

Case Story: Thank you Homeowner Support Project

In April 2015, on what would have been a regular day in Chisapani, Bir Bahadur Majhi felt the earth shake, heard loud scream of people all around and saw his own home slather in dust and debris. He was gutted with the scene around him and instantly looked out for his family wellbeing. He saw his wife and children crying with terror. His wife screamed with rage, "God showed no mercy for the poor people like us. He shattered our beautiful home and life." Bir Bahadur consoled his family and joined the local in safer place.



Days and week passed as Bir Bahadur and his family lived in utter misery. He managed some sheets form the relief package and build a temporary shade for shelter. The following season of rain, wind and cold, fear of snake and insect added despair in livelihood under temporary shelter. He could not withstand the dreaded life and decided to build a new home.

He had heard of the reconstruction grant in news and talks at teashop. He seeked for financial and technical assistance from government and partners but have not had been any legislation on reconstruction grant back then. He was exhausted with the daily stretch to governmental office for assistance and decided to build home on his own. He bought some loan and started construction with the reliability on local mason to build earthquake resilient home. The construction work was completed within a month.

With the formation of NRA and appointment of ward engineer in Chisapani, he asked for ward engineer for inspection of his home and approval of subsequent tranche. Upon request for 3 times, ward engineer inspected his homes and stated the construction is not as per guideline and unfeasible for tranche approval. He was is in deep shock. The gurgling of his loaner echoed his hollow mind when he realized he would not be receiving any grant.

One day, the team of Homeowner Support Project visit his house during the assessment of reconstruction status in Chisapani. He mumbled his story with exhaustion to the team. The team coordinated with ward engineer for re-inspection of home up to plinth level for approval of second tranche. The ward engineer approved the second installment and states the construction should be corrected to received last tranche. Bir Bahadur received second tranche, paid his debt and thanked project for effective coordination.

However, it is very unlikely and unpractical for him to adopt corrective measures in his constructed home to receive last installment. He is one of the many victims of unclear and irresponsible provision on housing reconstruction from the government.



HOMEOWNER SUPPORT PROJECT RAMECHHAP

Success Story: On-the-job training imparts skills to local masons

A local resident at Kathajor-3, Jhaku Singh Bishworkarma, aged 45 years, has been working as a mason for the past 15 years. He is proud to have constructed 100 houses during this period. He is understandably a highly reputed mason in his locality and is able to support his family with his earnings.

The day of the earthquake, April 15, changed all. He saw his own family, livestock and his house fall in front of his own eyes. He saw

terror rise among his people with the death of his relatives, and the piles of debris of houses and shelters like that of ash. He saw his work fall down in front of his own eyes. He saw himself failing as a mason too. It then struck him how important it was to build safer earthquake resilient buildings.

After earthquake, he looked out for the trainings on earthquake resilient techniques. He was desperate to learn new construction techniques. He heard on the news that many masons were being trained, after the earthquake. Unfortunately, there were no such trainings in his locality. Then, he met Bhesh Bahadur Khadka, Master Mason working with the Homeowner Support Project in Kathajor. Jhaku was working for the homeowner where the project team was providing technical support.

Bhesh, the Master Mason from our project, was orienting the working masons on bonding of the stones. He saw that this is what he needed: a good teacher to learn construction technique of the modern day. He sat with Bhesh and shared his curiosity. The project team oriented him on the earthquake resilient construction techniques over the house construction period and he paid attention on the minute details. He honed his skills, and enhanced his capacity. He called the Homeowner Support Project team when in doubt. He completed three homes under proper guidance of the project team. Now, Jhaku is a happy mason having built 20 earthquake resilient houses, all houses approved by the ward engineer. He appreciates the project support which helped him to transform to a qualified mason able to build government approved safer homes.

