CHOKGYUR LINGPA FOUNDATION

Earthquake Relief

Nepal 2015

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Cover: Majuwa village in Nagarjuna municipality, Kathmandu district.
All 72 houses made of stone and mud were damaged by the earthquake.

Nepal 2015

Introduction

Saturday 25 April 2015 was sunny and warm and most people were outside simply going about their business. At 11:56 a.m. Nepal suffered a magnitude 7.8 earthquake centered on the area of Gorkha. A huge cloud of dust obscured the capital Kathmandu as houses, offices and monuments cracked and fell. As it cleared the news began to spread of the damage throughout the country. Lama Nhono at Ka Nying Shedrub Ling (the White Gompa) was one of the first to hear news from his village, one of the many that had suffered enormous destruction from collapse and landslides. With great sadness he told Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche of the death of his mother and the suffering in his village, a story shared again and again by so many.

Rinpoche and the monks took immediate action. Motorbikes and vehicles were sent out to see what damage had been done and what help was needed. Emails and phone calls from many supporters offering help of all kinds were flooding in and that help was mobilised; money was collected, medicines, tarpaulins and tents for emergency shelter purchased. Within two days a dedicated website was up and running, sharing news of what was needed and what was being done.

Our emergency HQ was set up in Ka Nying Shedrub Ling where volunteers, survivors of the earthquake wanting to help, began to

Lama Buchung loading the jeep with 30kg sacks of rice and lentils. Kathmandu, Boudha, Relief Office.

assemble. The first blankets, shelter, medicines and food were being distributed within 24 hours of the first earthquake and volunteers were helping the injured and seeking out those who had no support. A second earthquake and continuing aftershocks brought increasing casualties and more people made homeless. The relief effort continued without a break.

Once emergency shelter and food needs were met, thoughts turned to the impending monsoon. Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche commissioned tons of corrugated iron sheets – jasta- from manufacturers and was able to get an excellent price for quality materials. These sheets were taken far and wide to places of the greatest need so that plastic tents could be replaced by more substantial temporary shelter. Homes, schools and temples – whatever communities identified as their priorities – the team has tried to help. Families and individuals, from the very young to the very old, have all been part of the relief effort.

That effort continues to this day. The final toll has 8800 dead and many families made homeless.

At the very heart of everything that has been accomplished has been the ineffable blessings and protection of our spiritual leaders, all the revered Rinpoches at Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery. We have been inspired and delighted by the fearless compassion of our monks acting tirelessly and without hesitation. We are awed by the resourcefulness and unrelenting commitment of our volunteer doctors, medics, nurses, interpreters and drivers, who were focused on the plight of the victims above any care for themselves. The commitment and devotion of the lay volunteers, both Nepalese and foreign, was impressive to see. Ignoring their own fear they cheerfully worked shoulder to shoulder with our monks to serve the seemingly endless stream of victims coming to our office requesting aid and assistance.

But all our efforts here on the ground were only made possible by the vast and continuing generosity of all those who have supported our work. We are blessed indeed to have such friends and patrons. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and sincerely thank all our individual & group donors, NGOs and foundations supporting us from worldwide for this relief work.

Lastly, with utmost sincerity and humility, we express our gratitude to the proud and strong Nepalese survivors of these earthquakes. It is in concert with their courage and strength that we are able to practice compassion, loving kindness, generosity, patience and wisdom, and relearn the simple universal truths of impermanence, death, and selflessness.

May all be auspicious, Sarva Mangalam.

Children on the ruins of their village. Nawalpur, Sindupalchok.

One of the ruined houses in Sindupalchok district.

Above: villagers on the ruins of their houses; Nawalpur, Sindhupalchok.
Opposite page: having lost their homes, people need to cook outdoors over wood fires; Nawalpur, Sindupalchok.

On the ruins of the village. CGLF volunteers survey the places estimating the damage and help needed with rebuilding. Nawalpur, Sindupalchok.

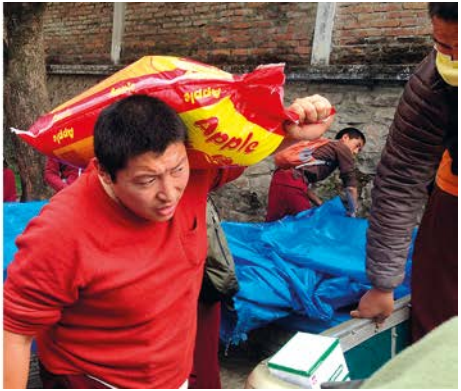
Nawalpur, Sindupalchok.

