

HASERA in rebuilding Patalekhet village after Earthquake

1. Earthquake, earthquake!!!!

25 April 2015, midday was neither hot nor cold. Soon after yololo, Bibek went to the village to take some measurements of the plastic house for vegetable farming. We were about to facilitate farmers regarding this technology. Bigyan went up to his room for studies. Mithu, I and 5 other volunteers were having conversation in the patio. Villagers were busy planting maize, which we had just finished in our fields.

All of a sudden, we felt big big shake in the ground. It was so big that we could hardly stand still on our try to run away. Running was impossible. All we could do was shouting “BHUINCHALO GAYO, BHUINCHALO GAYO !!!” with the biggest possible sound. This is the way we do in our community whenever some danger happens.



Within seconds, we could see, dusts spreading in the sky in every angles of our landscape, symbolizing the collapse of many houses. Luckily we all family members and volunteers survived but unluckily many many life –connected physical structures were damaged.

About an hour passed in frightening and confusion. Sooner, we were in the village.

2. Information collection

I started helping people to make emergency shelters and Bibek, Bigyan started to collect information regarding the damages in the village. Clair Lin, Laxmi Dhital, Hari Dhital (army) also helped a lot in this matter. Preliminary reports revealed that some 139 houses are fully collapsed and above 500 houses are damaged partially. But as the after shocks were coming so strongly and frequently, it was not possible for anybody to go inside and take the stuffs out. Everywhere we could only see the silent cry in the people.



3. Priority planning

On the third day, 27th April, 2015, based on the information and experiences we had we prepared the following priority points regarding the emergency support and rebuilding of the village:

- As human casualties has not happened, road are not blocked and the food grains are not buried in the debris, food itself and the clothing were not of an important need in the village.
- The immediate need was of tarpaulins sheets to make emergency sheds. But it was already run out from the market so it was beyond our capacity to find and fetch them.
- The next biggest need was to clear up the debris of the broken house and side by side prepare the ground for temporary house. As this was the need of 500 + households, it would demand some more tools. So some shovels and some wheel barrows to ease the soil and stone movements were the primary need as we could think of.
- As sooner the villagers have to start making new houses. in place of the broken ones, knowledge regarding the earthquake and other disaster resistant house was another major importance. So disaster proof house designing workshop was our second priority.
- Materials support for making emergency house was the third priority
- Light is very important resource at the time of emergency. As the village was supposed to face 18 hours of power cutoff in the dry season, installment of solar lights was another important priority area we found.
- Finally, agriculture was the main source of food security and income in the village. So reviving agricultural sustainability was unavoidable. So agricultural supports were another very important priority area.



In HASERA, our learning hall, kitchen were fully collapsed and the main house was heavily cracked. Without rebuilding them, neither we would have any space to live nor we would have capacity to spread the knowledge of Permaculture. So rebuilding our learning hall, kitchen and farm house was vital for us.

When we identified these priority areas, we shared it to our friends through Facebook.



4. Our helping hands

Soon after getting this info, friends from different parts of the world started to send supports for us. Following are the friends who supported us financially in this HASERA and community rebuilding process-

1. Abigali (UK)
2. Alberto Perez (Spain)
3. Alexandra Petricat (Germany)
4. Alexandra Ripcard Poicini (Switzerland)
5. Andrew Slonestky (Canada)
6. Barbara (deebabs@bluewin.): Switzerland
7. Basanta Dhungana (Nepal)
8. Bhawani Mishra (Nepal)
9. Bouquet Pablo & Maka (Chile)
10. Buddhi Gyanwali (Nepal)
11. Chakra Budhathoki (Nepal)
12. Cherry (Taiwan)
13. Christiana Edwin (
14. Christiana Schelker
15. Clair Lin (Taiwan)
16. Clementaine Kunzler (Taiwan)
17. Dhana Bdr Air (Nepal, IAAS)
18. Dinesh Pokharel (Nepal)
19. Dung-An Wang (Taiwan)
20. Ellen Hsu (Taiwan)
21. Francessca Clair (Scotland)
22. Gunjan Khanal (Nepal)
23. Helen Chasle (France)
24. Hsu Hsiu (Taiwan)
25. Jim Danis, Oma (USA / Nepal)
26. Karen Huang / Miracle Chen (Taiwan)
27. Karow Bettina
28. Kathrin Seidl (Austria)
29. Lila Khatiwada (Nepal)
30. Lucy Bowen (Australia)
31. Lucy Sool
32. Luna Panie (France)
33. Mangal Aarati
34. Maria Doloricorto
35. Maria Schelo
36. Marie Archambaut / Marika (Canada)
37. Michal Shani (Israel)
38. Mika Kamijo (Japan)

39. Milan Shrestha (Nepal)
40. NCHU University (Taiwan)
41. Prakash Kafle (Nepal)
42. Prof KJ (Taiwan)
43. Rachel / Steven Sullivan (USA)
44. Ram Chandra Khanal (Nepal)
45. Roman / Zaia (Austria)
46. Sharad Parasara (Nepal)
47. ShriNiwas Gautam (Nepal)
48. Thomas (Johanna Maming, Austria)
49. Thomas Koenig (Switzerland)
50. Titiana (France)
51. Un known !!
52. Vision YouthAction (Taiwan)
53. Yu Heng Lu(Taiwan)

Besides more than two hundred friends called or wrote us to give us encouragement to bear this situation and help the community.

