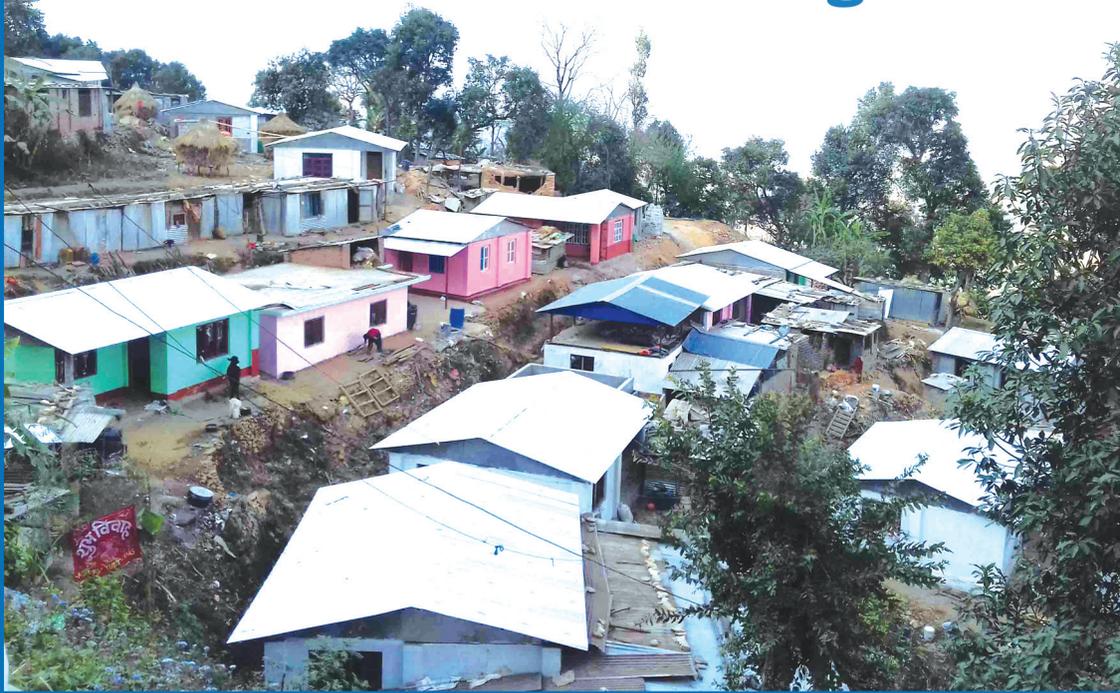


Evidence of Change



The Success Stories of Earthquake-affected People of Kavre 2017

Diakonie 
Katastrophenhilfe



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Evidence of Change: The Success Stories of Earthquake-affected People of Kavre 2017

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Cover Photo: Jagadishwor Shrestha, LWF Nepal: *A glimpse of the newly constructed earthquake-resistant houses at Rai/Danuwar settlement of Kodari tole, Mandandeupur Municipality-6 (former Gairibisauna VDC-3). LWF Nepal supported to construct 60 houses in Kodari tole. Among the 60 houses, six houses are owned by single women.*

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Message from the Country Director

Dear readers,

It gives me immense pleasure to share with you the ‘Evidence of Change: The Success Stories of Earthquake-affected People of Kavre 2017’ which epitomizes the positive changes we have been able to bring into the lives of the earthquake-affected people of Kavre district.



The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal with support from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) and Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra provided shelter construction support in five village development committees (VDCs) namely, Gairibisauna Deupur; Nayagaun Deupur; Baluwapati Deupur; Mahadevsthan Mandan; Jaisithok Mandan, and livelihood support, WASH and community infrastructure to all seven VDCs including Chandeni Mandan, and Jyamdi Mandan under the Post-Earthquake Rehabilitation and Livelihood Recovery Project in Kavrepalanchok district.

This booklet comprises stories of persons with disabilities, single women, Dalits, women-headed households, women, indigenous people and the most marginalized and vulnerable people. The stories showcase how the poor and marginalized people through our support have been able to ameliorate their livelihood.

In this collection, we have presented the representative stories of success that summarizes the positive changes our efforts have brought into the lives of people hit hardest by the April 2015 earthquake. The rights holders are the most marginalized and vulnerable people of the communities we have worked with.

LWF Nepal works in coordination and collaboration with the government agencies at the local and national levels. Community empowerment approach and rights-based orientation are the strengths of LWF Nepal. The organization believes in strengthening the capacity of duty bearers and empowering the rights holders. We lay strong emphasis on quality and accountability of our work in compliance with Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS).

The success that we have been able to achieve to improve the living condition of our rights holders is result of the collective efforts of rights holders, local implementing partner, government agencies at the local and national levels and other civil society organizations.

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Prabin Manandhar'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Prabin Manandhar
Country Director

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The Lutheran World Federation Nepal

Founded in Lund, Sweden in 1947, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. LWF has 145 member churches in 98 countries all over the world, with a total membership of nearly 740 million. The World Service (WS) has field offices in more than 25 countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. It is the internationally recognized humanitarian and development arm of LWF that works to give assistance to those in need, irrespective of their race, sex, religion, nationality or political conviction. Its Secretariat is in Geneva.

Nepal Program

LWF has been working in Nepal since 1984. LWF Nepal has intervened with disaster relief and rehabilitation in response to a number of emergencies, and worked with the Bhutanese refugees since 1991. Its development program has evolved from service-oriented sectoral and community development approach towards empowerment and human rights-based approaches, increasingly working with the most disadvantaged groups. LWF has shifted its intervention modalities to work with local partners (CBOs, CBO Federations, NGOs) as well as with government and civil society groups and movements to influence policy and practice at national level.

Vision: People in Nepal, living in a just society in peace and dignity, united in diversity and empowered to achieve their full potential, claim their universal rights, meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life.

Mission: Inspired by God's love for humanity, LWF Nepal responds to and challenges the causes and effects of human suffering and poverty.

