

Building Back Better in Earthquake Response



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Building Back Better in Earthquake Response

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Foreword

Dear readers,

We are happy to introduce this anthology of success stories highlighting the impact of the DEC-funded earthquake response project on building resilience of the earthquake-affected community in the remote mountainous villages of Rasuwa district. The project was implemented by IRW along with LWF Nepal and BATAS Foundation.

The successes in building resilience of the earthquake-affected community was possible due to the high level of engagement and active leadership of the community and by adopting the BBB approach. The approach focused on mainstreaming Disaster Risk Resilience in each of its intervention related to shelter, livelihood, water and sanitation, and further built the local capacities by organizing and equipping the community with disaster preparedness skills.

The report highlights how the intervention complemented the larger earthquake recovery efforts of the Government. The construction of earthquake-resilient shelter, drinking water supply, irrigation canals, village link roads, training of local masons in earthquake-resilient techniques in the remote Rural Municipalities of mountainous and hard-to-reach Rasuwa district in partnership with the rural municipality is a testimony to the BBB approach.

The resilient livelihood interventions supported with community infrastructure such as rustic stores, collection centers for local produce to support market linkages have provided greater bargaining power to the people and have added to their overall resilience. We would like to thank DEC and the British public for their generous and comprehensive support to enable the earthquake-affected people to get back to their lives with increased resilience.

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Building Back Better in Earthquake Response

We can turn every disaster into opportunity for change and renewal. Introducing the concept of Build Back Better (BBB) to the earthquake response has been a priority objective of the project to improve the overall resilience of communities in the face of earthquake disaster impacts, and in recognizing the vulnerability of the communities to multiple natural disasters.

The BBB mainstreaming has key elements of general principles including consultation, information gathering, social inclusion, economic recovery, resilient infrastructure, resilient communities and local empowerment.

In a transition from shelter to human settlement, the BBB mainstreaming in the project looked into additional components within Disaster Risk Reduction, Community Resilience and Effective Implementation. It has emphasized the learning from disasters to ensure a greater level of resilience and preparedness to future events, with a focus on ensuring decision-making takes into account risk reduction, social capital building, and quality and accountability through compliance to core humanitarian standards.



The implementation of the principles of BBB at all project stages empowers local authorities and communities, takes multi-hazard approach, ensures socio-cultural suitability, and creates an enabling environment to build resilience. Under the BBB, based on our experience, we need to ensure that linking humanitarian relief to long-term development should be approached, not as a linear ‘continuum’, but as ‘contiguum’ to reflect the fact that different needs may exist at the same time, and that rehabilitation and development may at times need to be conducted alongside relief activities.

We also need to be mindful that women are on the front lines of the BBB. Women’s voice and participation must be promoted in BBB mainstreaming to ensure that shelter to human settlement transition of the affected population is not just better, but also safer and inclusive.

Disabled-Friendly Toilets a Catalyst for Change

The earthquake devastated the life of 50 years old Kaisya Tamang, a resident in Kalika Rural Municipality 1, Ramche of Rasuwa district. Her house was demolished and property destroyed. The recovery program implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation and with financial support from Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) brought a drastic change in her life of frustration and disappointment.

An inclusive toilet ended the pain of Tamang, a person with disability, of going for open defecation. Unlike other persons, she needs an open space to sit and stand.

Living with her son, Tamang, has built a house on her own. The decision to choose her as a beneficiary for the toilet made her happy.

“Two months ago, when the local community told me that these 3 institutions decided to build inclusive toilet, it was one of the happiest day in my life. With the inclusive and disabled-friendly toilet at home, I don’t have to use the open space,” said Tamang.



Tamang said that Ramche village used to adopt various traditional practices such as traditional healers, open defecation, cleaning dishes and keeping them in sun light to dry, no water for dehydration patient, eating vegetables and fruits without washing and no hand washing before meal.

As the village was declared open defecation-free in March, the construction of toilet turned as a boon, said Tamang. Not only Tamang, every household has a toilet and some of them are inclusive and they are properly used. The local people translate the messages of using toilet and other hygiene behaviors to the neighboring village as well during their personal visits. The paths and school premises are free from feces and bad odor.

Household cleanliness such as solid waste management, proper dish washing and conserving food and water are being practiced in every house. The children are neat and clean, are concerned for their personal cleanliness and do regular hand washing. One of the things the toilet introduced is the level of awareness among the people on water-borne diseases.

“Construction of toilets has changed our life. There is no more water-borne disease,” said Tamang. “Although earthquake destroyed our property and made us homeless, the toilets give us a new healthy life.”

