

# REDR NEPAL EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE ONE YEAR ON



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“This earthquake was the biggest disaster to strike Nepal in a very long time. The country didn’t have enough capacity - in terms of knowledge, skills, preparedness, resources, and manpower - to face it alone. Many international agencies came to support Nepal and strengthen capacity by giving training, hiring local staff, and building skills. We also got the chance to learn more about disasters, which will definitely prepare us to cope with future emergencies.”

**RedR trainee Minar Thapa Magar**, Gorkha District Coordinator for the Housing Reconstruction and Recovery Platform (HRRP), articulates the need for training in post-earthquake Nepal.



# REDR NEPAL EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE

## ONE YEAR ON

On 25th April 2015, Nepal was struck by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake - the strongest to hit the country in over 80 years. A second, 7.3-magnitude earthquake on 12th May compounded the damage the country had already suffered.

**39 of the country's 75 districts were affected. 8,800 lives were lost, and 22,000 people were injured. Hundreds of thousands were left homeless, and many more lost their livelihoods.**

Although daily life is slowly returning to normal, the impact of the disaster will be felt for years to come. The reconstruction process has been extremely slow: one year after the first earthquake, millions of people are still living in temporary accommodation.

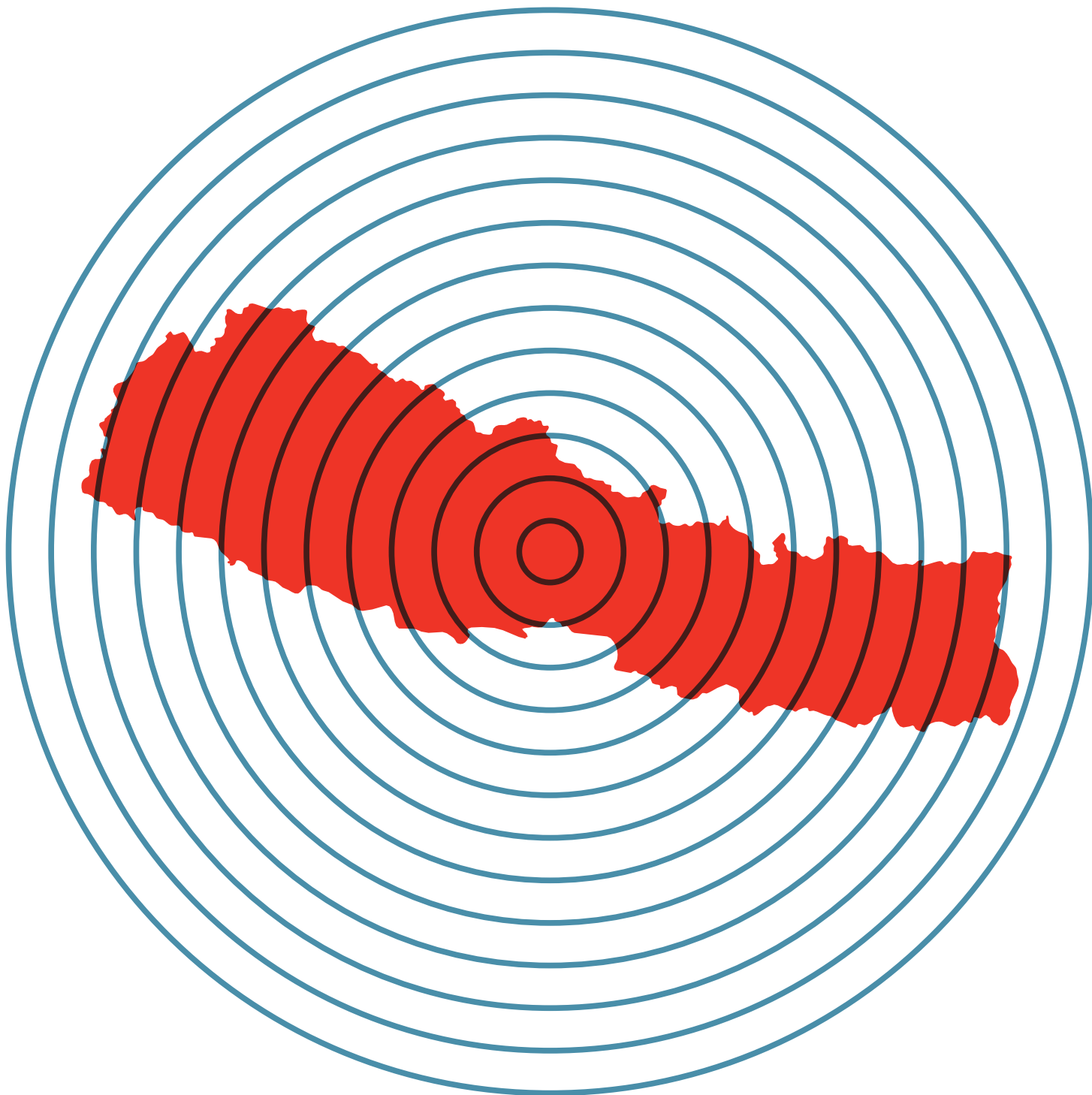
On top of this, Nepal remains extremely vulnerable to natural disaster. **"This is why it's essential that the country is able to 'build back better', safeguarding against future shocks,"** explains RedR UK's Nepal Project Coordinator Erina Mugadu. **"Over the past twelve months, we've focused on boosting the resilience of earthquake-affected communities and supporting the committed, courageous local aid workers who are helping the country rebuild, recover, and look to the future."**

