuilding lost confidence in post-earthquake'.

This assessment resonates with this 'national tourism strategy 2015-2024' and its 'Post-earthquake tourism recovery plan'. Various of the proposed plans in this assessment contribute to this national strategy.

Specific effort has been made by the Trekking Agents Association of Nepal (TAAN) and the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) to revive tourism after the April/May 2015 earthquakes. The NTB has been actively involved in promotion and marketing of Nepal as a tourism destination in social media and international travel and trade fairs. The *NepalNow* campaign (joint collaboration of NTB and CBI) has been pretty successful in spreading the word about visiting Nepal, especially now after the earthquake. However, the NTB has not been able to provide much needed work like capacity building, and product development on the ground/at community levels which are also a part of tourism value chains.

TAAN has been involved in trail building in Manaslu and Ganesh Himal trekking areas. However, a key constraint with NTB, TAAN and also the NMA was that not much was done to thoroughly assess the loss, damage, recover and rehabilitation needs, and almost a year after the earthquake implementation plans are not in place, yet. Although the Government of Nepal has prioritize tourism as third most priority sector, not much planning work has been done by Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, yet.

Initiatives to link tourism and livelihoods

Instigated by the recent earthquake in Nepal, ICIMOD (2015) developed a working paper, which provides a framework for resilient livelihoods in earthquake affected areas. It compares different cases and provides lessons learned for Nepal. The paper introduces key elements to be included in any recovery strategy, like creating an enabling policy and institutional environment, engaging and coordinating diverse stakeholders, strengthening skills and capacity of local people, ensure gender equality and social inclusion, promote community empowerment, etc., but also provides sector specific – agriculture; micro, small and medium enterprise development; and tourism – recommendations. In revitalizing rural tourism it is suggested to use (ICIMOD, 2015: ix):

... an eco-design approach and rebuilding environmentally friendly infrastructure and ecotourism, as well as supporting the rebuilding of damaged infrastructure (such as

trekking routes in safe areas) using people from earthquake-affected areas through cash-for-work, food-for-work, and other social protection programmes. Undertake targeted marketing of tourist destinations that have not been affected by the earthquake and provide policy and financial support to tourism entrepreneurs to restart their businesses.

These suggestions are included in this report, as well.

4.3. Main Issues Emerging to be included in our Assessment

Working on Damage, Loss, Loss till Normalization and Reconstruction Needs, it is realized that the assessment is of course about reconstruction of damaged trails, trail facilities, trail monuments and tourism enterprises, but above all about linkages from tourism into the local rural economy, about backward linkages of enterprises to the local agricultural system and cottage industries. However, it is not only about **Reconstruction** (extending to a period of approximately two years, aimed at rebuilding the basic physical infrastructure and shelter to enable people to begin afresh), but as much about **Rehabilitation** (more long term inputs of reinstating lost livelihoods, introducing new economic opportunities so as to reduce people's vulnerability and enhance capacities to handle future calamities). And of course that brings us back to the earlier GHT development projects and strengthening GHTNA as an interesting way to achieve sustainable socially responsible trekking tourism in Nepal.

This seems to be one of the main recovery needs in relation to trekking tourism in Nepal, and therefore in this Inception Report, not to only a focus on damage and reconstruction, but also (and maybe even more) on loss and rehabilitation.

4.4. Coordination needs

In assessing recovery needs in tourism and sustainable livelihoods, it seems coordination is needed (see also Chapter 7 on the long-term strategy). At district level livelihood assessments are shared; however tourism as a livelihood strategy is hardly mentioned.

There seems to be a gap between sustainable livelihood strategies and tourism as a canvas, a market and an instrument to integrate these sustainable livelihoods. Together with Oxfam, GHTNA can fill this coordination gap.

5. Findings of the four districts

In this chapter the results of the field work in the four districts is presented. Enumerators in each district collected primary data on the damage along the trails (trails, amenities, monuments and enterprises), and gathered information on loss with individual tourism enterprises. The enumerators used a 'guidance notes for enumerators' and different formats as presented in Annexes 2, 3 and 4.

The field testing took place in Helambu in the last week of February, and in the first two weeks of March, 2016 all enumerators collected primary data from the main trekking trails in the four districts. **In total 18 VDCs and 205 tourism enterprises were assessed.**

In Gorkha, part of the Manaslu trekking trail was visited (7 VDCs and 50 tourism enterprises). In Dhading the Ganesh Himal trekking trail was appraised (visiting 4 VDCs and 59 tourism enterprises). In Nuwakot mainly the damage and loss at the Nuwakot Durbhar was assessed (including 42 tourism enterprises), and in Sindhupalchowk three major tourist areas were visited (the Helambu and Panch Pokhari trekking trails and tourism enterprises at Tatopani). In the district 6 VDCs were visited and 54 tourism enterprises were studied. The primary data is complemented with secondary data in some of the VDCs (like in the upper parts of Manaslu trekking trail). Below the findings per district are given.

At the same time a **survey was conducted among 18 tour operators in Kathmandu**, to understand the impact of the damage in the four districts on their businesses and their need for services and products from the four districts. These private sector needs and demands are presented first.

5.1. Tour operator survey

In March 2016, a quick survey was conducted among 18 tour operators visiting the four districts for trekking tours. Most of the 18 respondents replied that the most important impact of the earthquake was decrease in number of tourists resulting in loss of business this year. Also, physical and structural damage to company properties, decrease in working staff and in some cases loss of life of field staff, were mainly pointed out.

In almost all of the assessed companies, the number of tourists that they have been receiving decreased compared to before the earthquake. With a slight possibility of increase in the following year, most of the company experienced loss in business transactions. For the same reason, many companies had to decrease their per tourist rate so as to run their business. But many companies had kept their service rates same because of local market inflation and energy crisis that followed the devastating earthquake.

After any natural disaster, it would definitely take some time for any business to get back to its usual self. The trekking companies need at least a year to be able to cope with the blow of earthquake. Many respondents said that they would require a time frame of 2 to 5 years while

most were still unsure as to how much time they would require to have a business like they were used to before earthquake (see table 6.1. below).

Table 5.1. Overview of respondents to the tour operators' survey (N = 18)

S.N	Tourists (before and after the earthquake)			Tourism percentage decrease %	Business loss %	Average spending decrease %
	before	After	2nd year			
T1	300	100	80	60	80	0
T2	100	30	100	20	50	20
T3	300	100	150	60	50	0
T4	300	70	200	60	30	0
T5	100	70	150	40	30	20
T6	40	10	60	20	50	20
T7	600	60	300	60	50	0
T8	3000	1000	1200	60	50	0
T9	100	15	30	50	80	0
T10	150	50	300	60	60	20
T11	100	50	100	60	50	20
T12	500	100	50	20	30	0
T13	100	10	100	60	60	0
T14	100	10	5	60	80	0
T15	300	150	300	60	50	0
T16	50	30	40	40	30	20
T17	300	150	200	60	80	0
T18	50	75	100	30	10	0
total	6490	2080	3465	48%	51%	6.7%

The assessment shows that the trekking business would require a good help from the government as well as other national organizations and media so as to create a better tourism environment. While most companies did not receive any relief support from any entities, a few companies received some help from foreign clients and agents in the form of financial, resource material or manpower.