“Along with the construction of the toilets, the people from BATAS also taught us the way to remain healthy by washing hand with soap before meal and after using the toilet,” said Tamang.

Foot-Trail Expected to Boost Vegetable Farming

Although Guranse Village is just 2 kilometers from Ramche bazaar and it is known as a pocket for vegetable production, the earthen road, lack of irrigation and inadequate knowhow on modern agriculture method remain as a stumbling block.

Connected to Nepal's different cities through Pasanglhamu Highway, the residents in Guranse of Kalika Rural Municipality have everything to make money except barriers mentioned.

Implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC, the project also constructed water intake to store the water to use for irrigation purpose. Under livelihood recovery program, these organizations have been providing the local farmers with seeds of vegetables, plastic sheets, and bamboos to build tunnel to grow vegetables.

Taking adequate mitigation measures to protect the trail from flood and landslide with Gabion wall, the construction of 1,600 meter Ramche-Guranse foot trail of Kalika Rural Municipality is going to be a game changer to develop the hill as a pocket for vegetable production.



During the rainy season, the link between Guranse and Ramche was usually cut off due to flood in the stream and it was always risky to walk through the trail. With the construction of concrete steps along with stone wall, people of Guranse will heave a sigh of relief. “The foot trail has already reduced our travel time between Ramche bazaar and Guranse,” said 78 years old Nema Wangdi. “With the steps, I have found it much easier to go down and climb up. It took me just one and a half hours to make a trip.”

Planting vegetables in his 15 ropanis of land, Nima saved Rs 60,000 last year. “With the all-weather concrete trail before us, it saves our time and energy,” said Nima.

The trail has certain characteristics. Following the guidelines of Build Back Better (BBB), adequate mitigation measures were taken during the construction period. As the project was selected with the decision and demand of elected representatives of ward no. 1 and community users group, local people actively took part in the construction. With resting places built for the porters at 2 points, the foot trail is likely to make a difference in Guranse village. It also comes as a relief to 300 students of Temrang Primary School.

Along with Wangdi, the foot trail is likely to help over 150 households in the areas which grow vegetables. 57-year-old Menjin Yalmo Tamang is one of the beneficiaries of the foot trail and irrigation scheme. Tamang, an earthquake-affected person, received materials for the construction of tunnel, vegetable seeds and fertilizers.

“My vegetable is at harvesting phase. I think I will make Rs 50,000 per season,” said Tamang. “With the completion of the all-weather trail and irrigation scheme, the vegetable farming is going to help us to improve our livelihood.”

Her level of confidence has gone up because the project also took them for an observation trip to Trishuli bazaar. “We met some vegetable vendors of Trishuli and they have shown interest to come to our village to buy the vegetables in bulk,” said Tamang.

Earthquake-resilient Water Supply Reduces Drudgery

Women of Palep Village of Kalika Rural Municipality used to spend 2 hours to fetch a bucket of water. Following the earthquake, the situation further deteriorated with the disappearance of water sources. They were compelled to spend hours to get a bucket of water. After the demolition of home by the earthquake, Yodarshe Tamang Ghalan, 51, Chair of Palep Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Group of Kalika Municipality, has been living in temporary shelter as the construction of new house is about to complete. He is happier with the construction of 15,000 liter-water tank by LWF Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation and financial support by IRW and DEC. The completion of the water tank and water distribution system has reduced the drudgery particularly of women.

“Now we are distributing drinking water to 90 houses. Under this project, we installed 15 water taps and rehabilitated 8 old taps, which had dried after the earthquake,” said Ghalan.

With the availability of water, all the households have built toilets. Along with toilets, people have also started using surplus water to grow vegetables in their garden. Learning from the past, this water tank is round and built considering proper mitigation and protection measures.



2,500 meters below the Pasanglhamu Highway, it normally takes 3 hours to reach the Grang bazaar and farmers like Ghalan are planning to grow vegetables to sell in the market.

Due to water scarcity, farmers of Palep are planting traditional crops like tomato, wheat and corn. “Given the availability of water at source, what I can say is that we would have some sort of water for the irrigation as well. This means we can grow cauliflower, cabbage and garlic,” said Ghalan.

The water scheme was identified and constructed with the participation of chairperson and members of Kalika Rural Municipality and as per the demand of the local community. The scheme is earthquake-resilient.

“We constructed the tank and distribution system with constant monitoring and guidelines given by the technicians from BATAS Foundation. We chose a very sound place for water tank, and distribution pipes have been buried well,” said Ghalan.