Core Values

- Dignity and justice
- Compassion and commitment
- Inclusion and respect for diversity
- Transparency and accountability

Focus Group

LWF Nepal works with disaster-affected and marginalized and vulnerable people. While working with disaster-affected people, it focuses on communities that are most vulnerable to natural disaster including climate change effects; and communities and individuals who are victims of natural disaster or forcibly displaced (including refugees, internally displaced, and host communities), especially the most vulnerable. Similarly, it also focuses

its interventions on bonded labor and ex-bonded laborers of various types; disadvantaged indigenous and minority groups; Dalits and the landless. LWF Nepal accords priority to women, children and people with disabilities.

Core Commitments

- a) **Human rights:** Human rights are at the core of all that LWF Nepal stands for, its actions and operations.
- b) **Impartiality:** LWF Nepal assists disaster-affected people, irrespective of caste and ethnicity, gender, age, religion, race or political conviction. Assistance is provided in response and relative to need, without discrimination or favoritism.
- c) **Inclusion and participation:** LWF Nepal is committed to be inclusive, and to enable the full and equitable participation of women and men, people with disabilities, indigenous and minority communities and Dalits in all programs and decision-making processes.
- d) **Accountability:** As guided by the LWF/WS Accountability Framework, we are committed to maintaining high level of staff competence and professionalism, and continued affirmation and adherence to Core Humanitarian Standard, Sphere as well as being accountable to the populations and communities our programs assist for, maintaining the highest standards.
- e) **Gender justice:** LWF Nepal includes gender perspectives in all aspects of its work and undertakes specific advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives to change attitudes and practices as well as to institutionalize gender justice.
- f) **Climate justice and environmental sustainability:** We are committed to incorporating environmental concerns into all development decisions and operations aiming at behavioral change, increased resilience and reduced vulnerability and shall apply the Climate Adaptation Framework Tool across all programs.

Thematic Areas

Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response
Sustainable Livelihood
Community-led Actions for Governance and Justice
Organizational Effectiveness

Farming vegetable becomes an addiction

Sushila Shrestha

Maidan, Mandan Deupur Municipality-9

Names are often illusive. The village situated on the top of a hill at Mandan Deupur Municipality is called Maidan whose literal meaning is a flat land. Therefore, conceiving an image of a flat land upon hearing the name of the place would prove wrong. The associated meaning with the term Maidan means a lot to the people who live in the mountains.



The place with abundant natural beauty faces scarcity of water. Therefore, people in this area are compelled to buy drinking water throughout the dry season. Locals in this village have to pay Re 1 for a liter of water fetched from a well at Kunta Bazaar that is around one and half hours' walk from the village. They use the rainwater harvested during monsoon to give water to cattle. What about for a bath and washing clothes? "Sometimes we use the rain water harvested during monsoon to take a bath and wash clothes, but we can do so only if we could spare some water after giving it to our cattle," said Sushila Shrestha, a local who has been struggling against water scarcity for years.

An organization had made an arrangement to lift water from a well 250 meters down the hill and collect it in a tank. But the earthquake in 2015 not only destroyed the houses of Sushila and her neighbors but also dislocated the source of water. This worsened the water scarcity in the village. They somehow manage their needs with the help of a small source of water until mid-November, but according to Sushila they have no option other than buying water at least for the next seven months of the dry season.

It is because of the water scarcity that Sushila has failed to muster the courage to start building a new house after her old one was destroyed by earthquake two years ago. "We received Rs 50,000 as the first installment of housing grant provided by the government for quake-affected people but we haven't been able to start the work due mainly to lack of water," Sushila lamented. "Building a house with the purchased water isn't feasible" she added.

However, an interesting thing is happening at the same place. Sushila has surprised many by producing tomatoes worth Rs 10,000 during the last monsoon season. She sold cowpeas worth Rs 400. She produced pumpkins and bitter gourds sufficient for her household consumption. Covered with cauliflowers, cabbage, garlic and spinach, these days her field looks so attractive. The first question every visitor to her farm asks her is: How could it become possible to transform the dry land into such an attractive vegetable farm?

"I don't waste the water used to wash dishes and clothes. I collect the water and put on garlic and spinach plants. For tomatoes, cauliflowers, and cabbage, I even use purchased water," she explained.

People also ask her a follow up question. Is it worthwhile irrigating vegetables with purchased water? Pat comes her answer: "I would not have wasted my money and time had it not been profitable".

She has empirical facts about transforming a vegetable farming into a profitable business. "In past years, I repeatedly incurred loss due to disease and various other reasons. Last year 600 tomato saplings were destroyed by disease," she said. "But, I am now earning a good amount as I started farming in tunnels since last year. Also, I produced bitter gourds, pumpkins and other vegetables in a large

quantity on a small area." She said that the success encouraged her to produce vegetables even at a time when she needed to buy water for irrigation.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal through its local implementing partner organization Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra encouraged her to grow tomato in tunnels and provided not only seeds and tunnels but also trained her in vegetable farming. She also learnt the ways to earn and save money. "After the training, in a way I became addicted to growing tomato and other vegetables. I have planned to add some more tunnels because I am now more committed to this profession," Sushila proudly explained her future plan as well.

Nanda Prasad Dhakal, an intermediary in vegetables, who operates his business from Kunta Bazaar, is ready to buy her produces at any time and in any quantity. Therefore, she has no worry about the market. Also, she no longer has to carry her productions on her back to the market as a vehicle has now started ferrying milk from her village every morning. And the same vehicle also transports her agri-products to the market at Kunta. She is now elated as she has got training, tunnel, seeds, water sprinkles, a drum for drop irrigation, and an easy access to the market. These are the factors that helped her muster the courage to grow vegetables amidst water scarcity. People have now started to praise her for her exemplary initiative of maximizing the utilization of water for a productive work.

Sushila's family owns around two ropanis (11,000 square feet) of irrigated and around 3 ropanis of non-irrigated land. Her husband teaches at a local high school. His salary is spent for food and other daily expenses but they were always in financial crisis when they needed money for their children's health and education. Now the problem is solved. With the income from vegetable farming, she has been able to educate her daughter at a school at Chautara, the headquarters of the neighboring Sindhupalchok district, which is considered better compared to the school in her village. Her daily earning from cauliflower, and cabbage, tomato saplings and other vegetables has further boosted her confidence in vegetable farming and she has become an addict to it.

