



Rehabilitating Livelihoods of
Earthquake Survivors in Nepal

Successes & Lessons



50
YEARS

Empowering lives. Resilient nations.



**Rehabilitating Livelihoods of Earthquake Survivors in Nepal:
Successes & Lessons**

Publisher: United Nations Development Programme,
UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur

© **United Nations Development Programme**
December 2016

Printed at:

Cover:

Sukumaya Tamang weaving bamboo baskets in a temporary settlement for earthquake affected people at Laharepauwa in Rasuwa. She was displaced by the earthquake from Haku VDC, Ward no. 8, Mailung. (Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

This is the project completion report of the Rehabilitating Livelihoods of Earthquake Affected Survivors in Nepal Project which UNDP implemented in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. UNDP Nepal is grateful to the Intel Foundation for providing USD 330,000 grant towards this project. UNDP would also like to thank Enterprise Development Service Society and Swift Awareness Society Nepal which implemented the project in Nuwakot and Rasuwa districts respectively. This report was prepared by Indra Dhoj Kshetri, an independent consultant and views expressed in this report do not necessarily represent that of the UNDP.

Background

The 7.8 magnitude earthquake of 25 April 2015 that hit central hills of Kathmandu and subsequent aftershocks killed around 9,000 people and over 20,000 were injured. Over 600,000 houses were completely destroyed and 288,000 were partly damaged. Equally devastating was the immediate and longer-term impact on jobs and livelihoods. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their jobs and livelihoods and were left with limited access to public services, markets and community infrastructures. The project Rehabilitating Livelihoods of Earthquake Affected Survivors in Nepal funded by Intel Foundation benefitted 26,000 people (5,151 households) from Nuwakot and Rasuwa districts. The project helped 5,151 households restart livelihoods/income generating activities, create sustainable enterprises and contribute to the local economy by supplying daily essentials. A total of 1,000 families also received psycho social counseling that helped them overcome the trauma of the earthquake. With parents back to business, round 11,000 children from the two districts resumed school. These entrepreneurs now act as catalysts to revitalize the local economy.