Although the past 2 years were painful for the residents in Palep as they used to spend 2 to 3 hours to fetch drinking water, the construction of drinking water project not only ended the burden of women, but also created an opportunity to grow vegetables.

Growing Grocery Leverages the Livelihood of Kamisya

The 2015 Earthquake brought a number of miseries in the life of 33 years old Pode Kamisya Tamang of Thangdur village of Naukunda Rural Municipality. Mother of 3 children, Tamang not only lost her house, but also her husband, the bread earner of the family.

For a few months, Tamang and her 4 children survived on the food distributed by various organizations under the relief package. Living in a temporary shelter for many months, depending on the food provided by siblings and relatives, Tamang, a single woman, faced many hardships.

Given her socio-economic condition, the community and the local level government agency recommended her as an eligible affected person to receive Rs 20,000 as a livelihood support which she used to start a grocery. The amount was provided by LWF Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation supported by IRW and DEC.

With the seed money, she opened a grocery in the village 2 years ago. “Since there is no one to take care of me and my family after the earthquake, I have been living close to my brother and mother. The support provided by BATAS not only revived my hope but also saved my 4 small children,” said Tamang.



Selling rice, potato, noodles and other household products, Tamang is earning Rs 500 a day, enough to raise her family and send the children to school. “I sell different products worth Rs 3,000 a day. Since last one year, I have added Rs 20,000 to my shop,” said Tamang.

Having no competitor nearby, Tamang has the only business. “Mine is the first of its kind grocery. I have been selling most essential daily-use commodities,” said Tamang.

As 2 of her children go to school and 2 others are about to join, Tamang is now considering to expand her shop. “Given my last 2 years’ experience, what I can say is that this grocery is going to be a bread maker of my children as well,” said Tamang. She is also growing vegetables in her garden.

“With a good daily profit margin, my grocery business is growing. First one year after the earthquake was painful and full of trauma and uncertainty. The second 2 years were of hope and economic sustainability,” said Tamang. “I have already recovered from my pain and agony of earthquake. With the grocery generating profits, I don’t have to worry about the future.”

Tamang has shown the way to run sustained livelihood program. Similarly, these successful experiences have also proved that the joint actions taken by the local body, community and civil society organizations can bring a substantial change in the livelihood of the poor people.

United we Stand: People, CSOs and Local Govt. Collaboration

After their micro-hydro plant, water intake and other infrastructure for drinking water were swept away by dry landslide triggered by the 2015 earthquake, residents in Thangdur Village of Naukunda Rural Municipality were compelled to walk almost 3 hours to fetch a bucket of drinking water.

With no water sources available nearby to meet the demand of water, the local community faced the difficulty to provide enough water to cattle. Many even sold livestock because of unavailability of water nearby.

Under a small support from BATAS Foundation, the implementing partner organization of LWF Nepal, Udeng Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Group restored the old pipeline and built a water tank with the capacity of supplying water to 40 households.

Although the rehabilitation of old pipeline solved the problems of 40 households, a large number of people living around the village didn't have any access to drinking water. Since the water source is far away at an



altitude of 3,000 meters above the sea level, the estimated cost of the project was Rs 8.2 million which LWF Nepal's partners alone could not afford.

Knowing that the community and donor were facing budget deficit, the newly elected chairman of Naukunda Rural Municipality Mr Norbu Syangbo Ghale agreed to contribute Rs 3.1 million to a Rs 4.5 million fund promised by LWF Nepal supported by IRW and DEC. The community users group agreed to contribute labor equivalent to Rs 600,000.

With a capacity to supply drinking water to 136 households, Udeng Drinking Water Project has almost been completed now. Learning from the previous experiences of landslide and earthquake, proper mitigation measures have been adopted in the project.

Along with building an earthquake-resilient drinking water tank, the project also used new method in water distribution. Pipes have been buried deep along the steep rocky mountain to protect the pipeline from natural disasters like landslide and earthquake.

“Our drinking water project is the first of its kind constructed in collaboration with and cooperation among NGOs/INGOs, local elected body and community users group,” said Prem Bahadur Tamang, chairman of Tokma Muhan Thangdur Drinking Water Project Users Group.

“As you know most of us are farmers, we need to keep livestock. Animals also need water. This project is going to revive the entire community giving them water to recover their livelihood. Learning from the past, we have built the new infrastructure in such a way that it can withstand earthquake and landslide. We have built them so strong that it will be disaster-resilient.”

Chairman of Naukunda Rural Municipality ward no.1 sees this drinking water project as a model in Nepal. “This drinking water project has shown that civil society, community and the local government can work to serve the interest of the people,” said Ghale.