## HOW REDR RESPONDED, WITH YOUR SUPPORT

A needs assessment conducted by our team in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake - in conjunction with other NGOs operating in Nepal - identified an urgent need to strengthen humanitarian capacity in the country.

To date, RedR has trained 449 aid workers and community volunteers working for national and international NGOs, through 1368 contact days. We have provided training and technical support in earthquake-resistant shelter construction and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), along with softer skills like project and people management: all an essential part of the recovery process.

**None of this would have been possible without you.**



**THE REDR EMERGENCY APPEAL RAISED £230,000**

In the hours following the first earthquake, RedR launched an emergency appeal - and we were overwhelmed by the response. Our supporters raised almost **£230,000** through donations, employee fundraising, and challenge events.

By supporting RedR, you are facilitating a sustainable approach to disaster relief - and one which spans the whole disaster cycle, from preparedness, to response, to recovery.

**“We know that Nepal is likely to experience similar natural disasters in the not-too-distant future,”** says Project Coordinator Erina Mugadu. **“That’s why it’s so important that local aid workers are equipped to prepare for this kind of event, thereby minimising its impact.”**

Recently, recovery efforts have been hampered by political tensions surrounding the new constitution, passed in the aftermath of the earthquake. Protests in the south and the subsequent border blockade resulted in a fuel crisis, and the escalation of prices for reconstruction materials and basic commodities, which paralysed the country for several months. Like many aid agencies, both local and international, RedR has felt the impact of this complicated context. Discussions over the new constitution continue, and until an agreement is reached, the humanitarian space in Nepal looks set to remain limited.

Despite these challenges, RedR is committed to completing the work we set out to do. **“There is still a need for humanitarian training in Nepal,”** says Erina. **“And thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we’re in a position to continue to provide it in the months to come.”**





The IOM distributes emergency shelter to affected communities in Barabise, Sindhupalchok District, in June 2015 © IOM

## SHELTER

### 'BUILD BACK SAFER' SHELTER AWARENESS TRAINING OF TRAINERS

**"In the weeks and months following the earthquakes, the Government of Nepal - working with the Shelter Cluster - identified ten key 'Build Back Safer' messages aimed at communities involved in the reconstruction process,"** explains RedR trainer Peter Jeyamaran. **"But these messages first had to be disseminated to the affected households, many of which were very remote. Moreover, many of the target communities lacked the practical skills required to put them into practice."**

With this in mind, in December 2015, RedR delivered *'Build Back Safer' Shelter Awareness Training of Trainers* in three of the worst-affected districts: Dolakha, Sindhupalchok and Gorkha. These courses were designed for staff from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and its partner organisations: a mixture of employees and volunteers from INGOs, NGOs, and local community-based organisations. **"Over six days, the trainees acquired practical knowledge of how to build earthquake-resistant shelter. They also learnt how to pass these skills on and become trainees themselves,"** says Peter.