Beneficiaries



5,025 received start up training



5,151 received startup capital and restarted their livelihoods

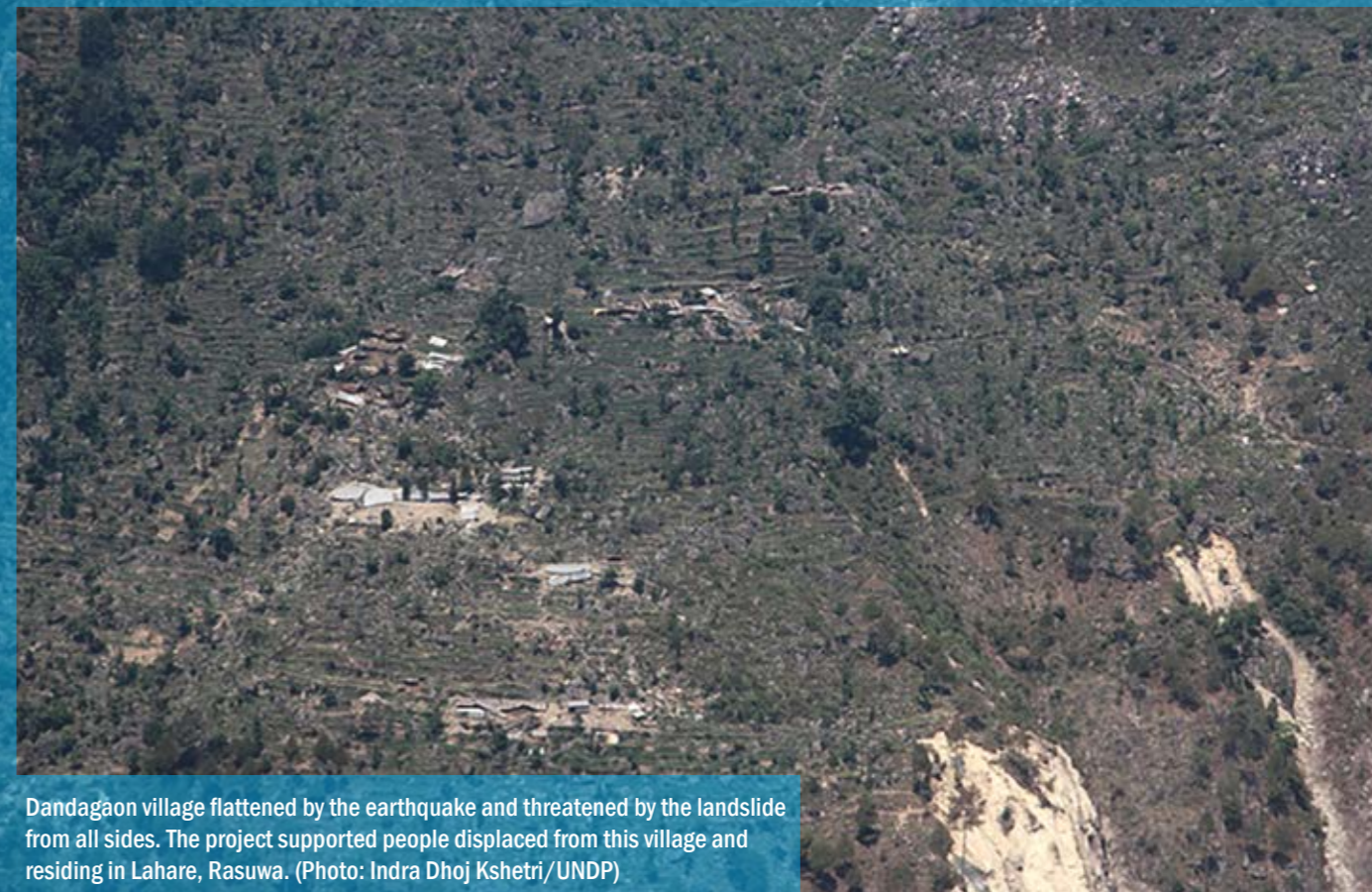
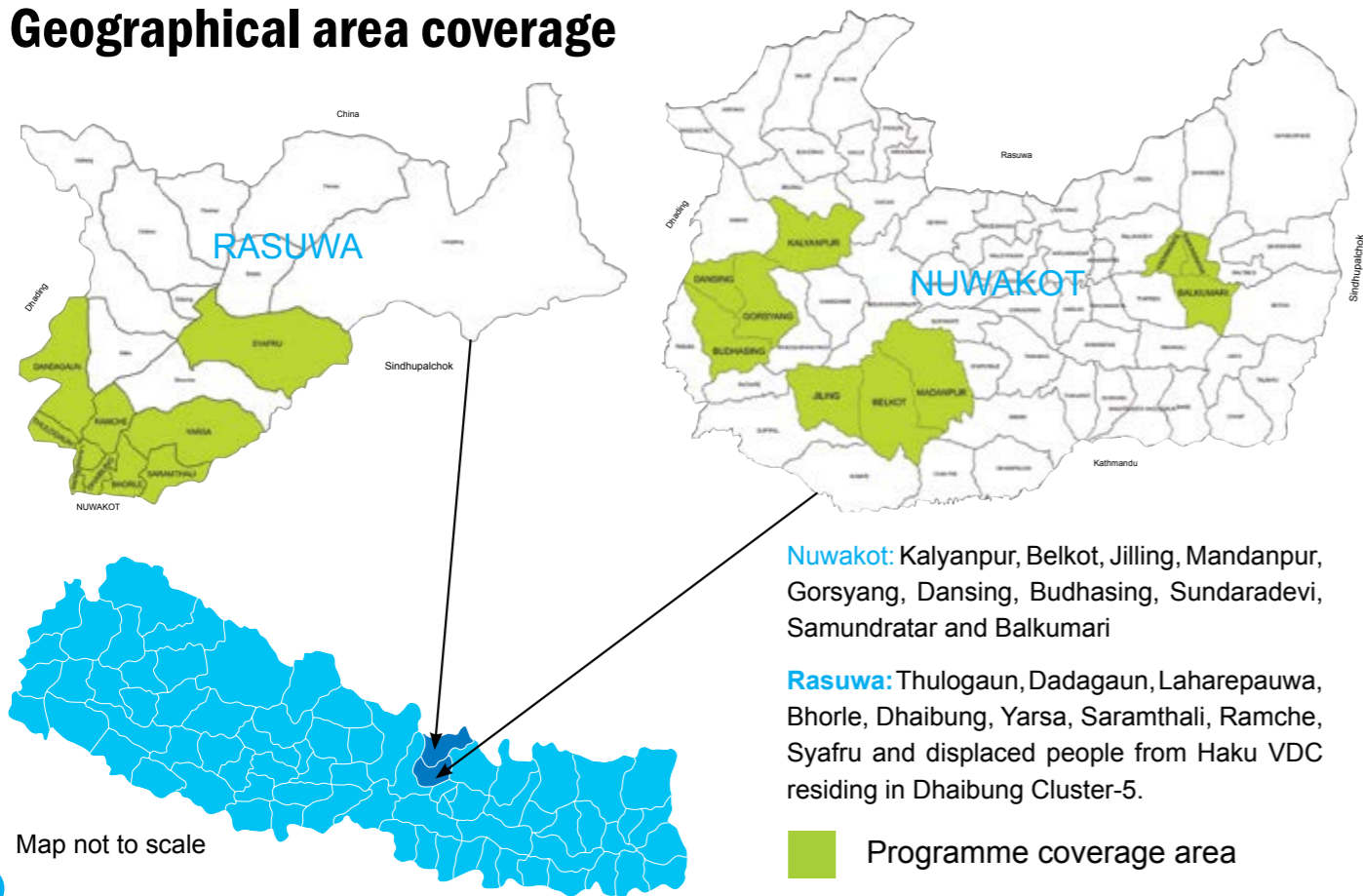