Tokma Muhan Drinking Water Project will revive the livelihood of the people in a sustained way.

Poultry Transforms the Life of People with Disability

Nima Dawa Tamang, 42, a father of 3 children is a person with physical disability. Living in a financially difficult situation with no source of income, Nima's luck turned when he entered into poultry business. Nima, a resident in Arukharka Village of Naukunda Rural Municipality, has been earning Rs 12,000 monthly.

The 2015 earthquake had badly damaged the means of livelihood of Nima. He lost his house and some cattle in the earthquake.

Living in a painful situation with fading hope, Nima was nominated by the community for poultry farming under a livelihood program implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC.

Under the project, Nima received 46 layer chicks and feeder and other necessary means equivalent to Rs 38,000.



Along with providing materials and chicks, the project also linked Nima with District Livestock Office for necessary technical support. Nima's day of generating income started after 6 months when the chickens started laying eggs.

"In early days, I was a bit worried about the market for the eggs. As soon as my chickens started laying eggs, the demand was so high that I was not able to meet all the demands," said Nima. "On average, I have been selling 35 eggs at the rate of Rs 15, making a net profit of Rs 10,000 a month," said Nima, who spends Rs 1,200 per month on feed.

If things go as normal, Nima is planning to add 50 more chicks. "We can reach Kalika bazaar in 2 to 3 hours. I don't need to worry about the market," said Nima.

Nima sustains his family from the profit. "I have to expand my poultry farm. Thanks to LWF and its partner BATAS Foundation, I have found a new way to make me self-reliant," said Nima.

Although the earthquake damaged his property and house, the recovery project showed him a sustainable way of life for the future.

Given access to veterinary service and market at home, he wants to continue rearing chickens. "Although we used to rear the local variety of chicken, they are not much commercially viable. The layers have changed my economic and social status," said Nima.

Safe Shelter Drives Away Fear of Earthquake

Although many of her neighbors in the community are yet to complete the reconstruction of their houses, 30 years old Batuli BK, a resident in Langhu village of Naukunda Rural Municipality of Rasuwa, has been living in her one-room earthquake-resilient shelter with a confidence.

The reconstruction of her house has a history of conflict with her neighbors who vehemently opposed LWF Nepal and its partner's package of building the earthquake-resilient house. "When I signed an agreement with LWF Nepal and its partner BATAS Foundation for the reconstruction of the house, my neighbors, who were seeking cash from the government, threatened to kick me out from the community," said BK.

At a time when a large number of people, who criticized her for accepting the scheme, have been leaving in temporary shelters and constructing smaller house to secure government's housing grant, BK, a Dalit, has a reason to rejoice with her decision.

"I have taken a right decision. Had I followed a rumor about the government distributing money, I would still have to live in a temporary shelter.



I know that Rs 300,000 is too small to reconstruct the house. This was the reason I signed the agreement for the reconstruction of my house with LWF Nepal,” said BK.

All the 151 houses reconstructed under the shelter program strictly followed the government norms and used quality materials. Built under the supervision of qualified engineers and technical staff following the BBB approach, the 151 houses, completed nearly a year ago stand with a distinct identity.

“Although my house has just one room and I am facing space constraints, I am confident that my house will withstand earthquakes like that of 2015. All the construction materials they used are of high quality,” said BK.

BK’s house also includes a toilet. This is additional benefit for earthquake-affected people. “Construction of a toilet in my house also ends the open defecation,” said BK.

At a time when people who ran after the rumor of getting Rs 800,000 cash for reconstruction are regretting their decision, BK finds herself living in a earthquake-resilient shelter.

Before the reconstruction of the houses, the implementing partners also made a land hazard survey to find out whether they could build the houses on old sites. As all the houses were reconstructed with the expert analysis of the land’s condition, the houses built by LWF Nepal are much safer and resilient.

“Looking at the current pace of reconstructed houses made by individuals, I feel more comfortable and safe. I am pretty sure that my house will not collapse even if a bigger earthquake than the previous one strikes,” said BK.

Mobile Phone Repair Shop Aids to Pasang's Social Mobility

When earthquake demolished his house and destroyed his property, there was a pressure to 26-year-old Pasang Tamang, a resident in Ramche, Kalika Rural Municipality of Rasuwa district. Because of growing pressure in the family and lack of employment opportunity back home, Pasang was about to leave Nepal for employment abroad.