Top left: villagers demolishing damaged house. Above: one of the damaged buildings. Left: one of the earthquake survivors; numerous aftershocks added more stress.

Rasuwa lady clearing the debris of her collapsed house. Chilime, Rasuwa.

Grieving the loss of family, friends and home.
Nawalpur, Sindupalchok.

First response



After our first few days in tents CLF volunteers known as 'the ground team' slept in the office next to the communal kitchen where monks and volunteers cooked each day for few hundreds of monks, nuns lay helpers and homeless families camping in the monastery grounds.

"By 8am there would already be a queue of people waiting to tell us their stories and what they needed. We recorded every request, and then sent scouts to check the situation. Some went a few yards up the road, others drove motorbikes up blocked and rutted tacks for hours into the mountains. It rained a lot and the roads were treacherous with wet mud. While the scouts were out we were scouring the city for tents, tarps and supplies - rice, oil, salt, lentils, noodles and medicines. We sorted and packed and labelled, loading and unloading in the dark so that jeeps could set off at first light. We stopped around nine o'clock each night, joining the queue for dinner then falling into our sleeping bags sometimes too tired to notice the aftershocks.

"Our first deliveries were made two days after the first earthquake. We had a huge map which showed where we had been and where we were planning to go, which roads were open and which were blocked by landslides. Kathmandu, Pharphing, Chapagaon, Sindapulchowk, Melamchi, Hylomo, Kavre – everywhere we knew there were problems – and every day the list got longer.

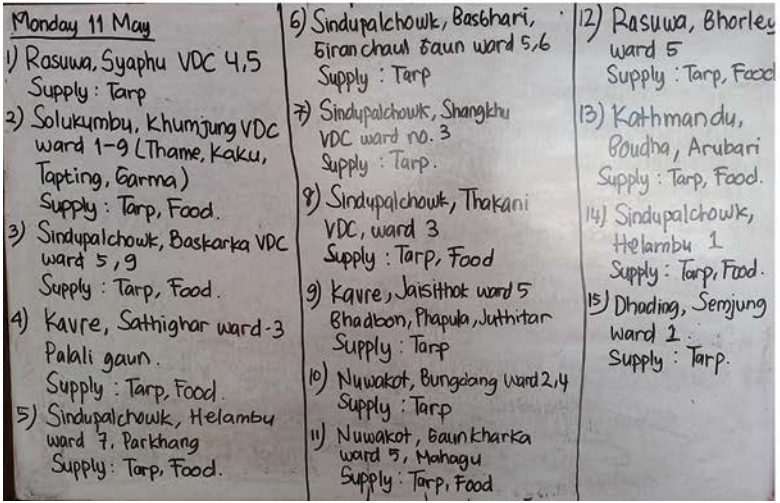
"Rinpoche was everywhere, carrying sacks, talking to survivors, dealing with suppliers, encouraging volunteers, planning, fundraising and going out to see for himself what was going on."

Monks loading the car with tarps and food supplies of rice and lentils. Kathmandu, Boudha, Relief Office.

Kathmandu, Boudha, Relief Office.

Left: earthquake Reilef Office in Boudha, in the grounds of Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery. Right: stock of food supplies at the earthquake relief office ready to be sent to earthquake affected areas. Opposite page: the monks help to pack rice to distribute to individual families.

A triage system was set up to best aid the increasing number of locals coming to HQ for help. Left: Didi Putali reporting the destruction in her village in Nuwakot. Left: whiteboard detailing the days relief activities. Right: Pragya taking detailed report to send help.



Monday 11 May

1) Rasuwa, Syaphu VDC 4,5
Supply : Tarp

2) Solukumbu, Khumjung VDC ward 1-9 (Thame, Kaku, Tapting, Garma)
Supply : Tarp, Food.

3) Sindupalchowk, Baskarka VDC ward 5, 9
Supply : Tarp, Food.

4) Kavre, Sathighar ward-3 Palali gaun.
Supply : Tarp, Food.

5) Sindupalchowk, Helambu ward 7, Parkhang
Supply : Tarp, Food.

6) Sindupalchowk, Basbhari, Biranchaul Gaun ward 5,6
Supply : Tarp

7) Sindupalchowk, Shangkhu VDC ward no. 3
Supply : Tarp.