1,165 received technical skills training



About 11,000 children were able to resume their school

Geographical area coverage





Handing over chicks as capital support in Bidur, Nuwakot
(Photo Courtesy: EDSS)

The project adopted a mix of approaches of humanitarian assistance, entrepreneurship development and income-generating activities to help people revive their livelihoods. The project aimed at providing immediate support to beneficiaries to pursue their enterprises through entrepreneurship development trainings, quick technical skills, technology/equipment support and a startup capital. Startup capitals enabled beneficiaries to engage in income generating activities within the project period.

Given shorter implementation period and humanitarian support nature of the project, the target beneficiaries were provided one-day orientation on entrepreneurship development. Given the initial package of ILO approved Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training is seven-day long, this orientation only focused on orienting the target beneficiaries on how the project would help them revive their livelihoods.

About 40% (2,053) of the beneficiaries also received one-day psycho-social counseling. The counseling sessions were redesigned for one day in consultation with experts. The one-on-one/group counseling by trained psychosocial counselors helped the earthquake survivors cope with the trauma and psychosocial problems caused by the earthquake and hundreds of ensuing aftershocks.

As identified during the orientation on entrepreneurship development, 1,165 people received technical skills training to start new or revive existing enterprises.



Farmers in Ramche, Rasuwa have revived vegetable farming after receiving seeds support through the project.

(Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

Project Activities and Achievements

Following entrepreneurship development orientation and technical skills training, all the target beneficiaries were provided capital support of NPR 3,000-5000 (USD\$ 30-50). As many had lost seeds and irrigation infrastructures, the support was provided in the form of material support i.e. seeds, irrigation tanks and raw materials like bamboos for basket weaving, thread for woolen bags and sweater weaving, etc.

By the end of the project, altogether, 5,151 households from both the districts (Nuwakot: 2,626 and Rasuwa: 2,525) were provided with startup capital, equipment, tools, machineries and seeds and were able to revive or start their livelihoods and generate income. They were also provided with adoptable technologies that were easy to use, low on maintenance and easily available. These technologies were provided as per their enterprise's needs.

Likewise, the project also aimed to link 292 beneficiaries to financial institutions to start new or revive the existing enterprises. However, there was no progress in this regard due to short duration and humanitarian assistance nature of the project.

Community Infrastructures

The project also supported construction of 11 Common Facility Centers/economic infrastructures in the two districts. These facilities are disaster resilient and have helped poor people to run their business. Others were community infrastructures like agro-products collection center, dairy, etc. for collecting and selling their products.

Community Infrastructures Constructed



Collection Centre



Improved Blacksmiths Workshop

- 1** Chiraito Collection Centre
- 6** Agro-products Collection Centre
- 3** Improved Blacksmiths Workshop
- 1** Milk Collection Centre

A BLACKSMITHS WORKSHOP HELPS REVIVE LIVELIHOODS OF THE WHOLE VDC

The Bishwakarma Tol in Budhasing - 3 of Nuwakot served about 900 household of the whole VDC by repairing the agricultural tools. When the earthquake destroyed their houses and working places, their livelihoods was threatened. This had larger effects as the people of the VDC had to wait long to get their agricultural tools repaired which in turn threatened the livelihoods of a wider population.

