

GESI: Impact of Baliyo Ghar Program

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Sita's dream of earthquake safe house fulfilled

Kalinchok Rural Municipality, Ward No. 3, Lamidada, Dolakha



Sita Biswokarma is a farmer from a Dalit community who has been growing maize, millet and paddy in a small land plot that she owns in her village, as well as keeping goats and cattle. She also takes occasional work as a farm worker. When the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake struck, Sita was alone in the house working on the farm. Her husband was in Kathmandu where he was working as mason, and her three children were on the way to Charikot to attend their higher education examination. The family's two-storey house collapsed in the earthquake, but Sita managed to escape without injury. She was very anxious about her family but eventually managed to find out they were ok and in a safe place.

After spending the months after the earthquake living in temporary shelter, Sita and her family moved into their new home in April 2017. The house, which cost approximately 500,000 NPRs to build and took four months to complete, incorporates earthquake resistant materials and construction techniques. Sita feels that the new house provides safety and security and their lives have improved greatly after moving out of the temporary shelter and into their house. The extreme cold during winter and the rains during monsoon made life in the

temporary shelter very difficult. Sita received support throughout the reconstruction process from a mobile team from the Baliyo Ghar programme, implemented by the National Society for Earthquake Technology with funding from USAID.

Sita kept in touch with the mobile team of Baliyo Ghar for every step and feels she would have not been able to rebuild without this continuous support. So far Sita has received all the tranches of the Government of Nepal housing reconstruction grant. She takes great satisfaction in owning a home that she can feel confident is safe in the face of future earthquakes.

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Baliyo Ghar's OJT; A turning Point for Doma

Khartal Village, Bigu Rural Municipality, Ward No. 5, Chilankha, Dolakha

Doma Sherpa is one of the few girls in Khartal, a village of Bigu Rural Municipality-05, Chilankha Dolakha who remained unmarried in her age of 23. Neither of the pals of Doma can be found in their fathers' house. Early marriage is common in

for building an earthquake resilient home, but the main thing that she gained from the training was increased confidence. She said, "I even didn't use to speak at all with strangers before the OJT, but now I have learnt to speak too."

Doma's family is very pleased to have a trained mason in their own family and to have started rebuilding their home. Doma's mother, Chyangbuti Sherpa, felt that with having her own daughter as a trained mason she had the confidence to start rebuilding her house and feels confident that their new home will be earthquake resistant. She said, "We didn't dare to start rebuilding our house because we didn't have any idea about the earthquake resistant house but after the OJT training conducted near to us and having our own daughter one of the trained masons, confidence came to do it." Chyangbuti is now confident enough that their house would not collapse at all in future earthquakes.

Doma continues to manage her household chores alongside her masonry work on the family house, and managing the other masons. This includes collecting fire wood and cooking food for the workers and her family. Her heavy workload does not get her down and she is full of confidence for the future and looks forward to seeing the family home complete and a long career as a mason.

Chilankha but Doma has committed to marry only after she could earn her own by being engaged in some skilled works. She lives with her mother, her father died 7 years ago, in a temporary shelter as their home collapsed in the 2015 earthquake. In April 2017, Doma took part in a 50 days On-the Job Mason Training (OJT) provided by the Baliyo Ghar programme, implemented by the National Society for Earthquake Technology with funding from USAID.

Prior to completing the training Doma and her family had not been able to start rebuilding their home as there were no trained masons available and the conflicting rumors they heard about how to rebuild made them unsure about how to proceed. After completing the training, Doma felt confident about rebuilding her family home and in addition to herself the family has hired four more masons; two skilled and two unskilled. During the training Doma learnt the concepts and techniques



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"I am having a house, I never dreamed of"



It was a tough job to nourish her siblings for Sali Mijar from her early conjugal life, as her family owns very low economic strength. Her family's economic health hasn't improved yet instead she has been facing more problems in due course of her life. Amid several miseries, Baliyo Ghar Program has helped her fulfil at least one of her dreams.

Mrs. Sali Mijar a permanent resident of Likhu Rural Municipality -06, Thansingh. She got married at the age of 15. After 12 years of marriage her husband died of serious illness. Being a single women at her late twenties, she remained single for life and now she has crossed 65.

"As my two sons keep on growing I nearly forgot the pain of being widow. But again, ill-faith struck on me. One day my youngest son stroke sudden death," she describes her misfortune. Again, after two years of the death of youngest son, eldest son faced with heart problem. For his treatment she took NPR 300,000 loan from local money lender.