5.1.1. Loss of tourism business in the four districts

All companies are organizing trekking tours along the Great Himalaya Trail in one or more of the four districts. All the Great Himalaya Trail routes in the four districts have seen a heavy decrease in the number of tourist as well as loss in business. Along the routes in these four districts, damages were reported on various trekking trails, facilities, monuments, and other building structures. Trails on these regions have taken minor to sever damages with blockage of trail due to falling of rocks and land slide. Many *Gompas* alongside this trail have been

completely damaged and some other important monuments have taken damages as well due to the earthquake. Various public buildings such as schools, health posts, tourist information centres, etc., have also been damaged due to the earthquake.

5.1.2. Recovery of tourism in four districts

Initiative to be taken and types of support expected

Effective and quick implementation of government 'tourism revival action' has to be done immediately. Effort from local people in collaboration of various organizations is required. Promotions and right messages must be circulated through national as well as international news and media. Better trail must be developed, repaired and promoted. Tourist huts should be built where lodges and hotels cannot be built immediately. Trail reconstruction should be done where possible and if not possible, alternative trails must be developed. New trails must be explored in existing trekking destinations while ensuring safety in the trekking trail. But the most important thing would be to develop good policies by the government and must be implemented in collaboration with various other concerned stakeholders and optimally mobilizing people and resources.

'Build back better' and 'sustainable livelihoods' at district level

There must be collaboration of local people and local governmental authorities. Anti-earthquake concepts must be included while reconstruction processes and awareness campaigns must be organized in district level. Government must mobilize concerned local people and help in smooth functioning of government procedures concerned with reconstructions initiatives. Thorough study and involvement of local authorities in planning processes, monitoring and evaluation in district level is very important.

Governments and media have to focus on local people, active involvement of local people, introduction of new destinations and tourism facilities development. Local people must be taught to make strong and well-built structures and must create and prioritize job opportunities for local people. Local people must be supported for generating local income to extend tourism. Sustainable livelihood can also be included in the district level by increasing local participation and focusing on promotion, production, processing and distribution/marketing of local products in cost effective manner.

5.1.3. Rehabilitation of tourism business in Nepal

Contribution from tour operators

Most companies were willing for contributing in at least one form. Many opted for financial support, while others showed interest in providing contributions in the form of resources, materials, technicians and volunteers.

'Build back better' and 'sustainable livelihood' at national level

By formulating better policies and amending poorly formulated existing policies. Better coordination team must be formed by government should take responsibilities. Foreign countries which are keen to provide help in need can also be asked for help. Effective implementation and

amendments of policies by government should be done and positive thoughts and motivation among local people must be extended.

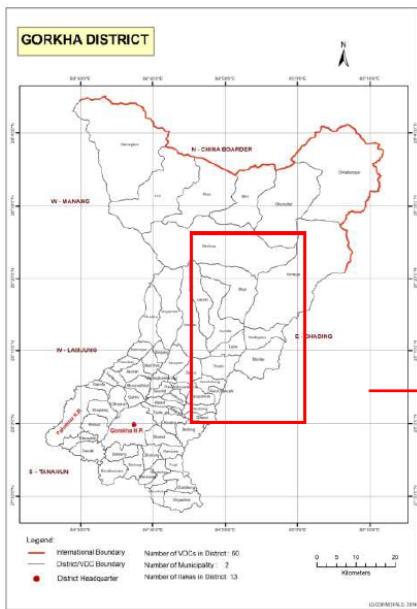
Awareness campaigns in grass root level (helps to develop better tourism in future), should take action effectively for rebuild commission, reconstruction of roads, health and education and other infrastructure etc. New and attractive tourism packages must be developed for sustainable tourism which in turn helps in sustainable livelihood. Local people must be involved where possible and trainings and campaigns/ awareness programs must be organized from grass root to national level. Government must also prioritize the basic needs of people.

Issues with respect to revival of tourism in Nepal

- Delay in implementation of policies and activities
- Instable government
- Lack of transparency in fund allocation
- Energy crisis and unavailability of resources
- Price inflation
- No prioritization of earthquake affected areas and tourism destinations
- Delay in quick reconstructions of tourism related infrastructures like tourism information centres, lodges, tea houses, home stays, check posts etc.
- Lack in spreading promotional messages from national media and government.

5.2. Manaslu trekking trail - Gorkha

Table 5.2. VDCs and enterprises (including loss of revenue) in Gorkha (Shrestha, 2016)



Study Area

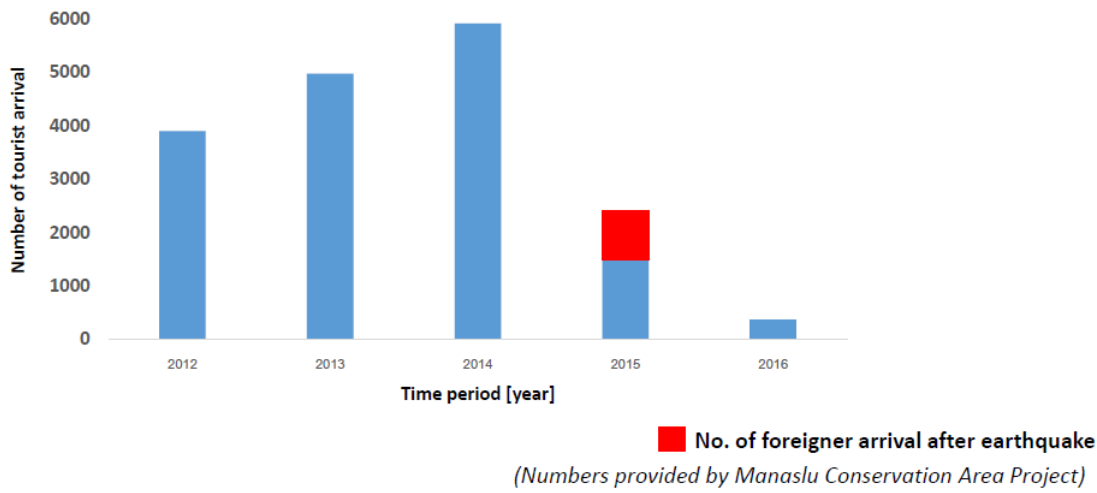


VDC	Place	Number of enterprises	Loss of revenue (%)
Sirdibas	Philim	6	70-80
	Sirdibas	2	60-80
	Salleri	2	80-90
	Jagat	5	85-100
Kerauja	Jagat Bagar	3	90-100
	Thuldunga	2	90-93
Uhya	Syauli Bhatti	1	100
	Dhovan	2	80-85
Gumda	Tatopani	3	80-85
	Khorlabesi	4	70-100
Lapu	Macchakhola	4	85-90
	Lapubesi	7	60-100
Thumi	Khorsanibari	1	85
	Sotikhola	6	60-70
Aruchanaute	Arughat	2	50-70

In Gorkha, seven VDCs were visited by the GHTNA enumerators. Next to the collected primary data, also data from People in Need (PIN) was gathered from Lho, Prok and Samagoan VDCs.

Due to the earthquake the numbers of tourists along the Manaslu trail have dropped tremendously. The numbers are less than half compared to before the earthquake. It is expected that it will take a few years to reach the tourism numbers of 2014.