His entire previous plan has changed after the meeting with LWF Nepal and its implementing partner BATAS Foundation. Under a scheme of LWF Nepal, Pasang was nominated by local community group and elected leaders of ward to take part in a 3-month mobile phone set repair training at Trishuli Bazaar.

Along with paying training fee and residential cost, LWF Nepal's partner BATAS Foundation also provided necessary equipment worth Rs 40,000 to Tamang. With this, Pasang, who has 2 children, is now operating a mobile phone set repair center at Ramche.



“Given the last one month’s income, I am confident to say that I can earn more money here than going abroad. At a time when everyone has a mobile phone set, there is a good market for mobile repair,” said Tamang, whose training has been accredited by the Centre for Technical Education and Vocational Training.

According to Tamang, he is making Rs 1,500-2,000 daily and his net profit is around Rs 1000. “The money is enough to maintain my family of three. I am also planning to expand my shop,” said Tamang.

Having his interest in electronics and electricals from childhood, Tamang decided to grab the opportunity provided by BATAS Foundation, an implementing partner of LWF Nepal supported by IRW and DEC.

“I am very much thankful to those organizations which supported in stemming the out migration of youth for employment. The support has become a relief to me. In my opinion, I have moved from darkness to light,” said Tamang.

Ramche having a population of 5,000 and lying on the high way, Tamang hopes to create a good market for his job. As each individual has a couple of cell phone handsets, I will find enough work to make me busy,” said Tamang.

“I have bitter memories of earthquake and its devastation. However, the earthquake also created opportunities in our village including employment,” said Tamang.

For the farmers in the region, the declining production of potato, corn, wheat and millet is a major concern. In this scenario, garlic is taken as an alternative to traditional subsistence-based farming.

On the initiative of implementing partner, garlic farmers have established direct link with District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) and dealers at Trishuli.

“DADO’s officials are regularly monitoring our fields along with LWF Nepal and BATAS Foundation,” said Thing who has planted 50kg of garlic.

LWF Nepal provided seeds, fertilizes and other necessary things worth Rs 50,000. “If the production went well and we found the market, we will expand the areas of garlic farming next year. Looking at my own crop, what I can say is that I can make more money from garlic than the traditional crops,” said Thing.

According to Thing, he is expecting to produce 350kg from 50kg seeds. As harvest is ready by June, Thing is curiously watching the green harvest of garlic in and around his field. As per the current market, dry garlic sells Rs 250 per kilogram.

Along with Thing, 10 other farmers have also planted garlic, making the entire areas as a pocket of garlic farming in Rasuwa district. Thing says that the farmers of this area are expected to produce about 6 tons of garlic in coming season.

“After inspecting our field and crop, DADO’s technical officers told us that the growth of crop is quite encouraging. They also suggested the technique to grow more garlic from a plant,” said Thing.

Besides earthquake, Rasuwa district is prone to climate change as the rising temperature is likely to affect the traditional crops. Although it is time-consuming to grow garlic, Thing believes that this is the right time to move to new climate-resilient crops for economic prosperity.

Bathing Cubicles Come as a Relief to Girls and Women

Women of Thangdur Village of Naukunda Rural Municipality have reason to be happy. With the construction of bathing cubicles for women near completion, women of Thangdur Village will not have to take a bath in front of males.

“With public tap common for men and women, we rarely find time to take a full bath. We are very excited to use women bathing cubicles soon,” said Nurkima Tamang. “This public bathing space will give us opportunity to take a full body bath whenever the time is appropriate.”

Although this is purely a new concept in the remote village of Thangdur, there is a visible implication. Women of all ages are taking part in the construction of the bathing space for women. There is a rush of women to complete the work.



“Naturally, male and female need separate bathing space. Unlike toilets, bathing is different matter,” said Nurkima Tamang. Implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC, the bathing space will increase gender sensitivity.

Binita Thogra, a social mobilizer of BATAS Foundation, says the construction of public bathing space will bring a lot of changes in the society with tangible change in women’s and girls’ health and sanitation.

Although it is invisible, one can see the pride among women as the numbers of women contributing to construct the bathroom is much higher. With the installation of water tap, the women will start using the facility which they are eagerly waiting for.

Mason Training Empowers Women Economically

As the deadline to complete the reconstruction of house and to secure the third tranche of housing grant is coming closer, there was a rush in Langbu and other villages to complete the construction of permanent shelters. There was a high demand of mason. Trained a year ago by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation, IRW and DEC, 33 years old Dawa Wangbu Thing Tamang is busy all the time.

Currently constructing the Bathing Cubicles for women, Dawa is earning Rs 1,200 a day as a wage. “Even before receiving training, I used to work as a mason. The training has given me a chance to enhance my skill and capability,” said Dawa, a mother of 3 children.

