

Report from Nepal One Year On 25.4.16



A man from Majhitar in Dhading District works on the rebuild with ACT Alliance support. Photos: ACT Alliance/P Jeffrey

CWS reports on the situation one year after Nepal was hit by two massive earthquakes and many aftershocks. With your support, CWS sent \$102,822.40 for the ACT Alliance's (Action by Churches Together) Nepal Appeal and is preparing to send further funding for the next phase. Ahead of the anniversary, ACT Alliance launched a follow on NZD\$23 million appeal to reach more communities and help Nepal recover.

CWS designated your gifts for food security, livelihoods, water and sanitation, shelter and psychosocial support. ACT Alliance Nepal also repaired schools and provided education materials and spaces. Together members worked in the districts of Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Dhading, Dolakha, Gorkha, Kabhrepalanchok, Kathmandu, Lamjung, Makwanpur, Rasuwa and Sindhupalchowk. Your donations helped many people survive. Thank you.

On 25 April a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck Nepal with the epicentre in the Gorkha district shortly before noon local time. It triggered avalanches and landslides as well as countless aftershocks. The biggest was magnitude 7.3 on 12 May 2015. It affected 14 of Nepal's 39 districts and was the most powerful to hit the region since 1934. The official death toll was 8,891 with 22,302 people injured. Some 604,930 homes were destroyed and total damage was estimated at US\$7 billion. Steep slopes, damaged infrastructure, approaching monsoons and the extent of the destruction hampered relief efforts.



Members of ACT Alliance Nepal responded immediately by distributing hot food and dry rations, tents, tarpaulins and drinking water. They assessed the effects on the communities where they worked and launched an international appeal to help local partners respond. CWS asked New Zealanders to help the hundreds of thousands of people affected by the tremors.



The Rebuild

Like many Nepalese, Maya Thapalyia (pictured in front of her transitional home gathering food for her livestock with her young son) was traumatised by last year's massive earthquake. Her home collapsed on 25 April along with all the others in her small village of Majithar. Families slept outside and salvaged what they could. One year after the quake the villagers are no longer living under tarpaulins but have transitional homes to protect them from the weather.

The government discouraged people from rebuilding until it had created the necessary policy and guidelines to build back better. Nepalese report that evaluations have taken place but they are still waiting for the 200,000 rupees (NZ\$2,727) promised to families who had lost their homes. The National Reconstruction Authority was not set up until December 2015, following agreement on the country's new constitution in September.

From November to January *Madhesi* political parties blockaded the border with India as a protest against the new constitution. The *Madhesi* people make up a third of the 28 million population and are from the southern plains. Price rises and a thriving black market restricted travel and made fuel and building materials more expensive. Materials need to be carried in on foot to villages at high altitudes and/or where landslides have blocked access.





Innovative Support

Determined to make sure the community rebuilt in a way that suited them, ACT Alliance introduced a new system making payments to the families through a mobile phone app. Once the grant was approved, *Hello Paisa* enabled instant credit. At its peak, ACT Alliance distributed money to 1400 families in 4.5 hours, and then could monitor how funds were spent. According to ACT

Alliance, 92% of beneficiaries used the cash for the purpose for which it was intended – others used it for earthquake related expenses.

Achievements so Far

ACT Alliance has reached over 100,000 households in 14 districts, mostly in partnership with government, clusters, local nongovernmental organisations and local groups:

- ◆ Over 30,000 families received assistance with water, sanitation and hygiene items.
- ◆ Over 40,000 earthquake affected households have been assisted with emergency or transitional shelter.
- ◆ Over 28,000 individuals have benefited from community based and school psycho social support.
- ◆ Over 16,000 children have been provided with temporary learning spaces, teaching materials, water, sanitation and hygiene (including lessons).
- ◆ Over 25,000 households have been helped to recover rural livelihoods for example with irrigation, tools, seedlings and livestock. Over 50% of earthquake affected families are dependent on livestock for food and income.
- ◆ Community buildings have been repaired, strengthened and repaired.
- ◆ 270 builders and masons have been trained to work on the rebuild.

Bhagwati Tamang a trained mason has been teaching others and learning stronger methods.

[Watch](#) her at work.



Psychosocial Programmes

Talking about what has happened and the problems they face has been an important way to deal with the trauma and shortage of help. Dancing (right) is a great safety valve.

Mediation Training

ACT Alliance Nepal trained 117 community mediators to help villages deal with the unevenness of aid distribution.

Sometimes a household received building materials or a village a new water system, while the neighbouring household or village got nothing as their home or system was in better condition.

“In the beginning there was a lot of scepticism. Can these ordinary people from our own area, whom we know, really solve our problems, people asked themselves. But gradually, as there were fewer problems, everyone realised that this model actually works,” says Devalci Silwal Nalang.

The mediators have arranged role-plays in the schools and have distributed posters and other materials that tell about conflict resolution. 60% are women, Dalits and other minority groups. Local authorities now ask the mediators to help in local conflicts

Next steps

ACT Alliance Nepal is asking for further funding to expand its programmes to more communities who are in need of assistance. The new appeal includes:

- ◆ Water, sanitation and hygiene
- ◆ Shelter
- ◆ Disaster Preparedness training
- ◆ Psychosocial help which includes training teachers and more community mediators
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Restoring livelihoods.



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Donations can be made to the Nepal Appeal on line or posted to the address on the left.

Videos are available at: <http://cws.org.nz/what-can-i-do/emergencies/nepal-earthquake-appeal-one-year>