8) Sindupalchowk, Thakani VDC, ward 3
Supply : Tarp, Food

9) Kavre, Jaisithok ward 5 Bhadbon, Phapula, Juthitar
Supply : Tarp

10) Nuwakot, Bungdang ward 2,4
Supply : Tarp

11) Nuwakot, Gaunkharka ward 5, Mahagu
Supply : Tarp, Food

12) Rasuwa, Bhorley ward 5
Supply : Tarp, Food

13) Kathmandu, Boudha, Arubari
Supply : Tarp, Food.

14) Sindupalchowk, Helambu 1
Supply : Tarp, Food.

15) Dhading, Semjung ward 1.
Supply : Tarp.

Below: Phakchok Rinpoche receiving support and guidance from Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche and Khyentse Yangsi Rinpoche (sitting) at the Relief Office. Right: Chokling Rinpoche leads a ritual ceremony as a part of the reconstruction process of Boudhanath Stupa, which was also damaged by the earthquake. Kathmandu, Boudha.

Kathmandu, Boudha, Relief Office.

Left: CGLF relief activities were covered by various media. Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche explaining the progress of CGLF's relief efforts to one of the TV stations from Latin America.
Right: monks unloading new supplies of rice and lentils.

Kathmandu, Boudha, Kavre.

Top left: some victims came directly to our relief office to collect needed supplies. Above left: our monks in blue CGLF T-shirts take time from their monastic activities to help. Right: nun Jangchub Drolma from Nagi Gonpa helps distribute rice to the people of her village in Kavre.

SILPAULIN
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SILPAULIN

Kathmandu, Boudha, Relief Office.

Opposite page: after the earthquake tarpaulins and tents were among the most needed items; new arrival of about 6000 pieces of tarpaulins from Siliguri, India. In total 11,160 tarps and tents were distributed during the first relief phase and 302 more distributed in the second phase. Above: Samten, one of the volunteers, tirelessly counting and packing the tarpaulins in the rain.

This population of very poor people in Salintar village appreciates the help given after most of their houses were destroyed in the earthquake. Champi district, Lalitpur.

Villagers in Chapagaon district receiving food supplies. Itahiti, Daragaun.

Earthquake survivors showing gratitude when receiving food supplies. Sindupalchok.

Compassion in action. Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche along with volunteers offering food to survivors in Sunkhani, Sindhupalchowk.

Medical

Far left: CGLF volunteers giving treatment to earthquake victim in a remote mountain area; this old woman was found with numerous fractures of her limbs. She stayed like this for two weeks before aid arrived; Bagam, Sindupalchok. Left: Dr. John from Canada giving medical attention to the villages in Badegaun, Sindhupalchowk; a man with serious leg injury was taken down to a hospital in Kathmandu.

"What I remember even now, six months on, is the smell, like roasted meat. In one village everyone sat dazed and still, too stunned to dig out their dead. We told them how important it was to cremate the bodies but in those first few days it was all too much. When we came back through the village four days later things had begun to improve. When we arrived people were so happy to see us – at last someone had come from outside and they weren't alone anymore. We saw broken bones and wounds that hadn't been treated at all and become infected. Helicopters were taking the worst injuries down to Kathmandu. In the beginning there was so much to do we hardly slept. When we did it was in the back of the truck or on the ground outside sometimes with plastic, sometimes not. But it didn't matter because we were so tired."

"Aside from fractures and injuries from digging through the rubble, we saw people in pain, with fevers, skin disease and multiple abscesses, digestive problems and diarrhoea, and of course, psychological trauma. We had medicines and bandages to share and we were able to leave some with the local nurses whose tiny clinics had been destroyed."

Volunteer first-aider Lana was among the first of our team to reach villages in Hyolmo.
Here she helps a seriously wounded survivor to the helicopter bound for hospital in Kathmandu.