Traditionally, masonry was a domain of male. Even in Langbu’s community, there are only a few male masons with a skill of build back better. However, Dawa is different one. “I reconstructed my house on my own and now I have been working to construct the public bathing space,” said Dawa.



Under the On-the-Job Mason Training for Women, Dawa along with other 3 women completed 50 days' training and got a certificate of a mason with a skill to build back better. "Although I have to complete the entire household chores, I also work as a mason at different places," said Dawa.

Before receiving the training, Dawa would use the traditional skills and knowledge of wall construction and base. The training equipped her with knowledge and new skills like plasters, construction of concrete beam, tie-beam and making ring.

"There needs to follow certain rules and a mason needs to have new skills to make an earthquake-resilient house," said Tamang. 3 other women also received training. However, Dawa is one of the busiest and active among them.

"If you remain shy, nobody comes and asks you for work. One has to prove the capability by self. Since people know my skills, they always provide me work," said Dawa, who also grinds the concrete and sells them to the villagers.

"I am obliged to LWF Nepal, BATAS Foundation, IRW and DEC for supporting me to get mason training," said Dawa. "Although some people are constructing their house sans following earthquake-resilience criteria, I have been convincing them on the need for using high-quality materials and following the BBB guidelines," said Dawa.

Along with earning money, Dawa has also been promoting the BBB approach which she learned during the training. In her work, she has not only been strengthening her purse, but also been suggesting people to build earthquake-resilient structures.

Children Learn to Cope with Disasters

“When the earthquake rocked our village 3 years ago, killing, maiming, injuring people and destroying houses, we all watched the mayhem helplessly. None of our community members had first aid box, stretcher and equipment to clear the debris,” said 53 years old Maina BK with a long sigh. “Had we have basic things as we have now, we could have saved a couple of people and provide first aid to the injured,” she added.

She was relating the story of 25 April 2015 earthquake. When she was sharing her experiences early in the morning with a group of children, middle-aged and elderly men and women of Langbu village of Naukunda Rural Municipality were listening quietly to her at the community building where people were discussing on DRR, emergency preparedness and response.

After opening of the discussion by BK, 14 years old Ajaya Thing, a student of class 9, shared his knowledge about disaster with the community members. Anjana BK presented her views on early warning, preparedness, risk, relief and recovery related to various kinds of disasters.

Organized by disaster expert, participants were asked to perform various tasks regarding disaster management and preparedness. At the end of the program, they also conducted a mock exercise to prepare themselves to face future disasters.



Raising the level of awareness is a key to minimize the loss of lives and damage to property including environment from disasters. Rasuwa being prone to earthquake, landslide and flood, people of Naukunda Rural Municipality have learnt the ways to cope with disasters and minimize their risks. Similarly, equipping the community with first aid and basic necessities is another important component of the preparedness.

Situated beneath Gosaikunda mountain range and glaciers, water-induced landslides often kill people, injure them, destroy house, standing crops, and even farmland in Naukunda Rural Municipality's ward nos. 1 and 2. After the earthquake, there have been frequent dry landslides.

BK and Thing were sharing the experiences of natural calamities and preparing their community for any kind of disaster in the foreseeable future. Organizing this kind of program regularly in different parts of the village, efforts are on to raise awareness of people and make them prepared for future disasters.

“At least people of our community have started to understand the causes of disasters and risk reduction,” said BK, adding “Preparedness is one of the most important components to prevent and minimize damage caused by disasters.”

Community groups, school children and political leaders are also taking part in various levels of mock exercises with an aim to be prepared for any kind of future disasters.

Along with this, LWF Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation supported by IRW and DEC recently handed over some basic equipment to the wards of Naukunda Rural Municipality to use during disasters.

Raising awareness at community level and equipping the community with the basic things, the project is preparing the community, schools, government officials and elected local bodies to minimize the risk of disasters and prevent loss. BK and Thing are two individuals mobilized to raise awareness.

LWF Nepal Supports in Setting up Emergency Fund

‘Where there is a will, there is a way,’ goes a saying. This is what Norbu Syangbo Ghale, chairperson of Naukunda Rural Municipality has shown. Establishing the first Local Level Disaster Relief Fund of Rs 1.8 million in collaboration and cooperation with LWF Nepal, Ghale showed his determination to collaborate with the civil society organizations (CSOs).

“I feel very comfortable to work with LWF Nepal and its implementing partner BATAS Foundation and their supporting partners IRW and DEC. Although there are certain elements in our areas who hold negative opinion about these organizations, but collaborating with these organizations is necessary to improve our village,” he said.

