

Project Background

In the aftermath of the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake, the Governments of Nepal and India recognized the need to facilitate the housing reconstruction process and enable home-owners to undertake reconstruction in a desirable and timely manner as per the established technical guidelines, ensuring seismic safety of the rebuilt structures. The Government of India (GoI) has offered the largest assistance to Government of Nepal (GoN) focusing on housing, education, health and cultural heritage.

To expedite the post-earthquake reconstruction process, GoI, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) have entered into an agreement, under which GoI will provide a US\$ 16.2 million grant to the two UN agencies to support safer reconstruction of 50,000 houses in two districts: Gorkha (26,912 houses) and Nuwakot (23,098 houses).

In Gorkha, GoI has sought UNDP's engagement in providing socio-technical facilitation to affected homeowners looking to rebuild. With the Government of Nepal having adopted an owner-driven reconstruction approach, support to house-owners in ensuring access to finance, materials, knowledge, technologies, skills and land— 'socio-technical facilitation', in other words—becomes critical to promote safe reconstruction. Experiences from the reconstruction of quake-affected areas underway since 2015 show that a significant number of households, who are entitled to receive the housing grant provided by the Government, require hands-on socio-technical assistance to build safer and code-compliant structures. The Nepal Housing Reconstruction Project: Socio-technical Facilitation Services is expected to address this need at the household level through deployment of trained engineers, architects, masons and community facilitators in the selected wards in Gorkha district.

UNDP in developing and implementing this project, leverages on its decades' long history of development and recovery, reconstruction globally and in Nepal. Additionally, to effectively deliver high quality socio-technical facilitation services to the targeted households in Gorkha, UNDP has partnered with the Owner Driven Reconstruction Collaborative (ODRC) India. ODRC is a network of experienced institutions registered in India working to support national and state governments in instituting and facilitating the owner driven housing reconstruction process. ODRC in Nepal includes four participating organisations from India i) Hunnarshala Foundation, ii) UNNATI – Organisation for Development Education, iii) SEEDS Technical Services; and iv) Centre for Ecocentric Development and Peoples' Action (CEDAP).

It is also important to note changes in federal structure of Nepal, and reorganization of VDCs into rural municipalities (gaupalikas) and/or urban municipalities (nagarpalikas), and the authority and responsibilities of newly-elected local bodies to implement reconstruction against this backdrop. This larger governance milieu also sets the contours for socio-technical facilitation mechanisms.

With this support and available financial assistance, it is envisaged that the homeowners will complete the reconstruction work within the next three years.

The project interventions encompass six major components:

1. Facilitating administrative procedures regarding inclusion, grant release and certification
2. On-site technical advice and guidance on construction technology, design options, disaster resistant features, government norms, material procurement and construction management.
3. Technical services of design drawings, preparation for building permit process.
4. Capacity building of all project participants, particularly house owners and masons
5. Concurrent monitoring and quality assurance
6. Facilitating use of appropriate disaster-resistant technologies