This has now been solved after UNDP's



Gopilal Bishwakarma works with his son at a Blacksmiths workshop in Budhasing-3, constructed through the project support (Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

‘Supporting earthquake survivors in Nepal’ project supported by Intel Foundation helped the Dalit community to build the workshop building, and also supported with modern tools and equipment.

“The programme also provided us training to operate these modern tools. Now, with better skills we are more efficient and thus we have better income by using lesser resources and efforts”, says Lal Bahadur Bishwakarma, the Chairperson of the group who also donated land to build the workshop.

Gopikal Bishwakarma (pic) who alone serves about a hundred clients in the VDC said the support not only revived their livelihoods but also helped to make it more efficient in terms of labour as well as energy (charcoal) use.

Conclusion

The achievements can be broadly summarized under four headings:

Livelihoods recovery

For most of the beneficiaries the programme support was stimulus to restart their livelihoods. Even after a year of the earthquake, people were struggling to revive their livelihoods. Many were still looking for relief assistance which was certainly not coming forever. The project encouraged them to resume their livelihoods. Startup capitals along with supply of required tools and techniques supported quicker livelihood recovery within the project period.

A HELP IN NEED, IS A HELP INDEED!



Moi Tamang and others weaving bamboo baskets at temporary shelter in Laharepauwa-8, Gombodada, Rasuwa. (Photo Courtesy: SWAS Nepal)

Sixty six years old Moi Yalmo Tamang and her family were displaced by the earthquake of April 25, 2015. A resident of Haku VDC, Rasuwa, Moi, along with her husband, two daughters, and a granddaughter currently live in an Internally Displaced Camp at Laharepauwa VDC, Ward 8, Rasuwa.

Before the earthquake, Moi and her husband relied on their skills to weave bamboo baskets for their livelihood. However, the earthquake not only displaced them, it also barred them with resources that they could use to restart their livelihood. As a result, Moi, along with her family members were finding it difficult to make ends meet at the Camp.

With startup capital and material support from UNDP’s Rehabilitating Livelihoods of Earthquake Affected Survivors in Nepal project funded by Intel foundation, Moi and her husband now weave around 5 Dokos a day and sell at the local market. On an average day, the duo earn from Rs. 1,200 to Rs. 1,500 (\$12 to 15). Moi invests the earnings in buying additional bamboos; spend some for daily errands and save what remains.

Trauma healing

The programme was implemented in two districts most affected by the earthquake. Rasuwa had the highest death per capita and many villages had been totally destroyed. Whole settlements in Haku and Dandagaon VDCs were wiped out and many were threatened by the ensuing landslides. About 20% of the beneficiaries were also provided brief psychosocial counselling. These sessions, though customized to be very short, helped the survivors congregate and share their stories; and to cope with the trauma.

Infrastructure restoring

The project built eleven community infrastructures. These were instrumental in reviving the local market systems. In some cases, a single infrastructure could support the whole village development committee. In other cases, these infrastructures were giving hopes for the people to start livelihoods activities. In Madanpur VDC of Nuwakot, those not selling milk before earthquake had started selling milk after a dairy was set up through this project support.

BINDA REVIVES LIVELIHOODS

Binda Neupane lost her husband in the earthquake and was left to fend for herself when the sole bread-earner died. As many others, she got immediate relief supports but none for reviving her livelihoods. In these desperate times for a single woman, UNDP's 'Supporting earthquake survivors in Nepal' project supported by Intel Foundation reached out to her. The project supported minimal cost to revive her cowshed and started dairy farming. Now, she is one of those supplying largest amount of milk to dairy of Chhetrapal Livestock and Dairy Production group, set up with support from the same project.

Binda says, "The dairy has supported us a lot. If it were not here, women and children



Bindu working in the paddy field

(Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

will not be able to carry the milk all the way upto Belkot to sell. Now, we can supply the milk to the dairy which is a good source of livelihoods."

Bindu who also produces cereals through sharecropping, adds, "By selling milk to the dairy, I have been able to purchase everyday household goods and send children to school."

Contributing to larger national goals of food security and employment generation

The earthquake threatened the food security of the large populace. People could not start their farm activities for many reasons including trauma; the seeds were buried in the destroyed houses; people could not concentrate on farm activities as they had to queue for receiving relief supports, etc. Therefore, this project prioritized in getting people back to their farm. In addition to providing seeds, the project also supported them with basic technical skills and connected them with the service providers in the district. This has shown the potential that they can turn into commercial farmers; generate income for their families; create employment to other; and eventually contribute to country's national goals of food security and poverty alleviation.

