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IOM NEPAL EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE:
6 MONTHS ON

foreword

On 25 April and 12 May 2015, devastating earthquakes measuring 7.8 and 7.3 Richter killed at least 8,790 people and destroyed 498,852 houses across Nepal. Together with local communities, humanitarian organizations and the Government of Nepal, the International Organization of Migration (IOM) launched relief activities to meet the needs of those affected. Amid terrible disaster and suffering, the strength, solidarity and resilience of the people of Nepal was clear. People came together to help their neighbors, spearheaded search and rescue efforts, shared what they had and volunteered in temporary camps. Within days many were on the move, returning to their village or their extended family to bring food, plastic tarpaulins and other help. Families and friends around the world sent also sent assistance, tripling remittances in the aftermath of the earthquake.

Soon after the earthquake, one of IOM's local partners met Reshma Adhikari living in Khopachagu in Dolakha district. Her house collapsed in the earthquake, and Mrs Adhikari and her family constructed a temporary shelter with some corrugated iron sheets distributed by a local organization, and also received some food. Although she had lost her house and her main livelihood, she never lost her hope and spirit, focusing instead on providing for her family. Six months after the earthquake, IOM is employing Mrs Adhikari and others in her community to clear debris from the collapse of the Kali and Tripura Sundari Temples. She plans to use her salary to purchase construction materials and begin rebuilding, and also to bring the family together in the upcoming festival season.

Six months on from those terrible days, IOM would like to dedicate this booklet to the people of Nepal, in appreciation of their compassion, hope and determination, and in solidarity for the road to recovery ahead.

Maurizio Busatti

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maurizio Busatti', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chief of Mission

IOM uses a survey tool called the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), to quickly gather, analyze and publish information about the locations of displaced people.



locating and listening to those in need

In the aftermath of a disaster, governments and aid organizations need to know where people are and what they need most. The faster and more accurate the information, the better responders can target relief supplies and assistance. IOM uses a survey tool called the Displacement Tracking Matrix to quickly gather, analyze and publish information about the locations of displaced people, how many there are and what they need most, gathering information on food, shelter, water and sanitation, health, education and safety. The first survey started seven days after the earthquake struck and assessed 103 sites where 37,500 people were displaced in the Kathmandu valley. The second round assessed 409 sites with 117,700 people in 15 affected districts. In the third and fourth rounds, the number of sites has decreased but some sites have grown larger. Assessments have focused on providing detailed and specific site profiles to ensure that aid gets to where it is most needed.

As part of the assessments, people were asked whether they plan to return home or move on to a new location: this information helps organizations gauge which sites may need longer term support. Information such as the altitude of each site helps to plan the priority locations for extra blanket and corrugated iron deliveries as winter approaches. All information is uploaded to a Google Map and the raw data shared, so that organizations can use and analyze the data further themselves. Full reports, maps and raw data can be downloaded from: www.tinyurl.com/NepalDTM



Nepali woman at Alchi Dada camp concerned about her future – where will her new home and farmland be? Where will they be resettled?



managing camps and temporary settlements

Globally, IOM is the lead organization for camp coordination and management. IOM is working with international and local partners to ensure that priority sites have camp managers, whether community-led efforts or with assistance from another organization. Problems in sites are assessed and resolved, often with support from other organizations working in the area. Site improvements are carried out, including construction of fencing for safety, walk ways, shower facilities, clothes washing areas, drainage works, communal cooking areas and meeting areas. In preparation for the monsoon, alternative sites were identified in case landslides or flooding meant people had to move again. Six months after the earthquake, many camps have closed but some will require ongoing support. A major priority is to provide insulation material, blankets and other materials to help those at high altitudes cope with the winter weather and avoid having to move again.



IOM's distribution of Shelter Kit in Selang Village Development Committee (VDC), Sindhupalchowk District.



providing temporary shelters and starting to rebuild

The earthquakes and resulting landslides destroyed over 498,000 houses and partially damaged more than 256,000 (Post Disaster Needs Assessment, 2015). Fearful of aftershocks or the collapse of damaged buildings, hundreds of thousands of people moved to open spaces and established temporary camps. To protect these people until rebuilding efforts could begin, IOM and other organizations distributed plastic tarpaulins, ropes, bamboo poles and corrugated iron to help families to build a temporary shelter. As many people had lost belongings, IOM also distributed blankets, kitchen sets, solar lights and hygiene kits. IOM has taken a leading role in providing a pipeline of supplies and support to the coordinated shelter response. IOM is distributing these items with assistance from over forty local and international organizations in 19 districts, and had reached 148,450 families by October 2015.

As rebuilding efforts begin, IOM is establishing Shelter Centers in the most affected districts. The first Centers opened in Sindhupalchowk, Gorkha and Dolakha in September and October 2015, and will serve as 'one stop shops' providing information and training on how to build back safer as well as supporting the coordination of reconstruction activities.

IOM is working with other organizations involved in shelter construction to develop user-friendly materials to support families with damaged and destroyed homes to build safer homes and be better prepared to face future disasters.