Table 5.3. Decreasing numbers of tourists (Shrestha, 2016)

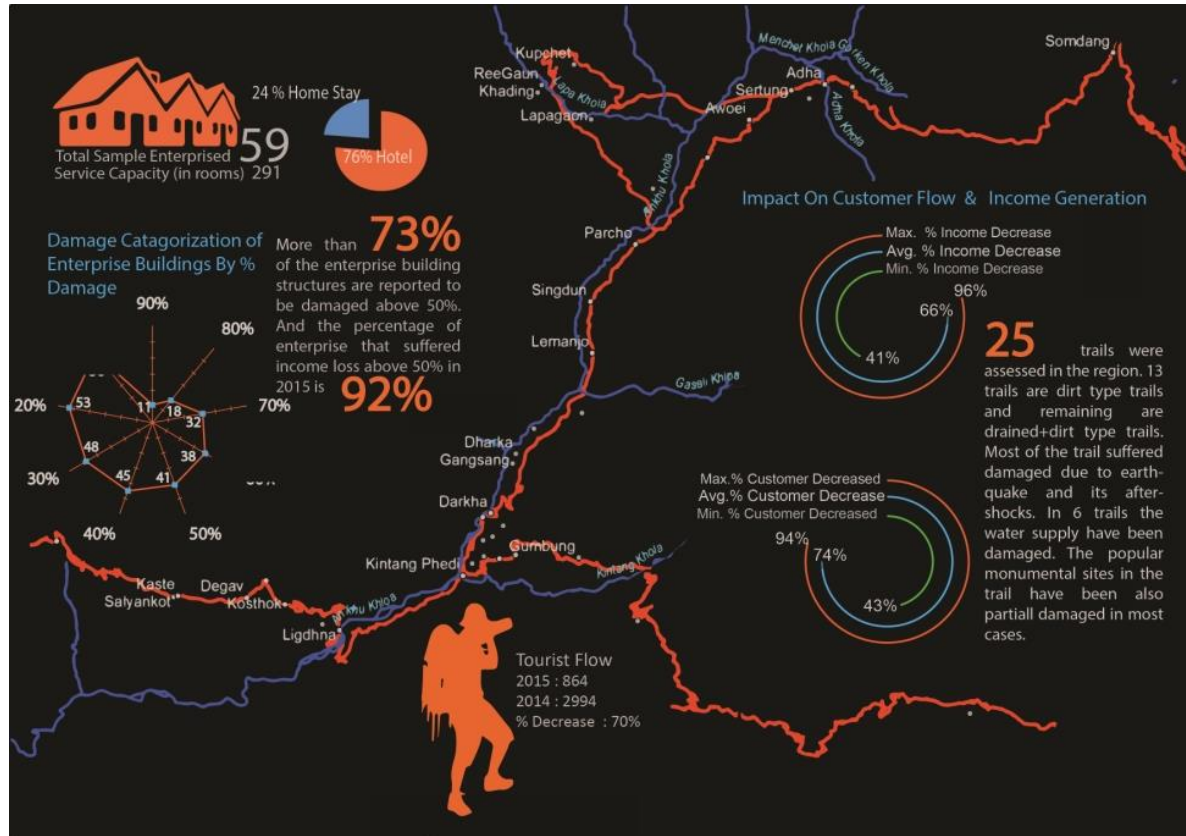


Trekking tourism can only take off again if trail damage is mitigated. The damaged trails, caused by landslides at Macchakhola, Khorlabesi and Syailibhatti, need to be rebuilt, sustainably; the damaged suspension bridges at Tatopani, Naulikhola and Philim need to be restored; and the river cutting at Yarubagar need tremendous repair work. Besides the repair and upgrading of the trail and bridges, also other trail amenities, like drinking water and power houses, need reconstructing.

To revive the local economy in the northern part of the district, tourism is needed, as there is a lack of alternative income sources. So it is important to ‘get the tourists back on the trail’ through branding, marketing and promotion of the Manaslu trail (as part of the GHT), and through strategically targeted events (like trail runs). A grant and loan system needs to be developed at the earliest possible. The district needs grants to improve the local infrastructure, and soft loans to tourism entrepreneurs to rebuild their businesses. At the same time the capacities of local governments, NGOs and communities need to be strengthening to implement tourism and livelihood programmes.

5.3. Ganesh Himal trekking trail –Dhading

Figure 5.1. Summary chart for loss and damage along the Ganesh Himal trekking trail (Gurung & Chand, 2016)



In Dhading, four VDCs (Tipling, Jharlang, Serthung and Lapa) were visited by the GHTNA enumerators. The Ganesh Himal (Ruby Valley) trail is one of the most popular tourist destinations for Dhading and the tourism flow and business increased after the earthquake. However, the earthquake of last year caused significant damage on trails, monuments, amenities, tea-houses and lodges.

The survey shows 25 trails were assessed in the region of which 13 trails are dirt type trails and remaining are drained dirt trails. Most of the trails suffered damage due to the earthquake and aftershocks. In six trails the water supply has been damaged. There are numerous smaller landslides (more than 200) in the region which need immediate repair and improvement.

Over 73% of the tourism buildings structure are reported to have been damaged partially (over 50%) or fully. According to the owners of these buildings, the structure needs to be replaced. Some have already started building temporary kitchen and dining to accommodate few trekkers they receive in this season.

The earthquake resulted in a 70% decrease in tourist flow have resulted in income loss of 92%, for enterprise along the trail for whom tourism was a major source of livelihood. Some of the socio-economic impact was seen in the migration of youth for employment abroad, children taken out of school as loss of business resulted in parents not being able to paying school fees. There have been significant changes in food, cloth and basic need facilities were observed, all direct impact of loss of tourism revenues post-earthquake in the region.

As tourism is seen as the key component for livelihood in the region there is urgent need to 'revive tourism' through immediate reconstructing infrastructure - trails, bridges, signage, energy-lines, etc. -based on relevant earthquake resilient guidelines. An important focus should be to provide a loan package for enterprises to restart their business as majority of the SME do not have access to funds to restart their businesses.

