

## **Final report Nepal Earthquake 2015 - Emergency Aid and Reconstruction**

### **Context**

In Spring 2015, life in Nepal changed in just a few moments. An earthquake, measuring 7.8 on the Richter Scale, shook the country in April and destroyed houses, roads and schools. In May, a second quake, measuring 7.2, followed. More than 8,000 people died as a direct consequence of the earthquakes and over 500,000 were left homeless. In Lalitpur and Makwanpur, the two most heavily affected districts in which we provided reconstruction aid, almost 18,000 houses and more than 160 schools were completely demolished. All this took place in a country that had been in a state of civil war between 1996 and 2006 – further, which had deposed its monarchy in 2008 without, to this day, having a functioning democracy to replace it. Nepal was thrown, from one day to the next, into a humanitarian crisis, with which the government was unable to cope alone.

The Usthi Foundation, together with Govinda Entwicklungshilfe e.V. and Shangrila, Switzerland, therefore decided to provide immediate local assistance. Govinda and Shangrila had been active and well connected in Nepal since 1998. Only thanks to the work in Nepal over so many years and to the existing co-operation between the various organisations, was fast and effective local assistance made possible.

Emergency relief and reconstruction operations were headed up by Govinda and Shangrila together with their partner organisations in Nepal. The Usthi Foundation participated financially and was represented locally by two female employees.

### **Project Plan**

#### **Emergency Aid**

Immediately after the first earthquake, a crisis team was formed to plan emergency measures and to initiate a risk management system.

Together with our Indian partner in Kolkata, an aid convoy consisting of 5 trucks loaded with survival equipment was put together, just as it had been ten years earlier, after the undersea quake (and tsunami) in Southeast Asia. Transport and goods were initially available in Calcutta at normal prices. However, after the natural catastrophe and the collapse of public order in Nepal, the "cost of survival" climbed exponentially and transportation became unavailable.

Nonetheless, in only one month, it was possible to provide emergency aid to over 36,000 victims. 55 tonnes of relief supplies were taken from Kolkata, India to Nepal and were distributed to the suffering population, as well as temporary shelters being erected. Usthi provided detailed information at the time, both in the press and on the [www.usthi.ch](http://www.usthi.ch) website.

## Reconstruction

From mid-June for three months, comprehensive monsoon aid was provided during the reconstruction project in the districts of Lalitpur and Makwanpur. The monsoon season was made worse by numerous aftershocks, landslides and flooding.

Monsoon prevention centres (hubs) served as a safe focal point for the inhabitants of the region. It was also possible to set up "WASH" training courses (water, sanitation, hygiene) and temporary skills training. A large number of health-checks were conducted and medical treatment and medicines were supplied during this time. Emergency shelters were also improved and extended.

During this time, building preparations were started to construct earthquake-resistant houses. Construction companies were selected, building plans were drafted and training was carried out in the skills immediately required. By January 2016, 126 people had been trained in masonry and carpentry and had been professionally prepared for the construction projects to come.



Examples of successful reconstruction: A couple & a mother with children stand in front of their earthquake-resistant houses

The destabilisation of the political system, caused by the earthquake, led to the closure of the borders with India, which meant that petrol and diesel became scarce and prices soared.

This was the first of many hurdles for the reconstruction - preparations were made more difficult and the calculated costs rose. Construction starts were also delayed by the government, as the specifications of the planned houses were frequently changed. This forced local organisations to make adjustments to the building plans several times, leading to even further unforeseen costs. However, only in this way were we finally able to obtain the building permit in February 2016, after months of struggle. Only twelve other organisations were able to obtain a building permit.

The houses were designed in traditional style, together with the affected population, and various construction and support teams were set up, enabling reconstruction to start in February 2016. An architect and construction management team from Nepal and Europe accompanied the "owner driven house reconstruction", in which homeowners were involved in building the houses. The reconstruction project was a complete success. Thanks to the active support of specialists and the tireless co-operation of the local population, all houses were completed by June 2016. In this way, the families were able to move into their new homes before the monsoon season. However, since the delivery of smoke-free ovens was delayed, some reworking of the houses was still necessary. This work was completed by August.