IOM's Discharge and Referrals assistance helps injured patients to return home in Melamchi Village Development Committee (VDC), Sindhupalchowk district.



continuing to support the injured and traumatised

Falling buildings and landslides during the earthquake killed at least 8,790 people and injured over 22,300. 446 health facilities were destroyed and another 746 partially damaged. Those hospitals still standing were overwhelmed with those needing care for traumatic injuries. Triage of patients was urgently needed, and in the chaotic post-earthquake situation, there was a risk that patients would not be discharged safely or followed up. IOM teams assisted patient discharge and referral so that beds could be freed up and those in need were linked to essential care. From 10 May to mid-October, IOM medical escort teams assisted 480 patients on 1,700 occasions with discharge and referral to local health facilities or back into their home communities. For 110 patients who lived outside Kathmandu, IOM also arranged transport to their homes. Health education and psychosocial counselling was also provided to patients and their caregivers, particularly those with traumatic injuries.

Many of those affected or injured in the earthquake also experienced psychological distress. IOM's multi-disciplinary psychosocial team, comprised of counsellors, social workers, animators and artists, provided direct assistance to people living in eight temporary settlements in the Kathmandu Valley, housing over 2,700 families. IOM also provided training for 80 volunteers and camp managers on mental health and psychosocial considerations in camp management and service provision, as well as self-care.



Six months after the earthquake, IOM continues to identify and refer cases of medical assistance or discharge. In October 2015, a specialized injury and rehabilitation unit was opened in Chautara in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Population to provide at least 140 severely injured and disabled patients with residential care.

IOM continues to support the National Tuberculosis Program to reinstate TB services in affected districts, including the follow up of patients whose treatment was disrupted by the damage and displacement caused by the earthquake. Since October 2015, IOM teams have been screening individuals in crowded temporary settlements in the Kathmandu valley, where an increased risk of TB transmission is a concern. IOM will continue to support the return of the displaced back home or to other locations over the coming months. Health teams will work with camp management teams to assist the most vulnerable including pregnant women, people living with disabilities or disabling chronic illnesses and linking these individuals with health care services and psychosocial support.



Overcrowded settlement sites and displacement in open spaces put displaced people, particularly girls and women, at significant risk of gender-based violence.



preventing human trafficking, exploitation and unsafe migration

IOM works to prevent human trafficking and unsafe migration from, to and within Nepal. The earthquake has compounded the risk of human trafficking, as families can become separated and people's livelihoods are disrupted. IOM is working together with other organisations to highlight the risks of trafficking and unsafe migration, as well as other safety and protection concerns in camps and displacements sites.



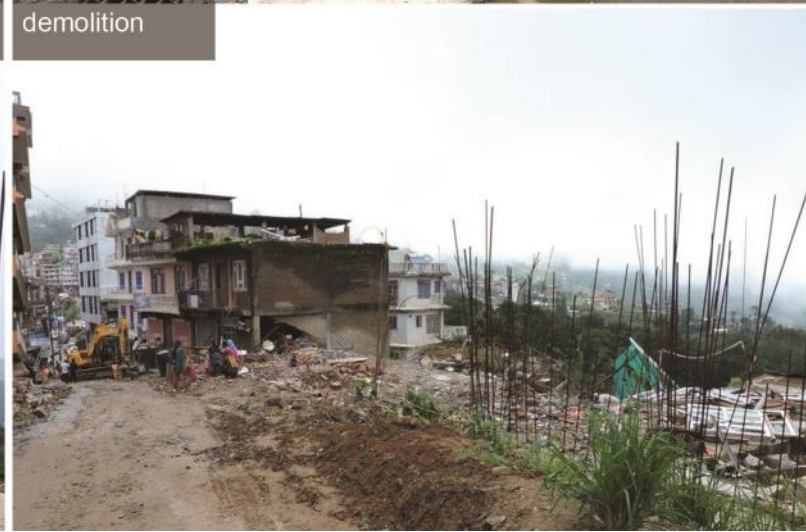
According to the Crime Investigation Department of Nepal Police, sex trafficking is particularly common from Nepal to India, with as many as 5,000 to 10,000 women and girls trafficked to India each year.



before
demolition



after
demolition



demolishing unsafe buildings and clearing the rubble

The earthquakes destroyed schools, hospitals, government offices and markets as well as private homes. Rubble blocked roads, isolating villages and preventing aid deliveries. Two weeks after the first earthquake, IOM launched a debris removal program, temporarily employing local workers to clear debris along the road to Chautara. Once this was completed, Chautara was able to become a humanitarian hub for the hard-hit district of Sindhupalchok, the seat of the local government, economic hub and crucial transport corridor for aid supplies. Local contractors and international experts were engaged for larger and more complex demolitions. By October 2015, IOM had demolished 121 government buildings, 32 private homes and 12 public infrastructures while clearing 26 others in Sindhupalchok, Dolhaka and Gorkha districts. The program has employed 1,144 local temporary laborers, including 453 women, for a total of 10,417 days of work, providing critical income to disaster-affected families.



IOM in Nepal

One year after Nepal became an International Organization for Migration member state, the Government of Nepal and IOM signed a memorandum of understanding in 2007 to encourage cooperation and the delivery of services to Nepal, which is a country of origin, transit and destination of migration. IOM's initial focus was on the resettlement of Bhutanese refugees. Since then, the organization has diversified its areas of cooperation with the Government of Nepal into additional fields such as Forced Migration, Migration Health, Migration and Development, and Facilitating Migration.



with thanks:

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AmeriCares





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