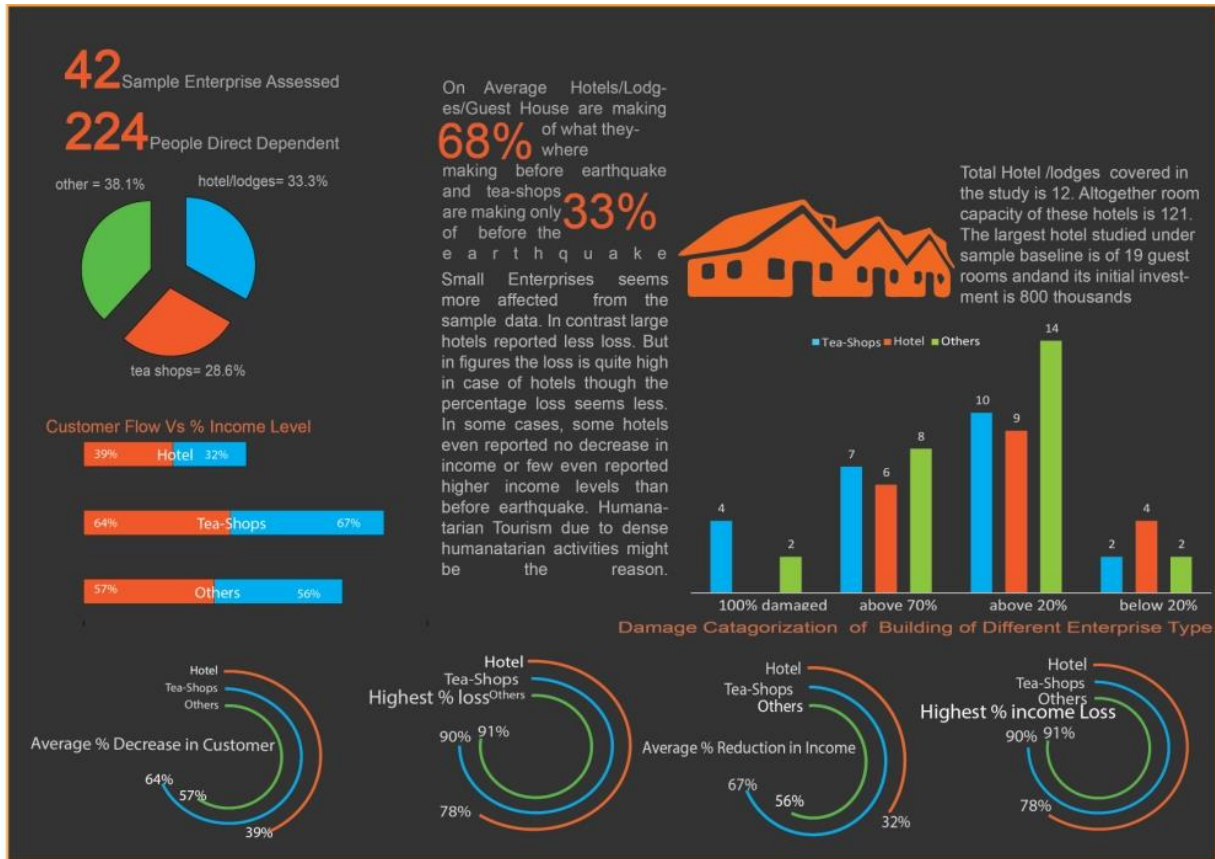
5.4. Nuwakot

In Nuwakot, the GHTNA enumerators collected data in the surrounding of Nuwakot durbar square as the square served a lot of international and domestic tourist annually. The buildings around the Nuwakot Durbar square have been severely damaged. Tea-houses, lodges and homestays in Nuwakot have suffered major loss of business after the earthquake. Since the durbar square is the major tourist attraction of Nuwakot, tourism can only be revived when the monuments in Nuwakot are restored.

The 42 enterprises (involving 224 people directly) studied, hotels/lodges/guest houses are earning on average 68% of what they were making before the earthquake, and tea-shops are making only 33% of what they were making before.

Based on the observations of the enumerators, the repair of monuments is top priority for tourism recovery in the district. Income generation activities based on livelihood with market linkages should be supported to revive tourism in Nuwakot. Therefore easy and accessible mechanisms for enterprise loans and support are necessary to facilitate the survival and continuation of tourism enterprises in the district.

Figure 5.2. Summary of damage and loss around Nuwakot Durbar (Karki&Chand, 2016)



5.5. Helambu, PanchPokhari and Tatopani–Sindhupalchowk

GHTNA enumerators collected data and information from the Helambu, Kiul, PanchPokhari and Tatopani areas of Sindhupalchowk. This region is one of the popular destinations along the Great Himalaya Trail. There has been significant damage to trails, monuments and infrastructure facilities in the region and the enterprises too suffered major loss of business after the earthquake with majority of closed and shutdown.

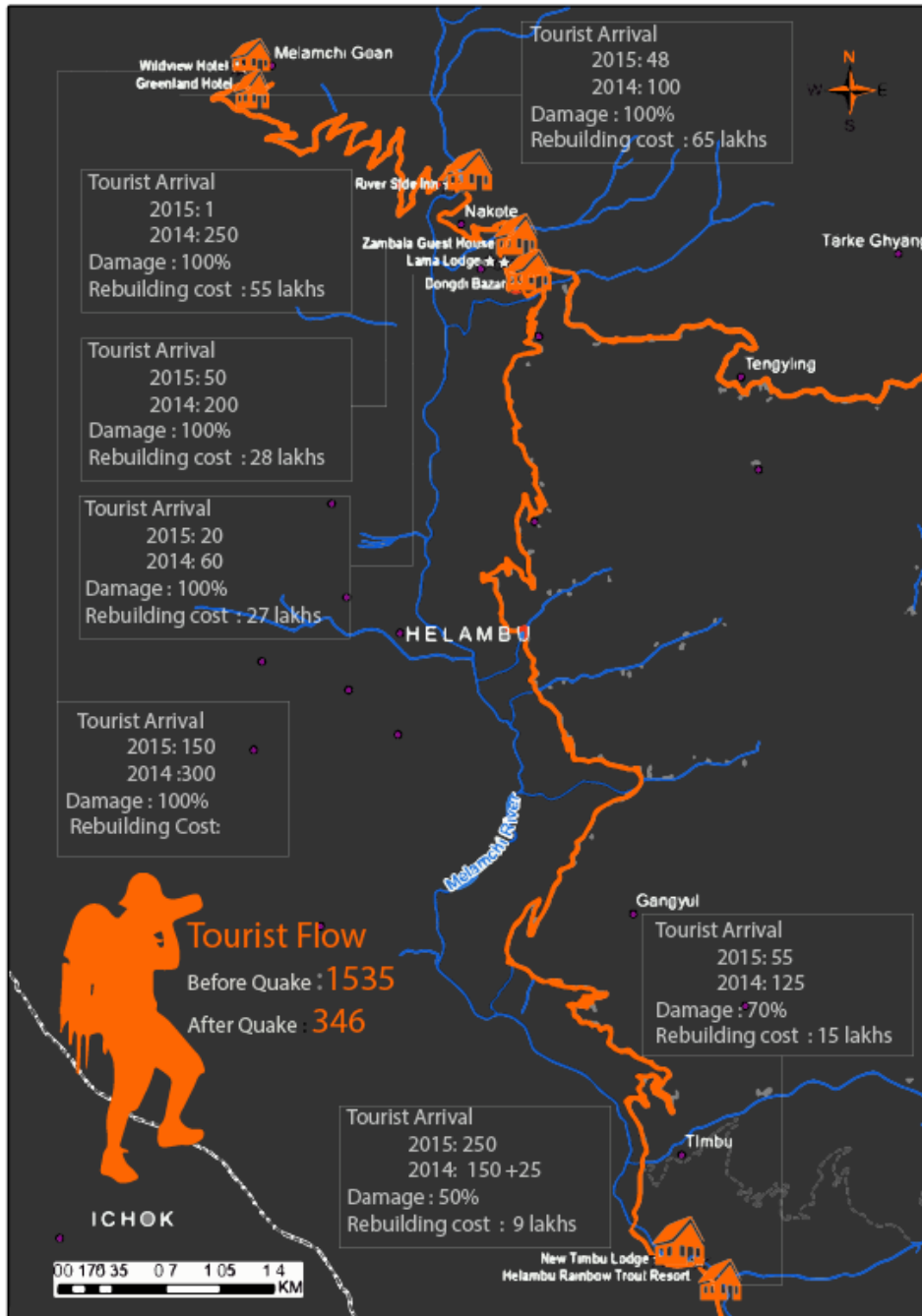
In Helambu, there has been major trail damage *en route* Tharepati – Melamchigyang – Tarkegyang, which urgently needs reconstruction. There are numerous landslides along the trails. However the motor road that leads to Helambu came back into operation last October.