From water scarcity to non-stop supply

Simalbote Drinking Water Project Bhatpol, Mandan Deupur Municipality-11

There were four taps in the village. And the water supply was good. But the 25 April 2015 earthquake changed the scenario. The devastating earthquake flattened 37 houses at Bhatpol. Two children that were in cradles were killed. The temblor not only destroyed the taps but also the water tank, the source of the taps. Within a few days, the tank dried up.



"We were suddenly in such a dire situation that we didn't even have a drop of water to drink," Bhim Bahadur Tamang, chairperson of Users Group of Simalbote Drinking Water Project said. "Then, having no other option, we started to fetch water from a natural well that was at around one hour's walk from the village. At times, the well was crowded by villagers and they had to wait for long for their turn. As women in our locality faced serious difficulty in fetching water, we bought water carried in a tank that cost Re 0.50 per liter," he said.

In the meantime, Bhim Bahadur met representatives of Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra, who reached the village to support earthquake-affected people. As he found the representatives ready to support them, he explained them about the water scarcity created by the earthquake, seeking their support. The organization's employees suggested him to submit a proposal for that. Their words of assurance encouraged them a lot.

Then, Bhim Bahadur spread the news of the organization's readiness to support them to villagers. But, a question from some villagers left him speechless. "What is the use of the taps and water tank to be built by the organization when there is no source of water? Can the organization find a new source of water in this village?" The villagers' questions threw cold water on Bhim Bahadur's plan and enthusiasm.

Then, he modified his plan and proposed the villagers to dig into the place from where the water source had disappeared after the earthquake. He insisted that source must have been dislocated. However, most of the villagers weren't convinced. Some of them were ready to bet on the recovery of the water source. After a long debate, Bhim Bahadur convinced the villagers in digging into the place.

They dug into the place for three days but there was no trace of the water source there. This disappointed Bhim Bahadur but those who were against this idea became excited. As villagers resumed the work on the fourth day, they found the source of water.

"After four days of hard work, we found that the source was pushed 10 meters downward by the earthquake. As we found the source, we felt like we defeated even the earthquake," said Bhim Bahadur.

The recovery of the disappeared water source and simultaneous acceptance of their proposal by the organization made Bhim Bahadur more than happy. He was very quick to travel around the village to spread the news. Then, the organization provided Rs 342,000, with support from The Lutheran World Federation Nepal and DKH, to the users' group while it managed pipes, cables, doors and other materials. Each household worked voluntarily for 14 days. As a result, four taps were constructed in

four locations convenient to 37 families. Also, a tank with modern facilities was built.

How long do they get water from the tap a day? "We didn't fit the caps on taps to turn them off and on as we have constant flow of water," he said adding, "Now you can guess how much water we have now."

The impact is visible in the village. Locals have now started to grow vegetables around their homesteads. House premises are clean and the practice of growing flowers and other plants has noticeably increased. Bhim Bahadur claimed that villagers are now happy to have running water at their convenience which has taken them back to the pre-quake situation.

Meanwhile, they are now working to utilize Rs 120,000 provided by the erstwhile village development committee, to supply water from the tank to all the households. Bhim Bahadur, who also heads the users group, said, "This village would be very beautiful and full of greenery once our plan to install taps in each house becomes successful." He believed that the availability of water will inspire locals to start small agro-businesses and that will eventually empower them economically. "Therefore, we are concentrating all our efforts on that project," he said.

Our burden has been lessened

We were compelled to drink dirty water. We had to wait in a queue even to fetch water from the nearest rivulet. But now we have non-stop water supply near our homes. I have no word to describe our happiness. With this we have been able to save valuable time. Now we can give that time for our children's health and education. After all, the burden of our work has been lessened.

Basanti Tamang

Bhatpol, Mandan Deurali Municipality-11, Kavre

A big support to the helpless orphans

Juni Lama

Gairithok, Mandan Deupur municipality-6

Everyone in the village would be talking about rebuilding their houses destroyed by earthquakes. They were saying that it was risky to stay in a cracked house. No sooner a group of people gathered at a place than they would start talking on similar topics. Conversations about the need for making an earthquake-resistant house were an ongoing topic for the people at teashops, public places or in local market for months after the earthquake.



But 16-year-old Juni Lama and her 10-year-old brother Bishal Lama just listened to the villagers' talks. They were saddened each time they heard such discussions. They didn't react during such conversations. Juni felt uncomfortable when she was asked to share her views on such occasions. Unable to understand the gravity of the matter, Bishal however would just stare at his daughter's sad face.

It was three years ago, when Juni was 13-year-old and Bishal was just seven, their father Bil Bahadur was murdered by neighbor Bir Bahadur following a minor dispute. Adding insult to the injury, their mother married another man while the wound of their father's loss was still fresh in the children's mind. Then, they had octogenarian grandparents only who could not do anything to support them. To make the situation worse, the April 2015 earthquake damaged their old house. They knew the dilapidated structure wasn't safe to stay in but they had no other option. As their neighbors, relatives and friends discussed about the need of building an earthquake-resistant house that only hurt them.

"Now, the situation is gradually improving," shared Juni. "Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra, with the financial support from the Lutheran World Federation Nepal and DKH has made a house for us. Now some finishing touches of the house and the toilet needs to be built." They are now planning to shift to the new building once the remaining works are completed. "Then, we will not have to worry about the chances of being killed by our own (dilapidated) building," she added.

The organizations provided them with construction materials worth Rs 300,000 to build the house. Besides that, they were also given Rs 85,000 for mason cost and additional Rs 16,000 to construct a toilet. Juni said they would now arrange some money to give the finishing touches to the building. Then they would move to the new house.

Some unforeseen circumstances delayed the construction work. Their grandfather passed away when they were working on the foundation in March last year. The contractor stopped working as he could ignore the children. Later, he resumed work upon the request of the villagers. On top of that, a sand supplier cheated the children by delivering substandard sand. However, overcoming one after another challenge, they are about to complete the building. They are hopeful of getting support from their uncle, who is working in Saudi Arabia. He is supporting them in their education and for basic needs as well.