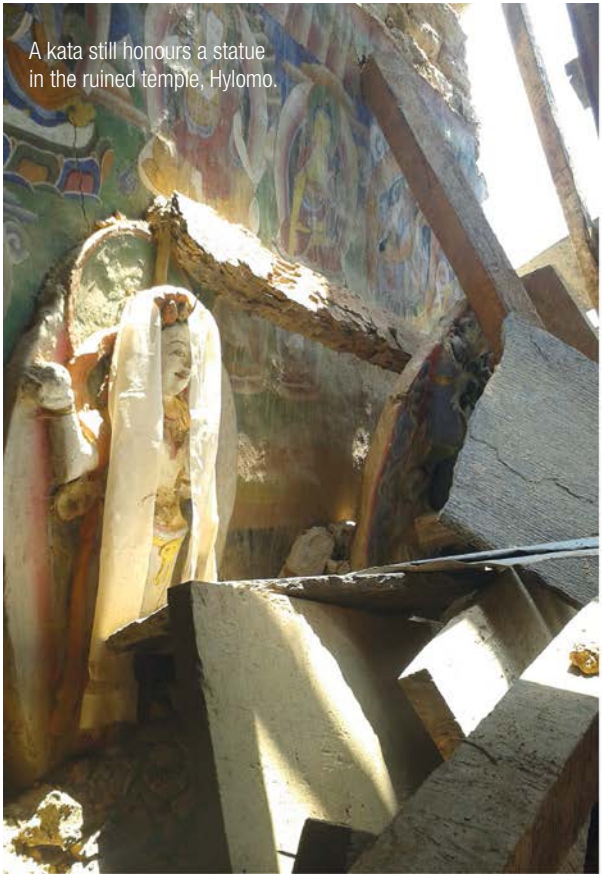
Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche hears from one of the 54 small monks of Pal Do-Ngak Nyida Mindrol Norbuling Monastery Chapagaon. They were all shocked – but unharmed.

First aid training

Few of our monks and volunteers had first aid skills then, and very few of the villagers in the places we visited knew what to do with wounds and injuries in the aftermath of the earthquake. We resolved to put that right! Five nurses from Singapore came to help. “We learnt how to treat different kinds of injuries – small cuts, deep wounds, sprains and fractures, what to do before doctor arrives, how to use bandages and how to evacuate an injured person to a safe place” Prajwal Shakya, manager of Vajra Varahi clinic told us. “People from different villages who came for the training will convey this knowledge to people in their own places. So lots of people can benefit from that”. First-aid trainings were conducted in Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery, Nagi Gonpa nunnery, Riwoche Monastery, Vajra Varahi Healthcare clinic in Chapagaon (for clinic staff and monks of Pal Do-Ngak Nyida Mindrol Norbuling monastery).

Left: lay people join the first aid training together with the monks. Top right: Nagi Gonpa’s nuns also train in first aid. Bottom right: Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling monks receive first aid training.

Monasteries' support



A kata still honours a statue in the ruined temple, Hylomo.

In his relief activities Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche supported not only villagers but also the monasteries and temples – both the cultural heritage and the very heart of spiritual life of local communities. Many monasteries and temples were badly damaged or completely destroyed by the earthquake. They received donations and tin sheets from CGLF to support the rebuilding and preservation of sacred objects such as statues, texts and other religious articles.

Once a year all villagers used to gather in this gompa in Melamchigaon village, built in 1932, to practice 'Nyugne'. Activities included fasting and silence, and prayers to the Buddha of Compassion to increase positive energies, the causes for happiness and harmony. Now the temple is totally destroyed.

Tibetan refugees having lost their homes, camping in an unfinished building. Tibetan Refugee Center, Boudha.

Boudha Stupa, 2nd June

Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche leads the Marme Monlam at Boudhanath Stupa, making aspirations for all the earthquake victims. Answering the call to mark Saga Dawa, the passing into paranirvana of Lord Buddha, thousands met to pray together or to cicumambulate the great stupas of Boudhanath and Swayambunath. From a simple shrine amid the forest trees to a back room, from monasteries to outdoors at one of oldest Buddhist shrines in the Kathmandu Valley, monks, nuns and lay people gathered to pay their respects to survivors and victims of the Nepal earthquakes. Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche led monks and nuns from Ka-nying Shedrub Ling, Pal Do-Ngak Nyida Mindrol Norbuling, Riwoche monastery, and Nagi Gonpa down to the Great Stupa of Boudhanath. Before long, a thousand candles slowly circled the stupa which sat radiant, as if the full moon itself had settled on the kora (circumambulation path). This was a time of remembering and renewal. Of quiet reflection, of prayers. Of joy and of sharing. All over Nepal, in the villages CGLF has supported, and all over the world our friends and supporters were united in this moment of reflection and solidarity from their own spiritual heart.

Daman, Makwanpur.