80% of the hotels, lodges, tea-house and homestay suffered major damage and are now closed. A few hotels have built temporary dining and kitchen to accommodate visiting tourists. With sharp number of decrease in tourist majority of the tourism enterprise are closed and also the enterprise are in urgent need to reconstruct their damage structure. However there is also need to address

the reconstruction of new enterprise that should be constructed as per earthquake resilient structure, guidelines, use of clean energy, etc.

The Trails in PanchPokari have reported major damage and are in urgent need of repair.

Figure 5.3. Damage and loss in Helambu and Tatopani (Lama, Bhandari & Chand, 2016)



Tatopani which caters for huge numbers of trans-boundary tourists (from Nepal to the Tibet Autonomous Region in China and vice versa) has been completely closed down after the earthquake. Fully destructed hotels are not in operation, but partially damaged hotels are in state of repair to operate if tourist flow can be generated in the next season. However, a major landslide on the Arniko Highway is the biggest obstacle for tourism recovery in the region. This landslide must be cleared and restored as soon as possible.

As tourism is seen as a canvas and a market for sustainable livelihoods in the region (especially in Helambu) there is urgent need to get the tourists back on the trekking trails. Like in Gorkha and Dhading, it is a priority to reconstruct basic infrastructure, like trails, bridges, renewable energy, WASH, etc., based on relevant earthquake resilient guidelines. Income generation activities based on clear market linkages, like potato, cardamom, vegetables with use of innovative and appropriate technology and improved farming methods can be key activities to revive tourism in Sindhupalchowk. It is important to focus on easy and accessible loans for enterprises to restart their business.

5.6. District Workshops

The District workshops were organized in all four districts (Gorkha , Sindhupalchowk , Dhading and Nuwakot) to share the findings of the study among the stakeholders in the districts (Private Sector, district government and administration, local NGOs). The workshops did not only focus on the results of the study, but identified the key activities that needed to be addressed in the district to revive tourism in the district.

Sindhupalchowk

1. New innovative packages should be developed (eg. Helambu Green Trekking Villages)
2. Harlang-Barlang – a new destination could be developed as tourism package and promoted
3. Effective collaboration among various tourism stake holders must be developed
4. Building sheds and resting places along with toilet facilities must be built along the GHT routes.
5. Focus must be given to ‘Immediate result oriented activities’ rather than long term result activities.
6. Livelihood activities focus of added value products like cardamom, apples, coffee, avocado etc., inked with agro-tourism and market linkage needs to be developed.
7. Clean drinking water is the main problem that has to be solved immediately. Donors need to develop and implement WASH activities and projects.
8. Agricultural activities could be integrated with tourism
9. Plans and policies should be integrated through effective collaboration of all stakeholders
10. Domestic tourism could be promoted
11. Gather various organizations and link up with district in grass root level tourism development.

Dhading

- 1) Spill-over effect – Lure tourists who visit Kurintar (rafting and cable car) to visit nearby places in Dhading
- 2) Tourists face hassle due to taxing at different locations, need global/one time taxing policy
- 3) End moral policing (e.g. police hassling tourists drinking alcohol, couple showing romance in the public and forcing bars and restaurants to close early, etc.)
- 4) Promote domestic tourist.
- 5) Active role of private sectors in policy making related to tourism
- 6) Emulate part of the cultural and heritage related policy, like encouraging people to maintain local tradition, clothing's and rebuild houses in the village uniformly with traditional architecture.
- 7) Product design and market linkages, need to identify the unique local products and present as USP
- 8) Backward linkages and marketing is prominent, like. 28 + homestays were set up with all the necessary preparations regarding food, culture, etc., but not attract tourists due to lack of market linkages.
- 9) Set up information centre to help tourists
- 10) Capacity building: guide training (focus on local guides), honing skills of local artists (can present cultural events for rafting tourists), hospitality and management for tea house/ lodge operators, local chicken farming, citrus & orange farming in the Mahabharata range
- 11) Need to add artificial components to further engage the tourists (e.g. cultural events, pottery, etc.).

Gorkha

- 1) Urgent reconstruction of Gorkha Durbar Square, trail repair and maintenance of Mansalu trekking area.
- 2) Establishment of Tourist Information Centre, develop digital and print brochure and flyers for promotion of the Gorkha District .
- 3) Need to develop business continuity model for micro enterprises
- 4) Tourists face hassle due to taxing at different locations, need global/one time taxing policy
- 5) Active role of private sectors in policy making related to tourism
- 6) Awareness: tourism in the education curriculum (religions, culture), people should be educated about the standard codes of etiquette while dealing with the tourists
- 7) Grant and loans to the MSME's along Manasalu Trail

Nuwakot

1. Develop home stays, develop model tourism villages along Nuwakot Durbar square

2. Involve local people/communities in infrastructure developing/building/construction activities.
3. Develop local tourism products/enhance/marketing as well as conserve in a sustainable fashion
4. Develop livelihood activities for income generation to local people
5. Organize trainings/programs for running low cost home stays
6. Rhododendron juice, ground apples based on livelihood projects could be developed as another attraction for this district. Products from rhododendron like juice and wine with market linkages could be huge income generation activities.
7. Trainings/development/marketing required for existing tourism attractions like the 'Goru Judaune festival' and 'Dupcheswor Mahadev Temple'.
8. Positive messages through media.

6. Summary on damage and loss; recovery and rehabilitation

- *Getting tourists back on the trail; market the Great Himalaya Trail*
- *Reconstruct trails and bridges as soon as possible*
- *Develop livelihood strategies in close relation to tourism development; develop backward linkages from tourism to agriculture, renewable energy and WASH*
- *Develop a sustainable tourism policy for the GHT in the four districts*
- *Generate interest among tourism-related stakeholders (private sector, NGOs, governments) to develop a continuing platform to develop and manage the GHT*

6.1. Summary of the damage in the four districts

- Damage to the trail is dependent on the district, in certain areas damaged trails and bridges (Gorkha) in other areas landslides (Sindhupalchowk)
- Springs and water points have been shifting with shocks along certain trails
- In places trail monuments are severely damaged (Helambu; Nuwakot; Dhading)
- In Sindhupalchowk most tourism enterprises are damaged (90%), in Gorkha far less

6.2. Summary of the loss in the four districts

- In Gorkha is loss of revenues more than 80%; in Nuwakot 68% loss of business; in Helambu 80%, and 95% in Tatopani area; in Dhading 40 % loss of business
- Loss of business is between 40 and 95%
- Tour operators state that they have 48% less business
- Some tour operators expect to be next year at the level of before the earthquake, some less, some more
- On average trekking tourists spend around 7% less compared to before the earthquake

6.3. Summary of the recovery needs in the four districts

- Immediate need for reconstruction of infrastructure: trails, bridges, energy, drinking water, signage, etc. with relevant earthquake resilient guidelines and norms

6.4. Summary of the rehabilitation needs in the four districts

- Focus on specific marketing for the earthquake affected areas
- Market linkage with private sector districts
- Soft loans for enterprises to restart businesses; with accessible funding mechanism

- Income generation activities based on livelihood with market linkages, e.g poultry for Dhading, agro-farms (potato, cardamom) in Helambu
- Employment training programmes (Dhading)
- Sustainable tourism friendly policy development

7. Long term strategy

To reconstruct and develop a safe and sustainable trekking tourism along the GHT in the four affected districts and at the same time improve livelihoods of more people in these districts a long term trekking tourism strategy for the districts is necessary.