According to her, some employees from the supporting organization also gave some money on their own. "Moved by our condition, some bought sacks of cement while some others gave us cash," she said. "We couldn't have even imagined of building such a house had the organizations not supported us. We are indebted to the organizations", she added.

Juni had to halt her study after her father's murder and mother's second marriage. With the support from her uncle, she is now studying in grade 12. Now she aspires to get a job and look after her brother and grandmother. However, her first priority is to complete the house and move to the new building.

An old man gets a new house

Buddhiman Tamang
Gairithok, Mandan Deupur Municipality-6

The couple had vowed to live together lifelong. But it's already been 19 years since his wife passed away, and six years since he has been paralyzed. His left hand and the left leg don't work. Unable to walk, 74-year-old Buddhiman Tamang is bed-ridden.



Buddhiman, who is now staying with the youngest of his three sons, has tragic stories. One son is working abroad. The daughter-in-law has been incapacitated after she fell off the two-storey building two years ago. She is under medication and needs regular check ups. The grandchildren studying in grades 8 and 6 need financial support. In such a situation, Buddhiman Tamang, who is deprived of his regular

medication, said, "Please do not add insult to my injury by asking about my past. The more I recall, the sadder I become."

The earthquake added misery to this family, which was already in a serious trouble. Their house was destroyed by the jolt. Buddhiman became further weak after the natural disaster but he had no choice. He just faced it.

In the meantime, employees from Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra, who reached the village with an objective to help poor and helpless earthquake-affected people, came to know about the plight of Buddhiman Tamang. Buddhiman shared his stories of one tragedy after another with the visiting team openly. After listening to him, they became ready to build a house for him.

Then, the organization provided him with construction materials and mason cost to build a house along with a toilet. But, it wasn't enough to complete the house. The organization had provisions that required the house owner's contribution so as to create ownership of the house. For that, Buddhiman had to arrange Rs 200,000. Half of the amount was remitted by his son and half the amount was borrowed.

"The family has a burden of loans. I have no money for medication. The son is working in scorching heat in foreign land. The daughter-in-law is ill. We have various other problems. But, we have now a house that has given some relief to us," he said. "Shelter is a major thing. Other things can be settled gradually. After all, the life itself is a journey of struggle," he added.

He can't arrange money even by selling property because he owns only a small piece of non-irrigated farm land. So getting an assistance to build a house from an organization is a great support for a family that was in such a dire need. "I was sitting just near the door at the time of earthquake. So, I could manage to come out before the house collapsed. Otherwise, there was no chance for an elderly and paralyzed man like me to escape," he said. "Now, I feel so lucky to get a chance to live in such a good house built with support from the organizations."

The building, which has three rooms- one for Buddhiman, one for his daughter-in-law and the other for kitchen and store, is now known as 'The Green House' in the locality. He repented for not being able to buy more arable land earlier. Being a farmer, one should give priority to farming on his/her own land. "Whatever knowledge or skill we have is related to agriculture, so we should focus on that," he added.

He is thankful to those who showed interest to support a bed-ridden person like him. He lauded the individuals involved in supporting him as big-hearted people. He was equally happy with the organizations as the construction work were completed in a relatively short period. The organizations provided materials and cash quite sooner than any government agency. "Many people in my village had started building their houses with the government support before us. They are yet to finish them. But we have finished ours and have already started living in the new house," he said.

'The organization is like a father to me'

Bhumika Pariyar

Bairipipal, Mandan Deupur Municipality-7

There are altogether eight households of Pariyar community in Bhumika's neighborhood at Bairipipal. Their ancestral profession is tailoring. Those who can't survive by the profession also work on daily wages. Due to lack of sufficient arable land, they are unable to establish themselves as farmers who work throughout the year in their farmland. Because their production from their own land is insufficient for a year they classify themselves into different categories of poor as those who sustain for: two, three or four months on their own productions.



The agricultural produce of Bhumika's family harvested from their own land is meagre. They collect hardly around 12 wicker baskets of maize from their land. "Therefore, our family is totally dependent on daily wages for our livelihood," said Bhumika, adding "Even work on daily wages is not be available all the time."

Why don't you do tailoring? Bhumika, her mother and siblings feel sorry while answering this question. According to Bhumika, her father returned home after working for eight years in Malaysia. During his stay in Malaysia, he could not earn money as expected. He returned home "with a disease". After arriving in Nepal, he was admitted to a hospital. Around Rs 300,000 was spent during 22 days for his treatment in hospital and for other cares. They unfortunately couldn't save his life.

Her father, who was skilled in tailoring, died leaving the burden of loan on the family. None of the other family member had the skill. When they saw their neighbors making a reliable income from tailoring, they felt the absence of their father. "If one of us had the skill, we could have been independent at least for basic needs," she lamented.

Moreover, Bhumika and other family members were shocked when an acquaintance of her father came and took away the only sewing machine, saying that he had lent it to her father for the time being. Then, her dream to learn sewing shattered.

Things however have improved now. "These days, I have become a bit confident that I can now play the role that my father would have played for my family. I have decided to concentrate all my efforts on tailoring," she said.

Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra has instilled confidence in her. The organization, with support from The Lutheran World Federation Nepal and DKH trained her in sewing and cutting. The organizations also provided her with a sewing machine, an iron, an ironing board and a pair of scissors. This support boosted her confidence. "I can do something because I have the skill and basic tools now," she said.

During the 36-day training, she learnt sewing, cutting and other basic skills. She said that the organization has become like a father to her as she had dreamt to learn the skill from her father. In his absence, the organization has fulfilled her dream of learning the skill and being independent.

She has started sewing clothes at her home. But she doesn't want to limit her work only to her village. She wants to run a tailoring business at a local market. But she needs to do something more prior to starting her own enterprise. "This is the age of competition. Customers demand fashionable designs and my basic skill alone isn't going to work. So I will join a designing course before starting my business in the market center," she explained her dream project.