One of the people we trained was Purna Bahadur Thami.

Before attending RedR's training, Purna had no practical experience of safe shelter construction. However, his objectives were very clear: **"I'm enthusiastic about helping and gaining knowledge to share,"** he said on the first day of training. **"I want to become a good trainer so the community can build back safer."**

Four months later, Purna is working with local NGO CWIN, delivering 'Build Back Safer' messages to earthquake-affected communities in Dolakha District as part of an awareness-raising programme conducted in partnership with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). To date, the programme has been implemented in two Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Dolakha: Laduk, and Bigu.

**"The progress made has been tremendous,"** says Purna. **"Village people have a conventional way of building houses. When we teach them different techniques, they always ask us for further explanations and want to know why this technique is better than the previous one. Along with the awareness sessions, we distribute toolkits, so the people can put what they learn into practice.**

**In both VDCs, the people needed no convincing to attend the session. Their enthusiasm and keen interest in learning, along with their warm, respectful and hospitable attitude towards the trainers, was very motivating for us."**

Purna and his team are now back in the office, making plans to implement the programme in a third VDC, Kalinchowk.

**"We aim to make all attendees into trainers. Our goal is for everyone to have good technical skills and knowledge of making earthquake-resilient houses."**

**"Speaking in front of a crowd of new faces has been challenging for me,"** admits Purna. **"As time passes, however, I have honed my ability to deliver my message confidently."**

Stories like Purna's illustrate how RedR's training can not only build skills, but boost confidence - contributing to the creation of a generation of skilled, committed humanitarian professionals who will be able to help their resilient communities prepare for and respond to disaster in the months and years to come.





### WASH: SUSTAINABLY IMPROVING HYGIENE PRACTICES

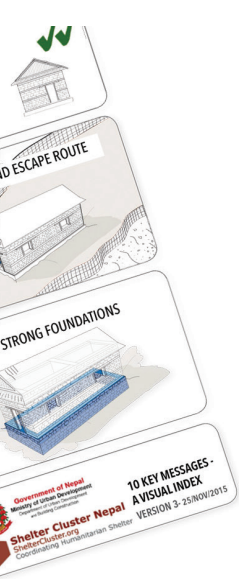
In the same way, RedR's water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) training included a close focus on community engagement. **“Water and sanitation infrastructure alone is not enough to combat the spread of water-borne diseases and sustainably improve hygiene practices in a community,”** notes Erina Mugadu. **“That’s why, along with technical training on latrine construction and water treatment, RedR provided training on hygiene promotion and community mobilisation - two complementary skill sets in a context like this.”**

**“Our field-level health workers were able to learn how health messages can be delivered to the community: through video shows, dramas, quizzes, mass gatherings, etc. As a result, community members and school children were able to learn how sanitation and hygiene can be maintained during an emergency - and why it is important that they are. Subsequently, they built toilets and started boiling their water to purify it, hand-washing with soap, etc.”**

Sweta Pathak attended RedR's WASH in Emergencies training while working with Save the Children.

“ The movement towards open defecation freedom was disturbed for some time due to the devastating earthquake. But now we are back on track. Some VDCs have already been declared open defecation-free. The use of improved hygiene practices has increased in the communities where I work. They were already aware of proper hygiene practices and our objective was to make them implement them. So the training has helped them to know benefit of practising rather than just being aware.

**Urmila Lama** was working as a Hygiene Promotion Officer with CARE Nepal when she took RedR's training on *Building Safer Latrines* and *Hygiene Promotion and Community Mobilisation*, both in Sindhupalchok District, July 2015.



## THE RIPPLE EFFECT: Empowering whole communities

We know that the training we provide has a ripple effect, as skills and knowledge are passed from trainees to their colleagues, from colleagues to community members, and from one household to another - as these trainees testify.