This strategy is based on three pillars – to promote the GHT in the four districts, to develop a trekking platform at national level to improve on sustainable development frameworks in the country and support sustainable and inclusive development along the GHT in the four districts.

7.1. Reconstructing, redeveloping and repositioning

This long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation strategy is based on the results of the damage and loss and recovery needs assessment conducted in Gorkha, Dhading, Nuwakot and Sindhupalchowk (as presented in Chapter 6 and in the summaries of Chapter 7), the ‘Post-Earthquake Tourism Recovery Plan’ as presented in the up-dated ‘National Tourism Strategic Plan’ of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of December 2015, ICIMOD’s ‘Strategic Framework for Resilient Livelihoods in Earthquake Affected Areas of Nepal of June 2015 (as presented in Chapter 5), but also contributing to Sustainable Development Goals as written down in ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’.

The Agenda proposes to achieve this through a wide range of measures, which include finance, technology, capacity building, trade; and the 'systemic' areas of policy and institutional coherence, multi-stakeholder partnerships, data monitoring and accountability (see pp.26-27). Sustainable tourism plays a significant role in achieving the Agenda, like in paragraph 33: ‘We are also determined to promote sustainable tourism’, in Goal 8.9: ‘By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products’, or Goal 12.b: ‘Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products’.

The long term strategy follows the time-lines of reconstruction, redevelopment and reposition, as proposed in MoCTCA’s National Tourism Strategic Plan 2015-2024. Reconstruction has a one year timeline, redevelopment a two year timeline and repositioning a three year timeline.

The main elements the long-term strategy contributes to include:

Promote (and brand) the Great Himalaya Trail in the earthquake affected areas

- Promote GHT as a premium trekking trail in the world, but focus in the promotion and marketing on the earthquake affected areas.

Establish and develop a platform for local, national and international stakeholders, and strengthen their capacities

- Maintain a network of tourism stakeholders in all four districts along the trail.
- Build the capacity of stakeholders along the trail and promote equal opportunities to benefit from tourism at all levels.
- Coordinate and lobby with related authorities of the Government of Nepal for adequate policies, acts, regulations and other relevant legal documents to ensure sustainable development of tourism in Nepal.
- Promote responsible tourism practices at all levels in Nepal.

Support sustainable and inclusive development along the trail

- Support the districts with developing strategic tourism development plans and build capacities to implement it.
- Support capacity development in socially responsible business development, job creation and income generation.
- Promote sustainable and socially responsible business practices along the trail.
- Support conservation of the natural environment, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and national pride.
- Facilitate infrastructure development along the trail to improve livelihoods of local communities.

8. Plans per theme and district

In this chapter the main plans for consideration with Oxfam or together with Oxfam for different donor agencies are shown. First the thematic plans, like ‘Getting the Tourists Back on The Trail’, are presented. Next per district concrete and implementable plans have been written down.

- Develop and support effective **marketing and promotion** of tourism along the Great Himalaya Trail in the four districts
- **Capacity strengthening of local organisations** to promote and support integrated development with **cross-sector participation**
- **Value Chain Development** along the GHT in the four districts to identify business and employment opportunities for the poor
- Create local employment and income through **support for SME’s**, increasing the number and quality of goods and services, promoting backward linkages, and ensuring that they respond directly to the needs of the market

It is suggested to develop activities as following:

1. Getting the tourists back on the trail – marketing and promotion

- a. Develop branding and marketing strategy for the four districts (together with NTB)
- b. Develop online marketing tools
- c. Develop social media marketing
- d. Create network of service providers and sellers
- e. Domestic marketing with national tour operators and NTB
- f. International marketing with tour operators and NTB

2. Tourism for livelihood improvement value chain development

- a. Tourism and livelihood enterprise development and support (tea house, home-stay, lodge, campsites, handicraft, agro-farms etc.) with soft loan and grant
- b. Financial network development (Linking with financial institutions lender and entrepreneurs)
- c. Facilitation Services (guides, porters, information centres, local ‘*haatbazaars*’ etc.)
- d. Local human resource supply (Hotel-room, Guides cook, waiters, travel agency etc.)
- e. Agro based enterprise and supply chain development

3. Basic infrastructure support and development for tourism (per district)

- a. Alternative energy for cooking
- b. Trail and bridge repair and improvement
- c. Waste management
- d. Water supply and sanitation
- e. Solar /Alternative energy
- f. Heritage conservation and support.

4. Institutional development

- a. Capacity building of DDC, TDC, VDC and communities
- b. Formation of tourism and livelihood entrepreneurs network locally

5. Capacity building and awareness

- a. Institution support and capacity building of public organisations in tourism.
- b. Capacity buildings of private sector and SME's
- c. Awareness building of communities, workshops
 - Tourism Education and Awareness Programme
 - Waste management
 - Health hygiene and sanitation
 - Energy and forest conservation
 - Water and resource conservation

8.1. Brief description of long term activity plan for the four districts

8.1.1. Marketing and branding support

8.1.1.1. Marketing and promotion materials developed for each district

Branding, marketing and promotion is key to increase the number of tourists visiting the four districts. Each district has unique products that can attract niche market tourists having higher spending capacity and length of stay. Increase in number of tourists' arrival and will have very positive impact on economy and the employment in the district.

To achieve this objective, the products needs to be branded and promoted through tour operators operating in the earthquake affected region. The idea is to bring in all the tour operators together and develop a brand slogan as well as product brand to promote the affected district. The developed brand would be used by the electronic media and the tour operators for uniformity and to attract tourists to the area. This brand would be used in all the brochures and pamphlets used by the private sectors to promote products of the tourism destination of the affected earthquake district. This will also help bring in tour operators together helping in standardisation and producing quality service to tourists.

8.1.1.2. Developing online marketing tools

Now a day's electronic media has been playing a vital role in reaching customer market and promotion of products. The electronic media is the cheapest and fastest means of communication to reach unreachable market due to cost involved in directly reaching them. To take the advantage of the online marketing, it is suggested to develop Tourism website align with GHTNA, Oxfam and potential donor agencies. This would serve as both development initiative

as well as promotional website. This website will provide necessary information on products and services of the district to the market. This will be an interactive website in which the tourist-queries would be answered by the programme professionals in the district. Along with website it suggested to operate social media like Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and others. Professional service provider would be hired to develop these sites and employees of the programme would operate these social media. Private sectors will be encouraged to use these social sites to promote their products and the district. The website will also serve merchandising site to divert the queries to service providers. These service providers will also get opportunity to promote their products and services.