Bhumika, who is studying in grade 12 with Nepali as a major sees no options other than starting her own business. There are some reasons behind her conviction. They had hard time in arranging monthly school fee for her brother, who is studying at a private school.

Her brother would have now been removed from the school had her mother had not got a job in the same school. She has been experiencing similar problems in fulfilling their basic needs such as education, health and other daily necessities. Therefore, she believes that her future would be secured only through tailoring business.

Being the eldest child in the family, she also has the responsibility to build a house as the old one was destroyed by the earthquake. "I have no confusion that tailoring is the business that I can do to solve my problems," Bhumika said.

The confidence boosted by forge

Hasta Bahadur BK Kunta, Mandan Deupur Municipality-7

Hasta Bahadur BK left his birthplace Barahari of Sindhupalchok 43 years ago to settle at Kunta of neighboring Kavrepalanchok district with a hope of better future. He is 58-year-old now. Hasta Bahadur however couldn't improve his lot at the new place either. He toiled for better health and education of his children and for



fulfilling other basic needs of the nine-member family. He bought a small piece of land, but it also troubled him as it is situated on a sloppy area.

He, somehow, arranged two square meals a day for the family. He had no alternative but to face the challenges. Struggle became a part of Hasta Bahadur's life. He spent most of his time at his smithy, which he inherited from his ancestors. He repaired household tools and utensils made of iron and copper for the villagers. He also made new utensils and sold them in the market

as a means of earning for his livelihood. Thus, he enjoyed the work at his workshop. He was left with Hobson's choice.

His life was moving on despite some hardships. But this routine was abruptly broken when the April 2015 earthquake destroyed his house all of a sudden. The pain became unbearable for him when he found that the temblor had also destroyed the forge, the only source of earning for his family. The entire family was left without any of income.

They started to stay in a makeshift shelter but they had nothing left to eat. He lost his workshop and income. A meagre amount of his saving was finished within a few days.

Then, Hasta Bahadur thought he had no option other than search and collect the tools from the debris of earthquake and buy some cheap tools so that he could somehow resume his work. But he couldn't make quality tools and utensils and that affected his earnings. Since the family's livelihood was at stake, education, health and entertainment were shadowed.

After speaking about his hardships and struggle before and after the earthquake, Hasta Bahadur shared some good news about his life in the changed context. "When I was in a serious crisis, I luckily met representatives of Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra who were providing support to the poor earthquake-affected people in my village, also inquired about my entire situation, observed forge and became ready to support me," he said.

He got a cutting and other machines and tools from the organization. With these equipment, he has been able to resume his profession. New equipment made him easy to make tools such as sickles, spade and khukuri (a curved knife). "As I have modern devices now, I can make utensils faster and more easily. Also, I can give better finishing touches to the items," he said. "This is how, now I can produce more goods in less time. Therefore, I can earn better than earlier," he added.

The number of Hasta Bahadur's permanent customers who pay him certain amount per annum has been significantly decreased, from 100 to around 10 households following the earthquake. He takes it easy. "The customers feel paying more for less work. We serve them just twice or thrice a year. On the other hand, it is not lucrative for us to collect grains from each household. And often we get substandard grains," he said. He said that with end of the annual payment in grain (Balighare) system, both receiver and the giver are happy.

With the help of modern tools and devices, he can now earn around Rs 400 to 1,200 a day. He earns good money from repair works as well. "Otherwise, it would be impossible to manage the daily expenses of the family," he added.

He said that he earns around Rs 200 to Rs 400 from a repair work and Rs 900 from making new items. Sometime he has to go to market to sell some items but most of the pieces are sold from his workshop itself. He is more interested in making new items as that helps him hone his skill and earn more money as well.

'The Wiring Miss'

Tulasa Acharya

Dhaitar, Mandan Deupur Municipality-8

Rakshya Paudel of her village was working with Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra as a social mobilizer. During her occasional meetings with Rakshya, Tulasa used to request her to inform her if any opportunity for skill training was provided by the organization.



Tulasa used to request not only Rakshya but also other employees of the organization to inform her if any opportunity arose.

The organization invited application for house wiring training and Rakshya informed Tulasa about it. She became quite interested to

learn the skill and informed her parents about the opportunity and expressed her interest. Tulasa said: At first my parents laughed at my proposal. My elder brother didn't take the proposal seriously. They took my idea of receiving training in house wiring very unusual as the society still considers it as the male domain. Rather they suggested me going for tailoring, which is more becoming to a girl.

But Tulasa insisted on taking the house wiring training because she wanted to do something new than doing usual things. She had seen her brother-in-law in the profession and that created interest in her for the unusual job for women. She used to think that it would be quite interesting to do the job after receiving training in it.

Now, her dream was becoming a reality and she wanted to make the best use of this opportunity. She went to the office of the organization to apply for that training. Then, she eagerly waited the day of selection. She passed the exam. Tulasa was the only female candidate out of 24. But she wasn't hesitant to join the group. She completed the training with excitement.

At the beginning, she was a bit confused. "Many people watched me curiously as I was the only female there. But I wasn't shy at all nor did I care about what other might be thinking about me," she said adding, "My focus was only on the things that the trainers were teaching about."

She stood third in the 36-day training. Then no one dared to undermine her.

As a result, within a year after the training, Tulasa completed wiring assignments in seven buildings. She worked jointly with her brother-in-law to carry out the work in three buildings and did it in other two houses jointly with her friends. She oversaw the entire task of wiring in four houses. "I have already received new orders to wire two houses. I will start it immediately," she said.

After the training, she wired the houses of Ganesh Adhikari of Jyamdi, Ganesh Acharya of Sangachok, Devraj Adhikari of Tinpipla and Hareram Nepal of Barhabise. Sanobhai Khadka and Baburam

Sapkota of the same village have already requested her to lay the wiring in their houses.

Now she is not only a worker but also a contractor. How much does she charge to wire a four-room house? She promptly answered, "Only Rs 7,000". She can complete wiring in just two days. "I have earned Rs 31,000 so far," she proudly said.

