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# NEPAL FACT SHEET

## BALIYO GHAR

Baliyo Ghar (*Strong House*) delivering the skills needed to help Nepal build back safer

The April and May 2015 earthquakes in Nepal damaged or destroyed over 755,000 homes. These were mostly traditional stone-mud and brick-mud structures built and occupied by the rural poor. The majority of these houses were non-engineered, constructed instead by home owners and with little consideration of seismic risks or building codes. The immense structural damage to housing after the earthquake highlighted many areas of vulnerability. These include construction workers' and homeowners' lack of awareness and training in earthquake-safe construction – especially in rural areas, as well as the absence of a national curricula, standards, guidelines and manuals for training individuals involved in housing construction. Inadequate compliance with building codes also contributed to the scale of the damage.

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The five-year, \$10.3 million Baliyo Ghar project, implemented by the National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET), is a key part of USAID/Nepal's reconstruction portfolio. Designed to help homeowners and communities rebuild in a way that increases their resilience to future disasters, Baliyo Ghar is closely aligned with the Government of Nepal (GON) owner-driven housing reconstruction project which empowers and supports homeowners, allowing them to build back safer. Baliyo Ghar established district- and local-level reconstruction technology centers, construction models, and demonstration homes. Project mobile units provide technical assistance to homeowners at the household and community level. At the national level, Baliyo Ghar supports the GON in developing improved and standardized training curricula and procedures to be used during masons and engineers training and while orienting homeowners.

## **DEVELOP IMPROVED AND STANDARDIZED TRAINING CURRICULA AND PROCEDURES**

Baliyo Ghar works closely with GON counterparts – such as the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction and the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training – to integrate earthquake-safe construction principles and technology into existing training materials. The project is improving and standardizing the training curricula for masons and other construction workers country wide. With GON counterparts, Baliyo Ghar is working to establish a formal system for skills testing and mason certification – both critical to professionalizing the field of masonry.

## **TRAIN MASONS & ENGINEERS ON DISASTER-RESILIENT CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY**

A key component of Baliyo Ghar is the training of masons, engineers, and other building tradespeople in earthquake-resistant construction technology and techniques. Courses are conducted at district and local levels for both existing and new construction workers. With a larger and better trained cadre of construction professionals, earthquake-affected households will have access to the human resources they need to rebuild safer homes.

## **ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS & ADOPT DISASTER-RESILIENT RECONSTRUCTION**

Baliyo Ghar deployed mobile teams to conduct orientation sessions for homeowners at the local level as well as to provide technical assistance to masons and homeowners during the reconstruction process, which is expected to take several years and will require sustained technical support. Each household receives on average 10 direct one-on-one interactions with a mobile team before and during construction. District and local resource centers and demonstration housing provide technical assistance and support for affected communities. The project is producing a variety of tools for education and outreach on safer construction practices, including mass media public awareness campaigns via radio, television, social and print media.

## **RESULTS & ACHIEVEMENTS** (through December 2016)

- More than 2,500 homes have been built to modern safety standards through Baliyo Ghar technical assistance
- 9 Reconstruction Resource Centers established to provide training and technical assistance support for housing reconstruction
- 3,800 masons and other building tradespeople trained on disaster-resilient building construction
- 2,200 GON engineers orientated on disaster-resilient construction technology to improve their ability to inspect homes
- 37,996 homeowners and other affected people provided critical information on the importance of disaster-resilient construction