8.1.2. Basic infrastructure support

Infrastructure development is primary requirement for effective and sustained tourism development in any area. Majority of the trails, monuments and facilities have been damaged and in immediate need of repair to revive tourism as shown in the study. The study suggests major infrastructure repair and reconstruction need in the district, but the programme cannot fulfil all the need of the district. It is suggested to include at least a few basic interventions in partnership with DDC, conservation area and other partners. This would encourage DDC to invest in tourism development.

The suggested sectors are:

- a. Trail Repair
- b. Solar energy support
- c. Improved cooking stoves
- d. Signage along the trail

The above activities would help in creating better tourism environment for both tourists and the local communities. It will also support in reducing pressure on natural forest resource on which tourism industry and the communities are dependant for cooking firewood.

8.1.3. Improved and sustainable livelihood from tourism value chain development

8.1.3.1 Supported tourism enterprises

This activity is specifically developed for livelihood improvement and business development of household involved in tourism and agro- enterprises. This will include hotels, lodges, teahouses home stays, agro-farms, handicraft development, etc., in the area. The programme would select SMEs in tourism area where most of business operate and depend upon tourist. After selecting these entrepreneurs, they would be supported over the period of two years building their capacity to upgrade their facilities and services to improve their profitability. They would also be supported to build network with financial institutions for improved investment which was found to be negligible in the district.

8.1.3.2 Support agro value chain enterprises

This activity aims to support farmers who can supply agricultural products like vegetables, unique grains and dairy products to the tourism enterprises supported in above activities. They would be trained to build their capacity and supported through small tools and equipment. Technical support will be provided throughout the programme period. The network of these farmers and tourism enterprises would be established so that demand and supply is matched for their production. They would also be linked with district agriculture department for further support and sustainability. They would also be supported to build network with financial institutions for improved investment which was found to be negligible in the district.

8.1.4. Institutional development and support

The programme success will also be determined by the district stakeholders' capacity and engagement. The stakeholders' capacity is the key to success and sustainability. The following activities are suggested:

8.1.4.1 Review and update of DDC Tourism development plan and activities

The District has detailed Tourism development activity plan within the district development plan (Gorkha and Sindupalchowk). This is pretty detailed but need revision as relevant post-earthquake. The district stakeholders should be trained in terms of reviewing the plan and finding source of funding within and outside the district. It is suggested to update and review and train the stakeholders for this activity.

8.1.4.2 Capacity building

These stakeholders are also to be trained in other activities as per the need analysis to build their capacity to implement tourism development activities and sustainability after the completion of the programme.

8.1.4.3. Regular meeting of stakeholders support

Another important aspect of the programme would be to bring in all the stakeholders together for proper implementation of project activities as well as proper monitoring and evaluation. This will ensure effectiveness of the programme and such continuation meeting would contribute towards sustainability of the tourism development in the districts.

8.1.5. Tourism jobs training courses for unemployed youth and women

The tourism industry is in regular deficit of human resource especially post-earthquake as there is migration of skilled human resource and unavailability of the staff locally in the district. In order to maintain proper supply and fulfil these requirements regular skill trainings are to be conducted for unemployed youth and women who cannot start their own enterprises. Once they are trained they can get employment in the existing enterprises of the districts solving both the issue of employment and need of skill workers by private sectors. In long run these are the

people who also start their own enterprises after obtaining sufficient knowledge and skill. The skills suggested are:

- a. Cook training
- b. Hotel and lodge management
- c. Local guide training
- d. Improved agriculture, green houses, seeds and fertilizers.

These are the suggested activities for the programme to be conducted in first two years. The magnitude and reach of these activities would be dependent on resource available and funds generated.

8.2. Proposed initial budget

Based on the findings of the study GHTNA and Oxfam plan the following activities and budget for potential funding to the donor agencies.

Proposed activities to revive tourism in the 4 affected districts by OXFAM and GHTNA as per the study for potential donors

Sr. No.	Activities	Units	Rate NRs.	Total	Year I	Year II
1	Improved Livelihood through Tourism Value Chain					
1.1	Supported Tourism and Livelihood enterprises					
	a. Enterprise up scaling/business planning training	2	75000	150000	75000	75000
	b. Skill trainings	4	75000	300000	150000	150000
	c. Physical support with equipments	LS	1000000	1000000	500000	500000
1.2	Supported Agro Value chain Enterprises					
	a. Capacity building Training	4	50000	200000	100000	100000
	b. Equipment tools support	10	20000	200000	100000	100000
2	Marketing and support					
2.1	a. Developed Branding of each district	4	100000	400000	400000	0
	b. Print leaflets and flyers	10000	40	400000	200000	200000
2.2	a. Develop Online Marketing tools	1	200000	200000	200000	0
	b. Technical Support and operation	24	10000	240000	120000	120000
3	Institutional development and support					
3.1	Review and update of DDC Tourism development plan and activities	4	800000	3200000	3200000	0
3.2	a. Capacity building Training	4	75000	300000	150000	150000
	b. Equipments support	4	100000	400000	200000	200000
3.3	a. Regular meeting support	12	10000	120000	60000	60000
4	Basic Infrastructure support					
	a. Trail improvement	4	1000000	4000000	4000000	
	b. Improved cooking stoves	100	15000	1500000	1500000	
	c. Solar energy support	100	15000	1500000	1500000	
5	Other Tourism employment trainings for unemployed Youths and women	2	300000	600000	300000	300000
6	HR Cost					
	a. Programme Manager	24	80000	1920000	960000	960000

	b. Field staffs (4)	24	30000	2880000	1440000	1440000
	c. Field Travel works DSA	200	1500	300000	150000	150000
	d. Office operation cost (stationery , telephones , print etc)	24	5000	120000	60000	60000
7	Monitoring and Evaluation Visits of stakeholders	4	25000	100000	50000	50000
	Sub Total In NRs.			20030000	15415000	4615000
	Organizational Overheads 10%			2003000	1541500	461500
	Grand Total			22033000	16956500	5076500
	In US Dollars (exchange rate 1USD: 106)			207858.5	159967	47891.51

Note: Budget can be adjusted as per OXFAM regulation and relevancy to potential donor

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Methodological guide for post-disaster recovery planning processes - Guidelines and actions for national, regional and local governments

Annex 1. Tourism Assessment of earthquake related loss in Dhading, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha districts and possible recovery and rehabilitation interventions

Name of the Respondent:
 Address:
 Name of Business /Organization:

Name of the Enumerator:
 Date:

This assessment focuses on trekking tourism in general in Nepal, and on the Manaslu, Ganesh Himal, Helambu and PanchPokhari Trekking Trails and Nuwakot Durbar of the Great Himalaya Trail in particular.

The assessment focus on the damage along the trails (on the trails itself, trail facilities, monuments along the trails, tourism and auxiliary enterprises) and losses to local tourism and auxiliary enterprises at district level, and tourism enterprises at national level.

