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## **United States Increases Support to Housing Reconstruction**

The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), today announced three initiatives to support the Government of Nepal's model of owner-driven housing reconstruction following the April 25, 2015 earthquake. Building on previous investments, USAID programs will train an estimated 13,500 local construction professionals and educate more than 285,000 affected homeowners on building earthquake-resistant homes over the next five years.

*Baliyo Ghar* (Strong House) is a five-year, \$8 million project that will train local masons, carpenters, engineers, and affected homeowners. *Baliyo Ghar* will also support the establishment of a National Reconstruction Technology Center and three training centers at the district and local levels in Dolakha, Dhading, and Nuwakot districts. *Baliyo Ghar* will be implemented by the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) in cooperation with the Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training, and National Planning Commission.

USAID will also expand its ongoing resilience project, *Sabal*, to invest \$2.7 million in training local masons in Sindhupalchok and Kavrepalanchok districts. In addition, USAID has made a \$9.6 million contribution to the World Bank Nepal Earthquake Reconstruction Multi-Donor Trust Fund. This contribution will directly support the Government-led beneficiary survey in the 14 most-affected districts, as well as the provision of housing reconstruction cash grants to affected homeowners.

“This week, as Nepal marks six months since the April 25 earthquake, we are pleased to announce our new and expanded initiatives and pledge that we will continue to help rebuild a safer and stronger Nepal,” shared U.S. Ambassador Alaina B. Teplitz. “These new projects and expansions of existing programs are valued at more than \$20 million, and are part of the \$130 million committed by the U.S. government in response to the earthquake and demonstrates our continued commitment to Nepal.”