SMALL SUPPORT PROPELS RASUWA INTO GINGER EXPORTING DISTRICT

For the last few years, the District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) had targeted to make Rasuwa a self-sufficient in ginger production. It had extensively promoted ginger farming in the district. These efforts were threatened after the earthquake affected about 90% houses in the district.

Now, in one and half years, however, Rasuwa is becoming not only self sufficient but ginger exporting district. The DADO had distributed 30,000 KGs of ginger seeds to over 2000 farmers, about half of which was through UNDP's 'Supporting earthquake survivors in Nepal' project supported by Intel Foundation. The project alone distributed 14,000 KGs of ginger seeds to 460 farmers.

The Chief of the DADO Ramesh Humagain said, "We have expanded ginger farming in 200 Ropanis of land this year alone."

According to DADO Rasuwa, the total area of ginger farming has gone up to 700 Ropanis and the output is expected to go up by 105,000 kgs and reach around 365,000 kgs.

"Given trauma and disturbance by earthquake, this is in no way a small feat. And UNDP's support was significant in this regard" Added Humagain.



Gyanu Paudel of Dhaibung - 8, Rasuwa planted 30 KGs of ginger seed provided by the project. She hopes to expand ginger farming in the coming season. (Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

Lessons Learnt

Partnership and Coordination

All proposed activities of the project were successfully implemented in both the districts. This can largely be attributed to the coordination that partner organizations maintained with the local and district level government agencies. It was also learnt that involving local stakeholders in project planning, implementation and joint monitoring was helpful in executing programme successfully.

The partner organization Enterprise Development Service Society which implemented programme in Nuwakot also closely coordinated with the District Micro Entrepreneurs' Groups Association (DMEGA), an umbrella organization of micro entrepreneurs in the district. Eventually, over 1,200 beneficiaries became affiliated with the DMEGA. This has paved way for these new members to receive sustainable enterprise development services through DMEGA. **It is particularly recommended that DMEGA reaches out to the Dalit community in Budhasing – 3 and help**

them turn their business from annual barter system to service for cash.

Coordination with DMEGA was lacking in Rasuwa. However, the partner organization Swift Awareness Society (SWAS) Nepal worked closely with the district-based government organizations and conducted technical skill training as well as technology support program in collaboration with Agriculture and Veterinary offices, Cottage and Small Industries Development Board, and District Development Committee. SWAS Nepal also collaborated with local NGOs such as Manekor Society Nepal, Nepal Agro-forestry Foundation (NAF) and local cooperative for building common facility centres. Despite small project support, this coordination helped build common facility centres as per the needs of the community. Through such partnership people received integrated service and also linkage between the beneficiaries and government agencies was established. This will help the beneficiaries receive services from government offices in the future.

In some cases, as the priorities of these organizations didn't match, the infrastructures are not supportive for people's livelihoods. For example, **a vegetable collection centre is constructed in Dhaibung – 4,**

Rasuwa in collaboration with NAF and the facility is largely useless as there are not many vegetable producers in the village. Further counseling and technical skills should be provided to the community to enable them to start vegetable farming at a commercial level and make use of the facility.

Long term impact

Though the support came in the form of post-disaster humanitarian support, the focus on livelihoods recovery has resulted into longer-term impactful interventions. While people were engaged in subsistence farming, the programme gave them basic technical skills and some exposure to market. Now, some of the beneficiaries are willing to start enterprises and produce in commercial level. They will require further support like business counseling and market linkages. This can be done through DMEGA in Nuwakot and as the project has ended, the DMEGA Rasuwa will have to itself reach out to these beneficiaries so that the potential entrepreneurs receive further business development services.

SMALL SUPPORT, BIG CHANGE



Dilaram Khanal (Left) checks nutrients in the milk as the milk seller Bachuram Gajurel looks on.

(Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

Madanpur VDC of Nuwakot district was very famous for dairy farming. About 100 families used to supply upto 780 litres of milk everyday and majority households was making livelihoods by selling milk. This changed after the earthquake of April 2015. Four members of the group lost their lives and many lost livestock too. Many were displaced.