A. Loss and Impact Assessment at national level

1. What are the major impacts on your business/organization by the earthquake? Name as many as you can think of for your business/organization.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

2. How many tourists did you organize trekking trips for? How many tourists do you expect this full year and next year (2073)?

S.N	Before EQ (1 year) - 2071	After EQ (expected) – 2072	Second year after earthquake (expected) 2073
1			
2			

3. Is the average income now per tourist the same/higher/ lower as before the earthquake? Can you give it as percentage? Can you give an indication of your expectation for next year?

4. How long it will take to your business to reach the level as before the earthquake (revenue-wise)? Can you explain?

.....

5. Do you need any assistance to restart your business (or fully operating again)? If yes, please mention the types of assistance.

.....

6. Did you get any types of relief support from following entity?

- a. Government: Types of support -
- b. Non-Government sector: Types of support -
- c. Private Sector: Types of support -
- d. Others: Types of support -
- e. Not at all

B. Loss of tourism business in the four districts

7. Are you working along the Great Himalaya Trail in one or more of the four districts? If yes, along which trails/hubs?

- a. Manaslu
- b. Ganesh Himal
- c. Helambu
- d. PanchPokhari
- e. Nuwakot Bazar

Can you indicate per trail:

8. What is the decrease percentage of tourists after devastating earthquake?

	Very High (60% above)	High (50% - 60%)	Medium (30%-40%)	Limited (20%-30%)	Hardly (10%-20%)	Other
Manaslu						
Ganesh Himal						
Helambu						
PanchPokhari						
Nuwakot						

9. What is your tourism business loss (revenues) along the indicated trail/hub?

	Very High (80% above)	High (50% above)	Medium (30% above)	Limited (20% above)	Hardly (less than 10%)	Other

Manaslu						
Ganesh Himal						
Helambu						
PanchPokhari						
Nuwakot						

10. What are the major damages along the trekking trails (indicate per trail), affecting the/your trekking tourism business?
- a. Damages to the trekking trails? Explain
 - b. Damages to trail facilities? Explain
 - c. Damages to trail monuments? Explain
 - d. Damages to tourism businesses (hotels, lodges, tea houses, shops, etc.)? Explain
 - e. Damages to community properties (schools, health post, community centres, etc.)? Explain
 - f. Other damages, explain

C. Recovery of tourism in the four districts

11. What major initiatives those have to be taken immediately to revive the tourism along the mentioned trails/hub? Can you explain per trail?

.....

12. What types of support do you need to revive/improve your business along the mentioned trails? Please explain.

.....

13. Who should be responsible to take rebuild/revive and reconstruct initiative?

.....

14. How can in all the reconstruction initiatives ‘build back better’ be included at district level?

.....

15. How can ‘sustainable livelihoods’ be included in the recovery plans at district level?

.....

D. Rehabilitation of tourism business in Nepal

16. What contributions are you ready to give from your side to revive tourism in Nepal?

.....

17. How can in all the reconstruction initiatives ‘build back better’ be included at national level?

.....

18. How can ‘sustainable livelihoods’ be included in the recovery plans at national level?

.....

19. Any other issues that you highlight from your side to immediate revival of trekking tourism in Nepal?

.....

E. Additional question

20. Can you tell us your business size (your business transaction) before and after the earthquake? What do you expect for next year? This is optional; however this will help us to identify the types and category of business taken into consideration for this research.

	2071	2072	2073
Up to Rs. 10 Lakhs per annum			
Up to Rs. 25 Lakhs per annum			
Up to Rs. 50 Lakhs per annum			
Up to Rs. 1 Core per annum			
Up to Rs. 5 Core per annum			
More than Rs. 5 Core per annum			

Annex 2. Questionnaire Physical Damage to Tourism Sector

Aim: Assessments of individual trails, lodges, tea houses, etc. along the trail (based on specific questionnaires)

Questionnaire for survey of Trail Damage

Name of enumerator:	
Date:	
District:	VDC/Area:

1. Name of the trail:	
a. Starting point:	
b. Ending point:	
c. Estimated tourist arrivals 2014:	Estimated tourist arrivals 2015:

2. Starting point of the trail survey:		GPS:
3. Information on starting point/name settlement:		Number of HH:
a. Number of Tourism enterprises:	Hotels:	
	Restaurants:	
	Others:	

4. Information on Trail Damage					
	Describe type of trail (Dirt/Paved/ Drained/etc.)	Describe type of trail damage	Trail facility damage (resting points, water sources, etc.)	Estimated repair costs	Total length
Start location name: GPS: End location name: GPS:					
Start location name: GPS: End location name: GPS:					
Start location name: GPS: End location name: GPS:					

5. Information on Larger Trail Facilities Information like porter shelters, village water sources					
	Describe type of facility (porter shelter, village water source, etc.)	Owner of the facility	Damage to the facility (% damaged)	Estimated damage costs	Estimated repair costs
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					

6. Information on monuments along the trail damaged					
	Name and type of monument (temple, <i>chautara</i> , village spouts, etc.)	Estimated age of monument (ask to several people in vicinity)	Significance of monument	Estimated damage costs	Estimated repair costs
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					
Location name: GPS:					

Annex 3. Questionnaire Damage to Tourism Enterprises

Aim: Assessments of individual lodges, tea houses, etc. along the trail

Questionnaire on damage on enterprises along the trail:

Name of enumerator:	
Date:	
District:	VDC/Area:

1. Name of the trail:	
a. Starting point:	
b. Ending point:	
c. Estimated tourist arrivals 2014:	Estimated tourist arrivals 2015:

2. Name settlement:		GPS:
		Number of HH:
Number of tourism enterprises:	Hotels:	
	Restaurants:	
	Others:	

3. Information on enterprises damaged					
	Name /type of enterprise (Hotel, lodge, restaurant, teashop, etc.) ; Number of rooms (if applicable)	Total investment	Damage to the property (as %)	Estimated damage costs	Estimated reconstruction costs
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					

	Name /type of enterprise (Hotel, lodge, restaurant, teashop, etc.) ; Number of rooms (if applicable)	Total investment	Damage to the property (as %)	Estimated damage costs	Estimated reconstruction costs
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					
Location name: GPS: Name of owner:					

Annex 4. Questionnaire Damage and Loss to individual Tourism Enterprises

Aim: Assessments of damage and loss to individual lodges, tea houses, etc.

Name of enumerator:	
Date:	
District:	VDC/Area:

1. Name of the trail:	
a. Starting point:	
b. Ending point:	
c. Estimated tourist arrivals 2014:	Estimated tourist arrivals 2015:

2. Name of enterprise:		GPS:
Name of owner(s):		Family dependent members:
Year enterprise started:	Type of company:	
Number of rooms:	Total investment:	
Others:		

3. Estimation of damage to the tourism enterprise:

Damage per room; Please specify:	Damage to the property (as %)	Estimated damage costs	Estimated reconstruction costs	Comments

4. Estimation of loss to the enterprise:

Sources of annual income of dependent household (in NRs)

Source of income	2014/2015 (2071)	2015/2016(2072)	2016/2017 (2073)	Comments
Tourism enterprise, specify:				
Agriculture, specify:				
Other, please specify:				

5. Impact on Entrepreneur how he has been affected and coping with loss

	Description of coping	Comments
Food		
Clothing		
Education		
Health		
Others		