4. Activities carried out

4.1 Wheelbarrow and shovel

During the interaction, community members suggested that wheel barrow and shovel are the urgent needs of the village. So we bought 9 wheel barrows and 18 shovels. One each of wheel barrow and 2 shovels were distributed to 9 village blocks of Patalekheta. In each village blocks one person was nominated to keep the materials and coordinate its uses in the surroundings. Name of these 9 people receiving these materials for the village were:

1. Mr Babu Ram Dhital
2. Mr Badri Prasad Ojha
3. Mr Bishnu Prasad Dhital
4. Mr Hari Prasad Dhital Army
5. Mr Mukti Nath Ghimire
6. Mr Ranga Nath Dhital
7. Mr Soman Tamang
8. Mr Tika Prasad Dhital
9. Mr Uddhav Prasad Dhital



These materials were handed over to the community on May Sunday, 17 May, 2015 (3 Jestha, 2072).

4.2 Home designing workshop

An interactive workshop to review the home related learning of the current earthquake and learn ways to design earthquake resistant homes in Patalekhhet condition was organized in Thursday, 21 May, 2015 (7th Jestha, 2072). Sixteen people including local house makers, village elites, old agers and engineering students participated in this day long workshop. Based on the outcomes of this discussion, a guideline for earthquake resistant house design was prepared, printed and circulated in the village. The guideline is also uploaded in HASERA website.



4.3 Bamboo house construction

Twenty selected very poor families were supported with bamboo, bamboo builders and some money to buy roofing materials to make temporary bamboo house. Names of the families supported for such bamboo house are –

1. Mr Bidur Dhital
2. Mr Bishnu Bhujel
3. Mr Bishnu Dhital
4. Mr Hari Pariyar
5. Mr Haribol Dhital
6. Mr Kamal Bhujel
7. Mr Kedar Dhital
8. Mr Khil Bdr Bhujel
9. Mr Gokul Dhital
10. Mr Krishna Bhujel
11. Mr Nara Bdr Bhujel
12. Mr Ram Krishna Bhujel
13. Mr Santosh Pariyar
14. Mr Shyam Krishna Bhujel
15. Mrs Maiya Tiwari
16. Mrs Megh Kumari Bhujel
17. Mrs Parbati Bhujel
18. Mrs Sabitra Dhital
19. Mrs Sabitri Dhital
20. Mrs Saraswoti Dhital



4.4 Earthquake education class

To educate parents and children regarding the potential further damage of the earthquake 5 classes were organized in the village. During the classes, geographical causes of earthquake, ways to be safe from this disaster and points to be considered while building our next houses were explained through videos, drama and group activities. About 100 parents and children joined these cases.

During the class, though major focus was given on the earthquake, ample knowledge was also given regarding the preparedness of other disasters like flood, land slide, fire, lightening, hurricane etc.

4.5 Roofing materials support for temporary house construction

As people lose their homes, and it was impossible to make another immediately, temporary house was a need for everybody. From the resource collected, we supported roofing materials for 166 families. These families were the members of local women group and cooperative.

For some needy families, some extra money was also provided to support temporary house construction. Families receiving such monetary support were 9.



4.6 Cleaning up broken houses

Cleaning up the debris of the broken house is a heavy labor demanding work. As many houses have to do it at the same time, there was a big shortage of the helping hands in the village. So with the help of international volunteers, we helped families to carry out this job. VYA volunteers from Taiwan were especially involved in this.



4.7 Solar panel distribution

At the time of emergency, light is very important. But every day there is many hours of power cut in the village. To solve this problem, we provided some subsidies to install solar light systems. Until now 75 families have enjoyed this supports. Others are expected to do sooner. Following are the benefits experienced by the families after installing the solar lights:

- People can run out of home safely during the after shocks
- Children can study more in the evening and early morning
- Mothers can prepare materials for the morning meal already at the night before which will reduce their time pressure in the morning
- More comfortable during cooking and eating
- It feels more nicer to be at home in light



5. Future plans

Now our next plan is to promote social, natural and agricultural situation of the village with the principles of Permaculture. For this following are the activities envisaged-

- Three important but very difficult trails of the village will be improved
- A community center will be established in the village
- Studies will be carried out to synthesis inputs for the Permaculture promotion in the village. Such studies will be done through interactive workshops at local, national and international level Farmers will be facilitated to prepare designs for their farms and communities for their sustainable future
- Required materials will be supported for the farmers. Materials will be owned by the community and the individual farm families
- Regular facilitation, follow up, monitoring and evaluation will be carried out for implementation and scaling up

Our ultimate goal of these activities is to develop a modal Permaculture village resilient to earthquake and other disasters.