Son had to undergo heart surgery and operation was succeed. Sali thought that she won a great race to save her son's life as she had loosed her husband and youngest son.

But, the misfortune did not stop following her. Eldest son also passed away though served with series of treatment. "I did not know how I survived after that. Further, Gorkha earthquake collapsed our small house. Me with my grandsons and daughter in laws, stayed in temporary cottage for three years back," she said in despair.

Mrs. Mijar sustains her daily life through daily wages, some products cultivated in sloppy lands and cattle she raises invested by local landlord. At such situation, she had left dreaming to reconstruct the collapsed house. When Baliyo Ghar Program intervened in her locality to implement On-the Job Training (OJT), she saw the rays of hope in life. After a long coordination among the local authorities, ward office and Baliyo Ghar team, OJT was implemented in her house for 50 days producing 6 new masons. Those newly trained masons are expected to contribute in reconstructing other collapsed houses in Mrs. Mijar's locality.

"Thanks to ward office of Likhu Rural Municipality -06 and NSET's Baliyo Ghar program, they selected me to build my house through OJT. Furthermore, gratitude goes to USAID who provided support to Baliyo Ghar team to implement program in rural areas like ours. I am having home which I never dreamed I could have," she expressed her pleasing with smile.

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Amusing smile of Old Man casts a spell

With none in the family, one can imagine how 80



years old man Mr. Lato Tamang, a resident of Shivapuri Rural Municipality -03, Sikre, Nuwakot has spent his days and nights throughout years. Having problem in language and with his tongue-difficulties Mr. Tamang cannot make others understand what he says but one can derive the meaning looking at his gestures. Having spent miserable days and months, having spent unconducive climates Mr. Tamang no longer saw no days ahead in his favor after his house collapsed during Gorkha Earthquake. But now, he is planning to live a happy life after being under the roof of the quake safe house. He shows his fore finger with amusing smile and one understands he is indicating that he still has Rs. 1 Lakh (grant amount of 3rd tranche) to receive from government. His neighbors say, "He is astonished to save some thousand rupees which he plans to spend in the days to come."

Mrs. Tamang is alone in his house for more than 10 years. His only son had been to India 15 years back and his wife waited him for 5 years but when she couldn't welcome him back to the home, she eloped leaving 2 sons with their grandfather. Few years later, when the two grandsons were also taken to Gumba - Kathmandu by some of their relatives, then Mr. Tamang started his lonely life. He had a house surrounded by few square meters of land where he used to cultivate vegetation for his survival. But when the house got collapsed during 2015 Gorkha Earthquake, Thanks God! He

was saved, but his miseries mounted. After the devastating earthquake, he stayed in a poor temporary shelter for 3 years.

Baliyo Ghar Program has been implementing On the Job Training (OJT) in Mr. Tamang's village Sikre. After a series of discussion with ward committee and villagers, Tamang's house was chosen to implement OJT but Tamang had no money to start with. He just had the 50 thousands of first tranche. He was in need of more than 70 thousand rupees to collect construction material. But he could find none to provide loan. In initiation of mobile team of Baliyo Ghar, three villagers invested him with 20 thousand each and Baliyo Ghar began 50 days OJT in his house. He himself was involved in reconstructing his house. He forgot his old age in carrying stones with his old bare hands and carrying water with difficulties. After 50 days, Mr. Tamang's house was ready. During the course, he received the 2nd tranche of government grant and paid back the loan. He was astonished to pay back the loan and get his house ready to live in.

In the Mid-August of 2018, he deployed his relatives (trained masons) to construct toilet so that he could easily get 3rd tranche of government grant. When he remembers 1 lakh rupees still to get he raises his fore fingers and says 1 still to come with amusing smile. His overwhelming gestures shows he has forgotten all his miseries and plans to live happily hereafter.



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Baliyo Ghar helps a depressed young boy transform his life



When Gorkha Earthquake struck entire central region of country in April 25, 2015, Mr. Krishna Prasad Dhungana had just sat for lunch (morning meal) in the ground floor of his house at Jogidada of erstwhile Khalte VDC of Dhading District. His mother was serving food to him and his father was about to take meal. As soon as the ground shaking started, young and agile Mr. Dhungana promptly went out of door. However, his father and mother could not do so. As the house caved in, they crushed to death by the debris and the wreckage of the house.