The achievement of this 20-year-old girl has made her popular not only in her neighborhood but in neighboring villages as well, so much so that these days she is popularly known not as Tulasa Acharya but "The Wiring Miss". If one speaks about Tulasa Acharya with villagers, they say, "Do you mean, "The Wiring Miss?"

Tulasa, who passed grade 12 recently, is more interested in further honing her wiring skills before joining bachelor's degree. She has planned to first complete the second and third levels of wiring training and then give continuity to the formal education. Because, she believed that once she becomes fully skilled in wiring, she would be independent and can continue her study without any financial problems. "I am just 20-year-old now. I have enough time to complete my higher study. After all, the wiring training, too, is equally important to study," she added.

She knows there are some people in her neighborhood who criticize Tulasa for her choice of profession. They describe her as a crowning hen. Some idle villagers, who kill their time gossiping, describe her work as imperfect. "I know they gossip about me and say that I am working carelessly and I may one day get electrocuted," Tulasa said. "But that doesn't make any difference to me. It only shows their mindset and the level of their understanding," she added.

She has a dream to open up an electric shop at Kunta Bazaar after completing the remaining two levels of training and save certain amount of money. Also, she has a dream to provide job for few people at her shop. "Therefore, I am working hard these days to lay a strong foundation for my future plan," she said.

Jogitar recovers its greenery

Tanka Prasad Nepal

Jogitar Irrigation Project

Jogitar, Mandan Deupur Municipality-10

The April 2015 earthquake created a big problem for farmers in Jogitar as their only canal was destroyed by the temblor. They faced serious crisis to irrigate their arable land. Their paddy production plummeted. Farmers said they could produce hardly a ton of paddy on their field which used to give them around five tons. Then most of the villagers stopped cultivating paddy as the cost of farming outweighed the income from the production.



Such a situation disappointed the villagers because they were unable to produce grains needed to feed their family members, said Tanka Prasad Nepal, chairperson of Jogitar Irrigation Users Group. They discussed about several alternatives to solve the water crisis. They held several meetings to discuss the same. "It seems,

our valuable land is going to remain barren," the villagers used to express their frustration at the end of their meetings when they failed to find any solution.

Then, the villagers came into contact with officials of Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra who were in the village to support earthquake-affected people. The farmers briefed them on their irrigation crisis. They said they would try to solve their problem. The locals regularly followed up with the officials until the organization became ready to support them to solve the problem of irrigation.

With the support from the organization, they got pipes to bring water from the local river, Ritthe Khola, to a pond. But it was insufficient. "Then they provided us with additional 100 meter long pipes upon our request," said Tanka Prasad. Also, the organization helped them build a small dam at the river and channel the water to the pond.

"Now, the problem of irrigation has been solved as the organization provided us Rs 602,000," said Tanka.

With this arrangement, the area of around 600 ropani belonging to over 130 households has irrigation facility now. The farmers are hopeful that their paddy field will have irrigation facility in time because they can now collect water in two separate ponds. Then, they could irrigate their paddy fields.

Around 200 people volunteered to make this irrigation facility successful. Construction materials such as stones, cement, rods and pipes were provided by the organization. Then the work was jointly overseen by the organization and the users group. They decided that at least 10 people would volunteer each day. They successfully completed the work in 20 days showing an exemplary unity among the local farmers. It also shows how important the irrigation project was for them. The farmers of Jogitar proved its importance.

"When we brought the water through land, the soil absorbed a lot of water and by the time the water reached to the field, its volume reduced significantly," said Tanka. Therefore, the farmers have

planned to use the pipes to supply water from the river to the tank and from the tank to the field. "For this, we need 1,200 meters of pipe. We are in the process to get some more pipes from local ward office of the municipality," he added. He claimed that once the work is completed, farmers in the village would no longer face the problem of irrigation.

In course of implementing the plan, some of the office bearers are in search of some organizations that can support them in this project and some others are regularly following up with the officials at the ward office. "We are trying to convince officials at the ward office and other organizations that the increased production in our village would contribute to food security of entire country," said Tanka.

I luckily decided to grow sesame

After the earthquake destroyed the canal, we suddenly fell in crisis. I have nine ropanis of land at Jogitar. Many others left the area uncultivated due to irrigation problem. But I decided to sow sesame because it doesn't need a lot of water. That decision helped me sustain. Otherwise, I would have faced a serious crisis. But, after the new arrangement for irrigation, I have again started planting paddy. Now we have got rid of that problem.

Chet Nath Nepal
Farmer at Jogitar Phant

The change brought about by a goat

Sabitri Nepal

Kantitar, Mandan Deupur Municipality-10

Even a goat can be helpful in earning good money within short time. Sabitri Nepal of Kantitar is an example. She has also proved that one can make a decent earning if goat farming is managed properly. She is now known as an exemplary goat farmer in the village.



Representatives of Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra, who were at her village to help earthquake-affected people in their livelihood, gave her a goat. The goat bred two kids. She grew them and sold one for Rs 14,000 and the other for Rs 7,500. Now she has two

more goats with kids. She used the money to rebuild the house that was destroyed by the earthquake in 2015.

She also has 10 more goats. In the past, she reared up to 20 goats at one time. But she sold several goats worth Rs 80,000 during Dashain. She used the money to build the house. "I could earn more from the goats given by the organization than from other goats that I have for years," she said. Her son is studying in grade 8. She has to give special care for her disabled daughter. She also has some buffaloes. Her husband also helps her. "We have enough areas to graze the goats. Therefore goat farming has become a bit easier for us," she explained.

Earthquakes not only destroyed her house but also injured her buffalo. Later, she forgot the pain when she made a good earning from goat farming. As she has started to earn a decent income from the goats, she has become more optimistic about her future. She always wants to share her positive stories about goat farming with the people visiting her farm.

She also uses smart ideas to expand her business. As she knew that goat manure helps increase vegetable production, she started vegetable farming as well. Her neighbors sowed paddy in their land but she is growing vegetables because she knows that she can earn more from vegetable farming. She has now increased the production using goat manure.