Opposite page: Small temple built in 1966 by Lama Rigdzin from Eastern Bhutan near holy Guru Rinpoche's site – Chumig Jangchub (Spring of Enlightenment). Above: The CGLF ground team with members from seven different countries bring a donation to help rebuild the Chumig Jangchub retreat place. Above right: Lama Rigdzin, 89 years old, caretaker of the temple and retreat place at the pilgrimage site Chumi Changchub.

This wrathful deity statue survives the earthquake inside the destroyed monastery in Manekharka, where medicine, tarpaulines and food were sent just days after the first earthquake. Manekharka, Sindhupalchok.

Top: Sangak Phuntsok Urgyen Choling Gompa; the temple is broken, but statues are intact. Right: Urgyen Choling Gompa destroyed by the earthquake. Sermatang, Hyolmo.

Forty-ninth day

Saturday June 13th heralded the 49th day after the April 25th earthquake. This anniversary is deeply significant to Buddhists who had lost friends and family in the disaster and it prompted a special invitation. A group of village lamas led by Sarki Lama asked Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche to Sermathang village in Helambu to give a teaching and do a puja for local temples.'Helambu' and 'Hyolmo' are synonymous for the same area in Sindhupalchok district; Helambu is the official name, Hyolmo an historical name found in old Buddhist texts and used by local people today, it's a special area, blessed by Guru Rinpoche to be an auspicious place for Buddhist practitioners. Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche together with the Earthquake Relief Team visited several villages (Sermathang, Tarkegyang, retreat center Drubpadrong, Darkpuk Senge Dzong), performing pujas and distributing warm clothes, blankets and donations. In Sermathang village Rinpoche gave a teaching and spiritual advice to lift the spirits of listeners.

Giving help to damaged Shugenchey Stupa, where the land cracked open. Shugenchey, Hyolmo.

Above: Lee San makes an offering to Meme Ngawang Rinpoche to rebuild the monastery at Drubpadrong retreat center. Right: Distributing warm clothes and blankets to villagers at Tarkegyang, Hylomo (above) and among families of Drakpuk Senge Dzong and Puksa villages (below).

Sharing warm clothes to face the winter in Drakpuk Senge Dzong and Puksa villages; Milarepa Cave, Hyolmo. Right: Sharing winter jackets – and love in Tarkegyang village, Hyolmo.

Sangak Phuntsok Urgyen Choling Gompa: the temple is broken, but statues are intact. Sermatang, Hyolmo.

Travel

"On some trips we walked for ten hours a day from place to place, seeing the damage and delivering supplies. Many of the villages are far away from the road, as much as 8 hours walk – but of course the landslides made the situation much worse. One day a road would be clear, the next it would be impassable. We would have to unload the truck and put everything on smaller jeeps or carry things by hand. Sometimes machines would come and clear the road, sometimes villagers would be digging with tools from the fields and even by hand. Sometime we waited for hours but got through in the end, sometimes the road couldn't be cleared at all. Walking across or around the landslides was scary and difficult but there was no choice. What mattered was reaching people stranded for days without help, sleeping outside without shelter or struggling on without food."

Left: huge landslide on the way to Milarepa's Cave in Helambu, Hyolmo. Above: Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche and earthquake relief team crossing the landslide area to go to Drakpuk Senge Dzong (Milarepa's cave).

The new road from Chilime to Tatopani with its' hairpin bends – one of the challenges teams faced delivering tin sheets to remote mountain villages.

This private helicopter, sponsored by one of our donors, brought tarpaulines and food supplies to a remote village of Nubri high in the Manaslu region of the Himalayas. While all houses were destroyed, of the 315 villagers, only one person died. Nubri, Gorkha.

To deliver tin sheets to remote mountain villages unreachable by road, CGLF collaborated with World Food Programme (WFP) to send helicopters. Tarkegyang, Hyolmo.

Jasta

Left: villagers showing appreciation to Jigme for the tin sheets that will allow them to rebuild their homes; Kharka, Hyolmo.
Right: delivering tin sheets to Kharka village in Hyolmo.

"Every sheet of jasta weighs 9.3kg. It was incredible to see a line of people walking through the fields with anything from one to four sheets strapped to their heads. When we arrived whole villages - men, women and children - would be waiting by the road for the truck. Everyone would help unload – but you have to be careful, it's easy to get cut. We shared out the jasta with the help of the village development committee, then everyone loaded up and set off back up the hill to the village. Sometimes we had raincoats and spare clothes to give out as well. The walk home could be four or five hours. In most case we were able to deliver jasta before the rains really began."