After successful completion of the reconstruction work, a project review was conducted. The efficiency and effectiveness of the project was evaluated with various tools. Despite massive bureaucratic hurdles, slightly higher project costs and a corresponding reduction in the number of buildings, the project was able to be brought to an extremely successful conclusion. The Govinda- Shangrila-Usthi co-operation was the only organisation to conclude reconstruction before the second rainy season.

## Chronology

<b>25<sup>th</sup> April 2015</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter Scale
<b>12<sup>th</sup> May 2015</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Earthquake, strength 7.2
<b>May 15 – June 15</b>	Emergency relief aid, relief supplies convoy
<b>June 15 – Sept. 15</b>	Monsoon aid, building temporary shelters
<b>Oct. 15 – Jan. 16</b>	Construction planning, skills training and obtaining building permits
<b>Feb. 16 – Aug. 16</b>	Reconstruction of houses
<b>Sept. 16 – Oct. 16</b>	Review of the concluded Reconstruction Project and final report

## Finances

Costs for emergency relief and reconstruction in Nepal were borne by Govinda Entwicklungshilfe e.V., Shangrila Schweiz and the Usthi Foundation

### Nepal Earthquakes - Emergency Relief and Reconstruction

#### Usthi Foundation Accounts - Emergency Relief and Reconstruction

	Income		Expense	%
Usthi Foundation 2015	290'242	<b>Emergency Aid</b>	116'542	30
Usthi Foundation 2016	44'734	Reconstruction	223'907	58
Govinda – for Emergency Aid	50'000	Own expenses	45'930	12
Loss	1'403			
<b>Total</b>	<b>386'379</b>		<b>386'379</b>	<b>100</b>

All financial movements are covered by bank documents. The accounts are public and can be inspected.

#### Co-operation between Usthi Foundation - Govinda - Shangrila - Emergency relief and reconstruction Nepal

	Emergency Aid	%	Reconstruction	%	total	%
Usthi	66'542	44	223'907	30	290'449	29
Govinda/Shangrila	85'180	56	624'700	70	709'880	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>151'722</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>848'607</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1'000'329</b>	<b>100</b>

Amounts detailed for the partners are taken from their own final reports.

## Results

- Emergency aid - 55 tonnes of relief supplies provided and erection of temporary shelters
- Monsoon aid with medical care, WASH training and operating two community centres
- Reconstruction of demolished houses, involving the local population
  - Construction plans and obtaining building permits
  - Collection of landowners' deeds
  - Training for local workers and "owner driven house reconstruction"
- Strengthened communities from successful co-operation in planning and implementation
- Situation stabilised and health and education maintained
- Documentation created, facilitating a similar reconstruction project in a different context



Gratitude and joy in the faces of proud homeowners - your help makes it all possible.

## Summary

The two earthquakes which struck Nepal in Spring 2015, triggered a humanitarian crisis in the country. The Usthi Foundation, together with its partner organisations Govinda and Shangrila, were able to react swiftly and provide prompt assistance thanks to their many years of experience and co-operation.

The Govinda-Shangrila-Usthi co-operation is currently the only organisation to have completed their reconstruction project in Nepal. The local population has played a major role in ensuring that reconstruction could be carried out efficiently and that the project had a broad support base.

The reconstruction project, which will have a lasting impact on the population and which brings with it a new sense of community, through intensive cooperation, was only possible through the generous support of our loyal donors. Within a remarkably short space of time, an enormous wave of solidarity from our donors made rapid action financially possible. We sincerely wish to thank you, on behalf of all concerned, for your solidarity and active support towards alleviating the hardship after the earthquake.

Zurich, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016

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