"The fodder and foliage are useful to feed the goats. On the other hand, the goats' manure is very useful as fertilizer for the vegetables. This is how goat and vegetable farming are complementing each other. Therefore, I decided to give continuity to both businesses together. One should not work hard but smart to succeed," she explained.

Customers come to her house to buy goats. But she has to go to the market, an hour's walk, to sell vegetables. Sabitri, who sells vegetable worth Rs 100,000 a year, said that her income from vegetables and goats was instrumental in building an earthquake-

resistant house. She said that she has focused her attention on goat farming as she need not worry about the market.

She also said that she knew the ways about rendering her enterprise sustainable and profitable only after she participated in training organized by the organization. She said it was after the training she knew how to integrate vegetable and goat farming and run the two businesses together. "I have got not only the goats but also skills in goat farming and that helped me grow my farm in a short period of time," said Sabitri.

She has learnt to maximize the use of fodder and foliage, keep the farm clean, and basic knowledge on diseases and their treatment. She has built contacts with veterinary experts to get support when needed, and got ideas to grow modern and productive grass species. Such ideas helped her earn more money in short span of time. During the same training, she learnt to manage goat sheds such as separating goats' urine, manure and the ways of feeding goats among others. "These are small things but they make a big difference in the operation of a business," she said.

The young man and his social service

Shrikrishna Bhattarai

Jaishithok, Mandan Deupur Municipality-11

He is just 19-year-old. He is a student of Veterinary and a Junior Technical Assistant. Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra invited application from aspirant youth for training in rural veterinary and posted notice in public places of the village. The villagers paid attention to the announcement. Locals discussed the matter and people at Jaishithok decided to encourage Shrikrishna Bhattarai to apply for that. Shrikrishna wasn't at home. He didn't know about the notice. However the villagers said that he was the most eligible candidate for it because he studied the same subject and he was interested to work in the field.



When Shrikrishna was 11, one of their buffaloes died. His parents became very sad. He thought that the buffalo wouldn't have died had he known about basic medication needed for the buffalo. This incident encouraged Shrikrishna to study veterinary. He left home and stayed at Banepa to study the same subject.

After that Shrikrishna was asked to go to Banepa. The villagers encouraged him to apply for the training. And, he was selected. As it was the place where he had been studying, Shrikrishna didn't face much difficulty in completing the training there. He carried on both formal education and the short-term training simultaneously and smoothly.

He was the youngest among the 21 trainees. But he was quite sharp in learning. The formal education made his theoretical learning wider while the training made him practically sound. As he got both the theoretical as well as practical knowledge and skills, he could start work immediately after the completion of the training. "I started to work the next day after completing the training," he said adding, "I have been able to work efficiently since then."

"I test dung, do postmortem, castrate goats and administer injection," he said. Shrikrishna visits farms upon farmers' request. He now has a plan to learn more skills. "With this farmers in this village need not worry about breeding animals," he added.

Shrikrishna is so busy with his work in the village that sometimes he doesn't find time to have a meal. "I receive so many calls from the farmers that it becomes tough to manage time for me. I try to reach every farm as far as possible as they seek my support," he explained.

He runs a veterinary shop at his home. But his mobile service is more effective. With some medicines in his bag, a mobile phone in his picket, and the skill in his hand Shrikrishna has become a quite helpful 'doctor' for the villagers. Therefore he is popularly known as 'The Little Doctor' in the area.

He is popular because he isn't money-minded. Others charge Rs 200 for castrating goats but Shrikrishna takes just Rs 100. He charges nominal fees for other services as well. He doesn't demand his fee for visiting the farm for providing general services and suggestions. Therefore, farmers prefer him to others.

As he comes from a humble background, he manages expenses for his study and has now started providing some financial support to

his parents. "It's been just four months since I started working in this field after the completion of the training. During this period, I have earned Rs 60,000. So, I have come to a conclusion that I can do much better in this field," said Shrikrishna.

Local ward offices distribute some vaccines free of cost. He helps local farmers by administering these vaccines to their animals without any charge. He brings medicines from Banepa and Bhaktapur and sells to local farmers with small margin for him. He has a plan to further expand his vet shop and provide more services to the people from there.

Gita does not fear landslide anymore

Gita Rai

Kodari, Mandan Deupur Municipality-6

There is a small piece of land where they can grow a meagre quantity of paddy and maize. They have eleven-year- and nine-year-old sons and a four-year-old daughter. Her husband works at a stone crusher to earn for the five-member family. The site of their house is sloppy. So building a house on that piece of land isn't easy. But they have no other option. It is a settlement of 30 households of the Rai community. All of them have built houses on the sloppy area. "Having no option, we were compelled to build the house in this sloppy area," said Gita Rai.



She said that it wouldn't have been possible to build the house had they not been supported by Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra. They mustered courage to build the house only after the organization promised to provide Rs 300,000 to purchase construction

materials, Rs 85,000 for mason cost and Rs 16,000 to make a toilet. In addition to the support, they had to borrow some money, she said.

Shortly after they moved to the newly built house, they got into a trouble. All family members were at home as her son had fallen sick. On the same night, a landslide hit their house. Frightened by the landslide, they ran away from the house. All of them had a narrow escape. The major structure of the house was intact but the building was so close to the landslide that it damaged a portion of the wall.

"Then, my husband informed the engineer of the organization that helped us in fortifying the house after the incident," she said. After a few days, a team from the organization visited the site and inspected the house. Later, the organization built a gabion wall to support the building. Now Gita's family is living in the same house and they no more fear landslide.

Gita also said that they were compelled to build the house on the sloppy area because the National Reconstruction Authority made it mandatory that the earthquake-affected people must rebuild their houses on the original site to be eligible to receive the housing grants provided by the government.

"My mother died during our childhood. Ever since, I spent all my life in hardships. The life after marriage was full of struggle," Gita shared her story of lifelong struggle adding, "When the landslide hit the house, I thought that I was doomed to face similar hardships throughout my life."

But, with the help of the organization, she has been able to breathe a sigh of relief. She said, with the support of the gabion wall, at least the house is safe. All the houses in this settlement of Rai community are built on sloppy land. They have other problems such as water scarcity, and lack of sufficient land for livelihood. Therefore, they leave the village in search of work.