"My family were lucky to be able to stay in a storeroom at the school for a couple of weeks – but it was very crowded for eleven of us and my baby kept us all awake. When we had jasta we could make a bigger temporary house for us all on one of our fields. We had space to hang mosquito nets and to store the things we had saved from the house, and our food. We could use the toilet of our old house, and we could cook in the rubble of the house too and life became so much easier. We were so lucky."

Villagers carrying tin sheets from Chilime up to Tatopani village, where the truck couldn't reach. Chilime, Rasuwa.

Left: old woman takes a few minutes rest from carrying three tin sheets, almost 30kg! Chilime, Rasuwa.
Right: houses built with bamboo and the tin sheets delivered by our team.

The truck carrying tin sheets couldn't reach Pangtang, so the villagers themselves needed to carry sheets through the river and walk at least 5 hours to the village.

Left: Mebu in her hut. Above: exterior of Mebu's solitary hut.

Mebu

"We discovered Mebu living alone on the edge of the village. You can hardly see her hut in the ferns and everyone else had missed her. Her hut is very small, just one room. It was really cold inside because the rain had put out her fire. Ther was no water or firewood inside. Mebu is ninety three years old and has no family in the village. She said to us "I'm old now, not feeling well. I cannot walk like before, I cannot hear and see properly."

"So we covered the leaky bamboo and thatch roof with tarpaulin and stacked firewood within easy reach. We left building materials and tools – jasta, wood planks, hammers, nails, wires, and a wood saw and villagers promised to make permanent repairs. They have done that and now Mebus fire burns every day."

Saimon, Sanu, Supriti, Kriti and Pritika in front of the Art Therapy Tent

Sitapaila, Kathmandu

After the earthquake teacher Kiran Karjit was sharing shelter together with families recently arrived in Katmandu from mountain villages that were completely destroyed. "As I stayed with these families I noticed how the children were scared. I realised that the children sharing our shelter were showing all the symptoms of trauma I had learnt about – for example being scared and naughty and having difficulties in concentrating." So Kiran put up a separate tent where children from the neighborhood could come and play. "After two months of playing in the tent they have begun to play joyfully again, sharing and helping each other, being more disciplined." CGLF provided tin sheets to built a long-lasting hut for this art-therapy project.

Supplies distribution

CGLF volunteer Kaleb helping distribute clothes and food supplies sent from abroad to Itahiti villagers. Itahiti, Chapagaon.

Sanagaun villagers, mainly blacksmiths, also received relief supplies. Sanagaun, Chapagaon.

Ling Ling, Rasuwa

Ling Ling and Briddim villages are situated on the hills above the main road going across Rasuwa district to the Tibetan border. Unpaved roads go up to the villages, which our jeep loaded with supplies for the villagers and the truck loaded with tin for the temples were not able to travel because of the monsoon and landslides. So the villagers came down to the main road to meet us, collect warm clothes, blankets and food supplies and carry them back home. Distribution was very well organized with the help of local people, and villagers were really happy with the aid they've received.

Above: Ling Ling villagers living in poor conditions, appreciate the help given.
Right: Ling Ling villagers carrying up the supplies to their village.

Above: Briddim villagers also came to receive help.
Right: Lopön Urgyen Dorje helps bring blankets, warm clothes and food supplies to the families in Ling Ling.

Disabled Rehabilitation Center, Kathmandu.

Top left: mistreated in the past, Gita now enjoys the care of the Disabled Rehabilitation Center (DRC) staff members. Left: children and staff of DRC express their appreciation for the clothes and food sent by donors abroad. Above: children of DRC happily wearing the new t-shirts.

CGLF team with the children and staff in front of Yamuna Children's Home where CGLF also distributed donated clothes and food supplies. Kathmandu.

Lopon Urgyen Dorje, Kuenga and Mahendra with children from Yamuna Children's Home. Kathmandu.

Farmers in Itahiti village express their gratitude for the relief supplies and aid; Itahiti, Chapagaon.