Mr. Krishna Dhungana (21) of Khalte-Jogidada of Dhading peeking through window of his newly built house

“As I rushed to outside of the house, I thought my parents would also follow me. But they didn’t do so and died instantly as the collapsed house buried them,” Mr. Dhungana narrated. He assumes that his parents might have thought that the shaking would be lighter one, at least not as devastating as it turned out to be. Although, he rushed to outside of house and managed to save his life, but could not escape unhurt. He too sustained injuries in his leg. Mr. Dhungana, second child of his parent, was just 18 and had just completed schooling of plus 2 level at the time of earthquake. The earthquake brought a grave consequences in Dhungana’s family and his personal life as he lost his both the parents. Obviously he turned orphan, but also lost his hope of future too. Prior to the incident, his life was completely dependent on his deceased parents. His educational journey got derailed. The agony of losing parents inflicted him depression and mental problems too.

Returned village, rebuilt house

After concluding the 13-day rituals of his deceased parents, Mr. Dhungana left village and went to Kathmandu and elsewhere. After living almost two years outside of village, Mr. Dhungana returned village for 2074 Dashain. NSET/ Baliyo Ghar Program was assisting villagers in providing technical assistance to reconstruction of earthquake flattened houses in the village. Mr. Dhungana’s elder sister requested Baliyo Ghar program for assistance in rebuilding house of her brother as part of OJT. The ward office and elected ward representatives also unanimously recommended his name for the OJT considering his’s case.

NSET - Baliyo Ghar program began the reconstruction of his house from last week of month of December 2017 as part of 50-day OJT. Mr. Dhaungana also involved in the reconstruction process as trainee mason. However, he had to play dual role; collecting all the construction materials and participate in the construction work. He, however, managed it successfully. “I would not have able to reconstruct new house, had NSET/Baliyo Ghar program not helped me,” Mr. Dhungana said.

Planning to marry and live happily hereafter

After the death of his parents, he has been living his life alone. In order to kill the loneliness, Mr. Dhungana is thinking to wed in near future and live rest of the life with his wife in the house. He has also made his mind that he would not go elsewhere to seek jobs but to live in the village. “Despite the fact that I am a single, I have built two-room house as I am thinking to wed very soon,” he said.



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Struggle of Single Women in Rebuilding her Home



Mrs. Sabitri Darji in front of her temporary shelter

Often, the progress of reconstruction is measured with counting the number of households rebuilt, but few go in depth that how the beneficiaries came to rebuild their houses. Were they able to build their house properly and easily? No, definitely there are many hurdles and problems they had to face. Specifically, the households with low income, single women headed family, vulnerable groups have gone through miseries to rebuild their dream house. They have faced problems like; land registration, lack of money, rate increment of construction materials, tedious process in receiving first, second and third tranches of government grant and lack of trained and local masons for reconstruction. Due to these reasons earthquake affected people are unable to reconstruct their house in time or if they are having their house rebuilt, their stories hits the heart. Mrs. Sabitri Darji, resident of Kageshwori Manahara Municipality ward -1 Gagalfedi is one of them.

Mrs. Darji, a single woman aged 50, lives in temporary shelter at Saraswoti Tole of Gagalfedi with her 3 children. She involves herself stitching the clothes of villagers to survive and better life for her children. Her misfortune, in time interval of 5 years she coped with 3 consequent mishaps in her family. 5 years ago her husband died, later her daughter's hand got fractured and at the very beginning of 2072 B.S. she lost her house in Gorkha Earthquake.

Regardless of many problems she is the first beneficiaries in Gagalfedi, who is constructing loadbearing house and again went through difficulties. When she started the excavation she asked her neighbor to help her put mud inside of underground but they denied, no one came to help her. Neither had she received loan citing she couldn't pay back. Being disheartened she took a loan from woman's group and relatives. The price hike in construction materials made her more deplorable. With the tears in her eyes she says, "Now the house is about to complete, it's time to pay all money to contractor and also shopkeeper who provided construction materials but I don't have enough money to pay."

She shares, a strong house meant a lot for her family. "I really need a house for my children, if I could complete my house my dream would be fulfilled. But I often remember of my loan which makes me cry."

She is happy to receive technical support from the very beginning she started her house rebuilt. "Had not I received the support of Baliyo Ghar I wouldn't be encouraged to build a house, I wouldn't be able to follow government guidelines and couldn't receive grants. Loan would be paid back. Now my son shouldn't have to suffer like me," she expressed.



Mrs. Sabitri with her daughters in front of her under construction home