"At least we now have a house. It became possible mainly because of the organization's support. Otherwise, we would have been living in a shed just like after the earthquake," said Gita.

Bad luck of the poor village

Though most of the total 30 houses in this area were built with support from the organizations, other families fear landslide. Just like Gita's house, landslides can hit our houses as well because all the houses are built on sloppy land. With the organization's support Gita's house has become safe. But other buildings are vulnerable. Also, the government policy, that made it compulsory for earthquake-affected people to build house on the original sites, is responsible for causing the problem. If those who have a piece of plot in safe place had been allowed to build their house there, they would not have to face similar problem again.

Ram Maya Rai
Gita's neighbor, Kodari

Helping the helpless to live a better life

Mithu Dotel

Ghumaune, Mandan Deupur Municipality-5

She lost her nine- and seven-year-old daughters in the earthquake. Her husband, who went missing along with them, came into contact only after three months. Neither he explained how the two daughters had gone missing nor did he show any interest to inquire about their whereabouts. Moreover, the drunkard husband tortured the wife and other children all the time.



He became alcoholic. He sold the cultivated land and several plots except for the piece where the house was standing. Mithu faced one problem after another including the disappearance of daughters, loss of the land, husband's addiction to alcohol and his battering.

Four years ago, he committed a suicide, adding insult to injury. Mithu's life became more painful. She had hard time to feed her children forget about giving education to them. She became mentally disturbed. Then, she had to take medicines to cope with mental disorder. This further burdened her.

Her condition worsened in 2015 when earthquake destroyed her house. Other people somehow managed to rebuild houses but she couldn't make even a shed. It further deteriorated her health condition. She took shelter at a neighbor's house for some days after the earthquake. Then, she made a hut.

The government announced to provide housing grants for quake-hit people, but she was neither able to get the grant because of the bureaucratic hassles nor to arrange construction materials and borrow money to build a house. Her neighbors were worried about her pathetic condition.

In the meantime, the representatives of Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra came to know about her plight. They became ready to support her in building a house. But they faced a problem. As per housing support provision of the organization, the beneficiary had to contribute certain amount to build a house. But Mithu had neither any money nor physically able to contribute labor. Therefore, the organization took a special decision in her case.

The organization decided to provide her full support to build her house and provided construction materials worth Rs 300,000, gave Rs 85,000 for mason cost and Rs 16,000 to make a toilet. The organization also made an arrangement to drop the materials near the construction site. Her neighbors carried the materials from the road to the construction site and managed water for the construction. With support from the organization and neighbors, a two-room house was built and she has already shifted to the new house.

She is worried about the future of her children who are studying in grades 11 and 8, money needed for her medicine, daily needs

and pay back loan. However she has become more confident these days because she has got an earthquake-resistant house.

At present, the only reliable source for her survival is Rs 1,000 given monthly by the government as a social security allowance for single women. Besides that, she has only two goats in the name of her property. Despite her poor health condition, she has somehow managed to keep them as that helped her to forget her misery.

Her problem of permanent shelter has been solved, but, she is worried more about her children's future than about herself. "I have got some satisfaction after getting this house. Now, I only worry about my children's future," she said.

Bhimsen School gets child-friendly toilets

Ram Sharan Rai

Kodari, Mandan Deupur Municipality-6

Bhimsen Primary School is small and tidy. There is a toilet a little downward the school building. But students didn't use the toilet. No one was ready to go to the toilet even after repeated instructions by the teachers. On the one hand, the toilet was useless, on the other hand, the school premises and surrounding areas became filthy. It became a big headache for the school management.



"Students were not interested to go to the toilet because the path to go to the toilet was risky. As the area was slippery and covered with bushes," said Ram Sharan Rai, chairman of the school management committee. "Since it is a primary school, the students are small. So it was definitely difficult for them to use the toilet. Thus, the toilet remained useless," he added.

This state of the toilet worried Ram Sharan seriously because he was the one who took initiatives to establish the school. First, he donated Rs 25,000 to buy the land for the school. Then, various organizations and individuals came forward to help. He also worked hard to recruit teachers and to run the school smoothly.

In the meantime, he met representatives of Shanti Janaadarsha Sewa Kendra, a local partner of The Lutheran World Federation Nepal. "I first briefed them about the children's problem and then took them to the school for field inspection," said Ram Sharan. "After that the organization was ready to help us build the toilet that made me quite happy," he added.

Now, there are two tidy toilets adjoining the school's main building. Students enjoy using them as there is no need to climb up or down nor a single step to reach the toilets. With the new facility being clean and convenient for them, students are quite excited to use it.

Ram Sharan is a mason himself. He has built several houses and toilets in the village after the earthquake. He however contracted out the task of building the school toilet. "Being the chairperson of the school management committee, I cannot build the toilet as it would be a conflict of interest. Therefore, we entrusted someone else with the task," he said.

The organizations provided Rs 195,000 to build the toilets that have septic tanks attached.

Children of this Kodari village are compelled to study at this school because the nearest school in the area is Mahadev Primary School which is an hour's walk from the village. Therefore Rai has been working hard to equip the school at least with basic facilities.

He is trying hard to increase the number of teachers at the school. He has been regularly following up with officials at the district education office and the municipality's ward office. "I have been holding series of meetings with officials of various organizations to convince them to help us increase facilities in the school in the way we received support to build toilets," he said adding, "We

must ensure basic facilities in the school to retain and attract more students."

In recognition to his hard work and sincere efforts to improve the school's quality, local people have repeatedly elected him as the chairperson of the school management committee. "Ram Sharan sir took initiatives to build the toilets in the school. Therefore, our children are quite happy and we don't have to worry about that," said Gita Rai, one of the guardians.

There are 51 students in this schools which runs classes up to grade 3. All students are from the Rai ethnic community. Also all three teachers and an assistant are from the same community. Ram Sharan said he wanted to develop the school as a model. He thanked the organizations for helping him build the toilets in school because that was a part of his long-term plan.

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