However, UNDP's 'Supporting earthquake survivors in Nepal' project supported by Intel Foundation revived their hopes. It supported the construction of a new building and purchasing a 1000 litre chilling vat for the dairy.

Dilaram Khanal, the operator of the dairy says, "After the earthquake destroyed the dairy, people had to travel far to sell the milk. In my information, only four families went to Belkot to sell milk. After this dairy was set up in the village, many people have resumed selling milk. Now we have 29 families supplying milk to the dairy which will increase to 80 and cover ward no 5, 3 and 6."

Khanal adds that those who didn't sell milk earlier are also starting to supply milk to the dairy. "We have transportation problem that vehicles don't move everyday due to the dirt road. This dairy has given us great relief as the milk will not be spoilt even if we have to withhold it for many days."

Too little support for displaced people

The project provided uniform support to all the beneficiaries while also providing additional common facility centre support to the poorest and the most marginalized. This resulted in better social cohesion. However, the support was too little for the people displaced from their villages. The project supported those displaced from Haku and Dandagaon VDCs in Rasuwa who were living in temporary camps. They were provided short technical skills and capital support equivalent to Nrs. 3,000 (USD 30). As they had no other livelihood options, many enthusiastically engaged in income-generating activities. However, as they utilized raw materials bought/received through capital support, they could not immediately sell the produced goods. Thus, they were not able to reinvest in purchasing raw materials. Also, as their resettlement was undecided, they could not receive support to build common facility centres too. As the need to meet daily needs of the family was most pertinent, many beneficiaries have returned to wage-labour. If DMEGA or other organizations can reach out to them with buy-back guarantee, they are willing to continue the income-generating activities.

INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT

All 145 households from ward no. 7, 8 and 9 of Dandagaun VDC were displaced by the earthquake. The tragedy not only destroyed their households but also the subsequent landslides threatened the fate of the whole village.

They were housed in temporary shelter in Lahare – 1, Bogatetar, which to their dismay and thanks to the government's delayed response, is going to continue. Their biggest worry now, as the relief supports dwindle, after one and half years of the earthquake, is livelihood for 500 people still inhabiting the shelter.

UNDP's 'Supporting earthquake survivors in Nepal' project supported by Intel Foundation supported each of the families with some form of livelihoods support – training and startup capital for woolen bags and sweater weaving, poultry farming etc.

However, as they had no other means of livelihoods,

many chose to continue wage-labour that would support their immediate needs and hence very few are continuing the businesses that they were supported for.



Tulmaya Tamang weaving cotton bag at a temporary shelter for earthquake displaced people in Lahare – 1, Bogatetar, Rasuwa. (Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)

Less effective entrepreneurship development trainings

The beneficiaries were also provided orientation on entrepreneurship development and many of them also received technical skills training. The Entrepreneurship development training was a one-day orientation which was not enough to orient participants on basic concepts about market and starting businesses. However, some participants observed that this was important for trauma healing and instilling hopes to restart livelihoods.

Increased Social Cohesion

The fact that the project supported all the earthquake affected families has resulted into better social cohesion. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, every family had been affected in some ways. The programme tried to cover all the families in the settlements it reached. This gave the feeling to all the earthquake survivors that they have also been supported and hence the local leaders became the advocates of the project in many places.

TOGETHER FOR REVIVING LIVELIHOODS

Uddab KC, a local social worker in Budhasing – 3 who also received vegetable seeds through UNDP's 'Supporting earthquake survivors in Nepal' project supported by Intel Foundation is the ambassador of the programme in the whole VDC.

A retired armyman, KC himself helped the programme team to identify the needy households moving from house to house in the whole VDC. Eventually, the programme supported 500 out of 900 households in Budhasing VDC.

"Every family was in need of something to revive livelihoods. This programme supported families as per

their needs. Though the support was minimal, it gave us encouragement and hopes in traumatic times to restart livelihoods."

According to KC, the programme's intervention was also timely as it reached to needy communities when the relief support was withering and no livelihoods recovery support in sight.

This is resonated by another social worker Ram Mani Adhikari. Former VDC Chairperson, Adhikari also supported the programme intervention and continues to remain ardent supporter of the efforts.

Blacksmiths workshop - before



Blacksmiths workshop - after



A blacksmiths' workshop built through project support. Local social workers Uddab KC, Ram Mani Adhikari and Ramchandra Neupane observe the newly constructed facility.
(Photo: Indra Dhoj Kshetri/UNDP)