“Applying what I learnt during the course has led to vast improvements in terms of capacity within my organisation. I replicated the training with thirteen staff members, who are now delivering training in the community.”

**Minar Thapa Magar**, District Coordinator for the Housing Reconstruction and Recovery Platform (HRRP), attended Build Back Safer Shelter Awareness training in Gorkha.

“The RedR training has had a great impact on my career. Upon completing the training, I was selected as a trainer with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

I joined the organisation in January 2016 and since then I have been involved in Build Back Safer training at the community level. I have completed training in five VDCs for almost 2500 participants - and this is quite an achievement, to have been able to make the community members aware of safe shelter.

**Nitesh Nepal** attended Build Back Safer Shelter Awareness Training of Trainers in Chautara, Sindhupalchok District. **both in Sindhupalchok District, July 2015.**

## FUTURE PLANS

**Thanks to the generosity of RedR's Patrons, corporate partners, and individual supporters, RedR UK expects to continue our work in Nepal until the end of the summer.**

As access to building materials improves, we will continue to develop the pool of community trainers taking part in the reconstruction process. We will deliver Training of Trainers on safer shelter construction to semi-skilled masons and carpenters in three key humanitarian hubs - Gorkha (Gorkha District), Chautara (Sindhupalchok District), and Charikot (Dolakha District) - and two more districts which are to be identified in coordination with the local authorities.

We have also developed a five-day course focused on *Children in Emergencies* and a three-day course on *Gender, Age and Disability Inclusion*, both of which will be delivered as soon as circumstances allow. This is part of a concerted effort by RedR, not only in Nepal, to help improve the inclusion of vulnerable groups in emergency response.

**"RedR's training helped me to take decisions on how to access and identify the most vulnerable people. I learnt about the importance of listening to communities and individuals, respecting their feelings, and addressing their real needs, specifically focusing on the most vulnerable households and people (single women, woman-headed households, children, old people who have no support, scheduled caste and ethnicity). Though I have been working in the WASH sector for almost fourteen years, RedR's training enabled me to channel the knowledge I have accumulated throughout this period."**

Prakash Bahadur Malla, Public Health Engineer - Officer with Oxfam GB, attended Manging Projects in Emergencies in Kathmandu, September 2015.

Project Coordinator Erina Mugadu explains: **"In the chaos of a humanitarian crisis, it can be hard to identify the most vulnerable groups and individuals. Often, those who are most in need of support are also those who are least able to ask for it. RedR's training seeks to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are taken into account in all humanitarian interventions - and that the dignity of all those who receive humanitarian aid is respected."**

## YOUR SUPPORT, OUR IMPACT

RedR Member Paul Jawor travelled to Nepal in August 2015, where he witnessed the techniques taught during RedR's safer shelter construction training being adopted and replicated in remote areas of Gorkha District.

**“In three separate villages, I saw evidence of the knowledge gained during RedR training being put into practice in the reconstruction process,”** he says. **“The Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs) I saw had been built with bamboo, joined together using lap joints. And the children were happy to be able to go back to school - particularly to this ‘safe space’.**

**I was proud to see RedR making a difference in this difficult part of the world.”**

When we know that one individual, trained by RedR, can pass his knowledge on to 2500 people in five VDCs - and that one person can contribute to building 100 Temporary Learning Centres - it makes it easier to gauge the impact of our work. With your support, we're building the resilience of thousands of people in disaster-prone communities.

**Thousands of people contributed to our Nepal appeal, and we are sincerely grateful to every one. We would like to highlight the outstanding contribution from the following Patrons and corporate partners:**

- Arcadis Middle East
- Arup
- Atkins
- Beale & Company LLP
- Grant and Brown
- Lloyd's Charities Trust
- Mace & Mace Foundation
- Mott MacDonald
- Peter Brett Associates
- The Reed Foundation
- The Worshipful Company of Engineers
- Tony Gee & Partners LLP
- Turner & Townsend
- WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff



**On behalf of all those who have benefited from our work in Nepal,  
thank you!**

**redr**uk  
people and skills for disaster relief