Above: our volunteer Lily receives an appreciation letter from Prakash Man Singh, Vice Prime Minister of Nepal, for CGLF relief efforts. Kathmandu, Boudha

Hyolmo Social Service Center

The Hyolmo Social Service Center in Boudha (HSSC) usually helps the Hyolmo community living in Kathmandu. After the earthquake, HSSC was at the forefront of relief work, focusing on the Hyolmo area of Sindhupalchok district. CGLF joined them in supporting rescue work and supplying and delivering supplies to affected areas. On 20th September CGLF ground team members were invited to the Monastery to join a ceremony of appreciation of help and support to the Hyolmo Community. On behalf of all CGLF helpers, donors and suppliers they received a beautifully written and framed letter, a token of appreciation from the whole Hyolmo Community.

Education support

Damaged building of the Primary Government School. Nawalpur, Sindupalchok

Yet another focus of CGLF relief efforts – education support. Numerous schools were damaged and destroyed by the earthquake. In many villages children continued their studies in tents. Many children became orphans, many families lost their livelihood and couldn't afford to send their children to school anymore. CGLF provided various support – finding donors to sponsor children's education, sending tin sheets and stationery and other supplies to collapsed schools. As we have seen over and over again, being at school, with its familiar routines, friends and activities is a vital part of recovering from the trauma of the earthquake – let alone preparing for a future!

Children of Chilime village lost their school – only blackboards were left standing. Rasuwa, Chilime.

Top left: Yangrima School totally destroyed in the earthquake; Sermatang, Hyolmo. Left: these students of Saraswati School didn't lose their joy and interest in studies; Badegaon, Sindupalchok. Above: Saraswati Educational Foundation pupils in their temporary classroom say 'thank you'!"; Badegaon, Sindupalchok.

The Yangrima School students and staff show appreciation for our help with new hopes to rebuild their school destroyed in the earthquake. Sermatang, Hyolmo.

Left: CGLF volunteers Kuenga and Marcela with Karma and one of his younger siblings. 17 year old Karma is now able to support his family with a new job found with the help of our volunteers; Kathmandu. Right: Pasang Drolma writing her admission exam to Ambassador School in Jorpati, Kathmandu"

Youth Gathering where young Nepali were recruited in order to equip them with knowledge and team work skills to help the country in crisis. Kathmandu, Boudha.

Sher Bahadur

Sher Bahadur receives the jasta donated to his vilalge.
Nikoshera, Bhaktaphur.

Sher Bahadur, 92 years old, witnessed the 1934 earthquake in Nepal when he was 11 years old, living in a small settlement of twelve houses in the open fields of the Kathmandu valley. Now Nikoshera is a village of 160 houses. People began to move here after 1934, leaving their collapsed houses in Bhaktapur. “That earthquake was much more devastating, but there were fewer aftershocks than in 2015. Only two people died in our locality – seven people died here this time. But it was really frightening back then. This time he wasn’t so afraid.”

Ratna Maya

Ratna Maya, 95 years old, witnessed the 1934 earthquake. She says the earthquake of 1934 felt much more strong and was much more devastating. This time she wasn't nearly as afraid as she was as a 13-year old girl. In 2015, although she was on the 3rd floor of a house, the building was left standing. Back in 1934 Ratna Maya and her family lived for 5 months in an half-collapsed house with only beams above their heads. There were no tarpaulins or tin sheets in those days, and life was really miserable. "It was difficult to get food. Rice that was strewn on the ground I scratched from the mud with my hands" tells Ratna Maya. "Back then it took much longer time for people to psychologically recover and become ready to rebuild their houses".

Ratna Maya, tells of the 1934 earthquake. Nikoshera, Bhaktaphur.

Thank you

Words alone cannot convey the destruction we witnessed in 2015. The pictures here show the story, the sorrows – and the joys your help made possible right up to the present day.

CGLF could only help with your support. Our deepest warmest thanks go to each of you who have shared with us your time, your money, your ideas, your strength and the warmth of your hearts. Together we have touched the lives of many, for the better.

Yet our work is not completely over. On page 64 you can see some of the help we gave schools immediately after the disaster. We would like to help train more teachers for these schools. We also took on the educational sponsorship of a few children who lost not only their homes but their family support networks. We are already training health workers but we want to train more, and share first aid skills as widely as we can.

You can read all about our work at www.basic-goodness.org, the Basic Goodness Foundation from which all our relief and humanitarian works manifest. And as Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche mentioned in his letter, “please do stay in contact with us. See what we are doing. Watch the seeds you have helped sow, slowly begin to grow and blossom!”

Earthquake Relief ground team with Phakchok Rinpoche and Khandro-la.

Our work continues

For information please visit earthquakerelief.cglf.org

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