Working with these organizations during recovery and reconstruction, Ghale saw their planning and implementation process closely. “As long as I remain the chairperson of Naukunda Rural Municipality, our municipality needs their expertise and experiences to minimize disaster risks and transform this society,” he asserted.

Not only Ghale, the entire elected representatives of this municipality are of the same opinion. The determination is reflected in their actions in launching and implementing disaster preparedness programs.

When LWF Nepal decided to contribute Rs 80,000 as seed money to establish Disaster Emergency Relief Fund, the municipality board sanctioned Rs 1 million. Naukunda is one of the few rural municipalities to establish a Disaster Emergency Relief Fund in collaboration with NGOs and INGOs.



“With the technical expertise provided by LWF Nepal, our municipality has also developed operation guidelines. We can use this fund during disaster. Since my rural municipality is very vulnerable to natural disasters, the municipality board has realized its importance,” he added.

In the past, communities had to wait for District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC) for support. This emergency fund ends the long tradition. “We need not approach the DDRC or other organizations to distribute smaller relief. We can use the fund immediately at the time of need. We used to wait for days to receive relief and humanitarian support from the center and other international organizations. This practice has come to an end”

Along with Emergency Relief Fund, the municipality has also formed a Disaster Management Committee which decides on the mobilization of the fund.

According to the guidelines, the money deposited in the Emergency Fund can be used in relief distribution and recovery. It helps to save lives and property by responding to disasters immediately.

Not only in developing guidelines and establishing the fund, LWF Nepal also carried out a number of disaster preparedness and awareness campaigns targeting elected representatives. “They also provided us five-day training in fund management and disaster issues. Earlier, we were confused about the concept of disaster, relief and preparedness. After the training, we understood disaster,” said Ghale. “The mock exercise further enhanced our understanding,” he added.

“Our past experience is very disappointing. There used to be DDRC which used to delay the distribution of relief. Now having such a committee at the local level with the technical support from the CSOs, our Climate Change and Disaster Management Committee will function efficiently,” he added.

“My experiences show that strong collaboration with the CSOs and local bodies can make a lot of difference. But such collaboration does not fulfill the interest of those who want to misappropriate the budget. I am defending LWF Nepal because I have seen their work. Our municipality does not have human resources, the organization has pool of experts, technicians and experienced people. Moreover, they are very transparent in implementing program and are willing to supplement and complement our programs, it is good for the municipality to accept it,” explained Ghale.

Community Restores Irrigation Canal

With the rehabilitation of irrigation system using proper mitigation method, the worries of farmers of Arukharka Village of Naukunda Rural Municipality have come to an end. Due to lack of mitigation, the old irrigation system was washed out by landslides triggered by the 2015 earthquake.

LWF Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation and support by IRW and DEC rehabilitated the irrigation canal applying the BBB approach.

As the project completes, 130 households of Ghyang Tole, Kuna Tole and Ghale Tole will have enough water to drink and irrigate their land. With the majority of people relying on subsistence farming, the irrigation facility helps to increase the agriculture production. The regular irrigation facility will also give an opportunity to the farmers to move to cash crops like garlic.

“After the earthquake, several factors in and around the area damaged our drinking water and irrigation intakes. Earlier, we constructed irrigation canal sans considering protection measures. So almost all old infrastructure were damaged,” said Khaijung Tamang, 50, the member-secretary of Pangachyasa Khola Irrigation Users Committee.



“The new pipeline and irrigation intake was built taking care of the state of the river and conditions of land. We also used 50 Gabions to build a wall along with intake and canal to protect the irrigation scheme,” said Tamang.

After the demolition of the canal there was lack of water. Farmers returned to grow traditional crops like corn, potato, millet and wheat. “As our village is very close to Kalikasthan bazaar, we are thinking to grow vegetables and garlic in coming season as we have perennial irrigation facility now,” said Tamang.

In some of the vulnerable areas, the technicians also used polls to hang the irrigation pipes. Given the vulnerability of land which is prone to landslides, the project followed adequate safety and risk mitigation measures.

With no irrigation, farmers grow one crop in a season. As the irrigation project completes, farmers will grow two crops a year. “Since we have cold store nearby, we are planning to plant vegetables and potato which have high demand in Kalikasthan,” he added.

Constructed taking full consideration of the DRR component and the BBB approach, each and every aspect of mitigation has been duly applied to the irrigation scheme.

