

Nepal: Watch. Learn. Then Act

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REGINE WEBSTER
VICE PRESIDENT
CENTER FOR DISASTER PHILANTHROPY



News from Nepal the past two days about the devastating April 25th earthquake has been chilling: story after story report rapidly changing death tolls, contain scary accounts of power outages and are filled images of indiscernible structures covered in dust. The city of Kathmandu and its surroundings are changed forever.

On the United Nation's Human Development Index, which measures a country's development status, Nepal is ranked "low" – 145th out of 187 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/NPL>) countries and territories – a figure that reflects the country's low life expectancy, low mean years of schooling, and relatively low amount of Gross National Income and associated Purchasing Power Parity. International aid, from both bi- and multilateral agencies has supported development efforts to improve these three indicators for decades. The quake that occurred at midday on Saturday in Kathmandu, literally and figuratively shook the ground of these development efforts.

How can anyone reading, hearing about or seeing the news about this disaster not want to respond immediately? Even here at the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, our team feels a

long-term needs over the understandable visceral, emotion-driven response. So what can you do if you want to make a donation that will have a long-term impact?

Based on our contacts with first responder organizations, we know that many immediate needs are already being addressed, including:

- ◆ Search and rescue
- ◆ Access to clean water
- ◆ Temporary shelter
- ◆ Access to medical care
- ◆ Communications equipment
- ◆ Electricity

While we do not know the exact details of this disaster, we know from previous disasters (earthquakes in particular) that over the course of the coming weeks and months those immediate needs will undergo a metamorphosis into:

- ◆ Adequate supplies of safe water, sanitation, and hygiene resources
- ◆ Mental and physical health services
- ◆ Rebuilding the educational infrastructure and so children can return to school
- ◆ Access to permanent shelter
- ◆ Ways to earn income – including returning to work and the rebuilding of affected businesses
- ◆ Long-term infrastructure rebuilding in the form of roads, power grids, sewage lines

Knowing that, here's advice for those who want to make a difference:

1. **Watch.** The disaster occurred on April 24. Before considering a funding option, wait two weeks. Maybe even four. Use that time for the magnitude of the disaster to truly unfold. It won't be long before a fuller picture emerges of lives lost, infrastructure damaged, individuals affected, and unmet immediate response needs.

2. **Learn.** Take that time to understand how the needs associated with this disaster are

unfolding by reading media accounts of the disaster, responding agency reports, UN and USAID updates about the devastation, and the CDP website.

3. **Act.** After two weeks, the media's attention will sadly have turned away from one of the poorest nations in Asia. Simultaneously, the local and international nongovernmental organization community efforts will be in full swing to support the needs of affected Nepalese. Now is the time for a funder to wisely choose to support medium- and long-term recovery efforts. Either by working with CDP or closely with an NGO, look to support activities that will rebuild Kathmandu and put its residents back in their homes, jobs, schools, and communities.

While the world right now is rightly focused on immediate relief, you can begin thinking of how you want to help the longer term recovery. To help, we've created the [CDP Nepal Quake Recovery Fund](http://disasterphilanthropy.org/cdp-nepal-earthquake-fund/) (<http://disasterphilanthropy.org/cdp-nepal-earthquake-fund/>).

The Center for Disaster Philanthropy is available every day, 365 days a year to answer your questions about the earthquake. We can help you think through how to allocate your dollars, to whom, and for what. Please do not hesitate to give us a call.

This guest post first appeared on the [Center for Disaster Philanthropy's website](http://disasterphilanthropy.org/) (<http://disasterphilanthropy.org/>). You can [find the original post here](http://disasterphilanthropy.org/disaster-coverage/earthquakes/nepal-watch-learn-then-act/) (<http://disasterphilanthropy.org/disaster-coverage/earthquakes/nepal-watch-learn-then-act/>).

Regine A. Webster is vice-president of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy. She can be reached at regine.webster@disasterphilanthropy.org (<mailto:regine.webster@disasterphilanthropy.org>).

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