“We used rod anchor, cable crossing and Gabion to make the irrigation project sustainable,” said Bhabishya Neupane, Project Manager of LWF Nepal. “The participation of the local community in construction helped to transfer the knowledge of the BBB and the DRR to the people. “From planning to design and construction, we involved the local users groups and elected representatives of the local level,” he added.

Cooperation to Improve Agriculture Cooperative

At a time when the farmers in the region started to grow vegetables, they required institutional mechanism to market their products and provide other financial services. LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and support by IRW and DEC, assisted to Temrang Agriculture Cooperative Limited to improve its institutional capacity.

Although the cooperative was established almost 3 years ago, it lacked basics like table, computer and racks. The cooperative had not been registered with any government institution.

Creating an institution and strengthening it requires some basic elements. Guiding the cooperative members on the need to institutionalize, LWF and BATAS Foundation helped the cooperative to register it with District Agriculture Development Office and get accreditation as an agriculture cooperative.

“Our cooperative is more organized now and functions as a legal entity. LWF Nepal supported us to institutionalize it,” said Priti Tamang, treasurer of the cooperative based in Ramche, Kalika Rural Municipality.



Under the program, the cooperative received Rs 150,000 from LWF Nepal to purchase computers and improve its information system. With the capital of Rs 3 million, they are investing money in Ramche bazaar. “We are investing our capital in the areas like vegetable farming and livestock,” said Priti.

“We provided loan to stationery, mobile shop and agro-vets,” said Tamang. With 365 members, majority of them being women, the cooperative has been providing loan to small farmers, ranging from Rs 30,000 to 100,000.

After getting a computer, rack and table, the cooperative has set up its office at Ramche bazaar. The cooperative supports small and marginalized farmers to improve their livelihood through commercialization of agriculture. Loans are disbursed to produce cabbage, cauliflower, tomato and potato. “We are now working to connect the local farmers with other markets like Trishuli, Kalika and Dhunche to sell their products,” she further said.

As the number of farmers seeking loan to commercialize their agriculture has increased, the pressure on the cooperative has also gone up.

'LWF Nepal Supported me to Survive and Sustain'

Sonam Gurung, 28, a resident in Langbu of Naukunda Rural Municipality, had lost everything to the 2015 earthquake. His house collapsed and grains were buried and landslide washed out his farmland. He experienced an upheaval in his life.

“I had not imagined that I would recover so soon. LWF Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation, IRW and DEC supported to build 151 permanent shelters under the Responsive Adaptive Shelter for Earthquake-affected Community Project. Sonam is one of the beneficiaries. The project also supported him to keep poultry.

Under this scheme, LWF Nepal provided Gurung with chicks, feed and other materials to operate a farm. He has constructed one-room earthquake-resilient shelter using the BBB approach. Gurung’s poultry has 55 layers. He sold up to 50 eggs at the rate of Rs 15 during the peak time earlier.

“We are earning enough money to feed our family of five,” said Gurung. As the first batch of chicken is getting old, he is now planning to increase the number from 55 to 100 so that he can make more money. “LWF Nepal showed me the way to survive and sustain my livelihood through poultry. Now, I have to show them their contribution is paying to my family,” said Gurung. With good income from sustainable livelihood program, Gurung’s life has transformed from an earthquake-affected person to a successful poultry farmer.



A Teenager Attempts to Beautify Follow Women

Eighteen-year-old Babita Tamang Thogra, a resident in Thangdur village of Naukunda Rural Municipality, had never thought that she would be trained as a beautician and start a beauty salon business.

LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC, implemented several programs aimed to enhance diversified and resilient livelihood options of targeted households, improved and equitable access to safe drinking water for earthquake-affected communities, sanitation facilities, community resilience and mainstreaming DRR and Climate Change Adaptation in livelihood, community infrastructure and WASH.

A student who just took the School Education Examination, Thogra Tamang is planning to shift to Dhunche, the district headquarters, to open a beauty parlor. She completed 3 months' training at Trishuli.



With 3 months training and support of equipment equivalent to Rs 38,000, Thogra is considering to start her livelihood business at Dhunche from the next month.

“I have already rented a house at Dhunche and the beauty parlor is in the final stage of completion. I am confident that I can make enough money to pay the rent and cover my livelihood,” she said.

Unknown about the beauty salon and beautician skills, neighbors of Thogra Tamang listen to her very seriously. Since this is a new profession to me, I have to show to the local people that this also gives sustainable employment opportunity to me,” said Tamang. “As I am doing a new business, I believe that it will not only make them more beautiful but also change the outlook of women of our community to beauty and the beautician.”

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