Nepal Earthquakes: One Year Later

Moving On

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FOREWORD

Twelve months ago, the earth beneath Nepal shook violently – so violently that it tore through the lives of millions of people living in the central and eastern parts of the country. The earthquakes in April and May 2015 took the lives of nearly 9,000 people, a third of whom were children. The earthquakes injured thousands; robbed the livelihoods of many more; and turned to rubble a huge number of homes, health posts and schools that faced the brunt of the quakes. They displaced millions of people from their homes, including thousands from their villages that had been wiped away by quake-induced landslides.

Everyone working for UNICEF was also affected by the earthquakes in one way or another. But each one managed to rise to the occasion to provide immediate relief to those who were most affected by the earthquakes. In the first couple of days, UNICEF staff had travelled to the worst affected districts to assess the situation of children and women and started initial life-saving assistance such as provision of safe drinking water, medical tents and essential drugs by using supplies pre-positioned in the country prior to the earthquake. Within a fortnight, we were able to roll out relief activities on a much larger scale, bolstered by additional staff and strong support from a number of government and private donors and UNICEF National Committees.

The year 2015 was not easy for Nepal. To add to the devastation caused by the earthquakes, the country went through serious political turmoil which led to a more than four-month long stricture on the movement of essential supplies across the border and within the country. This affected the entire country and the activities of humanitarian agencies, including UNICEF. Health facilities ran out of essential medicines, and transportation became a serious problem for women near childbirth. It was a double brunt for people living in the earthquake-affected districts as they also had to cope with a shortage of fuel for heating and cooking through the coldest months.

Now with the winter behind us and the long-awaited initiation of the rebuilding and reconstruction process, the country is definitely on the mend. At the same time, there is still a long way to go towards full recovery. Many children are studying in temporary learning centres, which need to be repaired or replaced by transitional structures before permanent buildings are finally built. Many health posts and birthing centres are still functioning under tents. A number of families with their children continue to sleep in makeshift shelters close to their destroyed homes. Keeping children free of disease and malnutrition is still a constant challenge. There is also a fear that with many families reeling from poverty, children could be forced into labour of the worst forms, including through trafficking.

However, an opportunity for us is how to learn from the experiences of the districts affected by earthquakes this time and apply the lessons to other parts of the country. It is becoming increasingly clear that when it comes to disasters, there is no 'no-risk zone' in Nepal. The whole country is subject to the risk of large-scale earthquakes because of build-up of underground stress due to the movement, friction and slip between the two large plates of the earth's crust – the very force that created the magnificent Himalayas. According to recent studies by several seismologists, the western half of Nepal has not experienced a major earthquake in the past 500 years while there have been three in the eastern part of the country, making the former the next high-risk area for a likely large-scale earthquake.

In view of this, disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness need to become part of everything we do and support in Nepal for development. And this should certainly cover actions for those who are most vulnerable, including children and women, in the form of earthquake-resistant schools, health institutions and water- and sanitation-related facilities; more knowledge on how to better prepare for and protect oneself and one's community from disasters; and social service and support systems that are robust and can respond to disasters more quickly and effectively as they happen – just to name a few. Experiences globally show that the time immediately after a major disaster is the time when our attention to and interest in disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness is the highest, and that is NOW for Nepal.

The best homage to the people who were deceased in last year's earthquakes is to learn lessons from this sad experience and use them to better prepare for future disasters. In a highly disaster-prone country like Nepal, occurrence of disasters is not a matter of 'if' but of 'when'. Our job is yet to be done.

Tomoo Hozumi
Representative
UNICEF Nepal

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

One year ago, four minutes to noon on 25 April 2015, the earth beneath Nepal moved and quivered for more than 45 seconds. It was a 7.8 magnitude earthquake. The next day, there was a powerful aftershock measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale, and two weeks later on 12 May, the earth shook violently again with a 7.3 magnitude aftershock. The clash of the tectonic plates beneath this nation of over 26 million people that straddles the base of the Himalayas wrought devastation of immense proportions. It took the lives of nearly 9,000 people, and 22,400 people were injured. While the earthquakes affected nearly half of the country's 75 districts one way or another, 14 of them were classified as severely affected and prioritized for humanitarian assistance. They have an estimated total affected population of 2.8 million, out of which 1.1 million (40 per cent) are children. In these districts, almost all of the homes made of mud and mortar turned to rubble, as did 90 per cent of the health posts, and over 80 per cent of school buildings and other infrastructure.

A year hence, the country has been shaken by over a thousand aftershocks, nearly 450 of these measuring over 4 on the Richter scale. Nepal is prone to many natural disasters including earthquakes, floods, landslides, glacial lake outbursts, lightning strikes, fire, avalanches, cold and heat waves. They affect 335,000 people and kill 1,000 on average annually. But the 2015 quakes were the worst natural disaster in the country in the past 80 years. It has literally left the country shaken. Aside from the death and destruction, an estimated 700,000 to 982,000 people are estimated to have been newly pushed into poverty (living on less than US$1.25 a day). Of the 188,900 people who had been temporarily displaced right after the quakes, an estimated 26,272 people are still living in temporary shelters away from their villages. Most people have been living in makeshift accommodations made of tin, tarpaulin and whatever material they manage to scavenge from their destroyed homes. They have been through all seasons. They have gone through the hot summer, wet monsoon, the cold winter, and now the stormy spring accompanied by wildfires, before the summer heat beats down once again.

The monsoon rains that also triggered landslides affected the ability to deliver response and relief activities and exacerbated the vulnerability of the population already badly affected by the earthquakes. In addition, prolonged political strife and the associated economic crisis that affected the entire country added a double brunt to those already reeling from the aftermath of the quakes. Import of vital commodities was severely restricted at Nepal's southern border for more than four months. Stocks of fuel, medicine and food declined and schools in the southern plain area remained closed. This put the lives of more than 3 million children under the age of 5 in Nepal at risk of disease during the harsh winter months.

At the one-year mark of the earthquakes, efforts for substantial recovery and reconstruction in the country finally started to move forward. The task ahead is massive. There is still much to be done to bring normalcy to the lives of the children and their families living in these shaken hills. The focus now should be to take the lessons from the past year to the rest of the country so that it can be better to prepared for disasters, for there is no 'risk-free' zone in Nepal when it comes to large-scale earthquakes. Reducing the risks and being prepared for disasters is the only way forward.

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BACKGROUND

8,959
people killed

605,254
houses destroyed

$7.06 billion
financial loss

765
health facilities destroyed or damaged

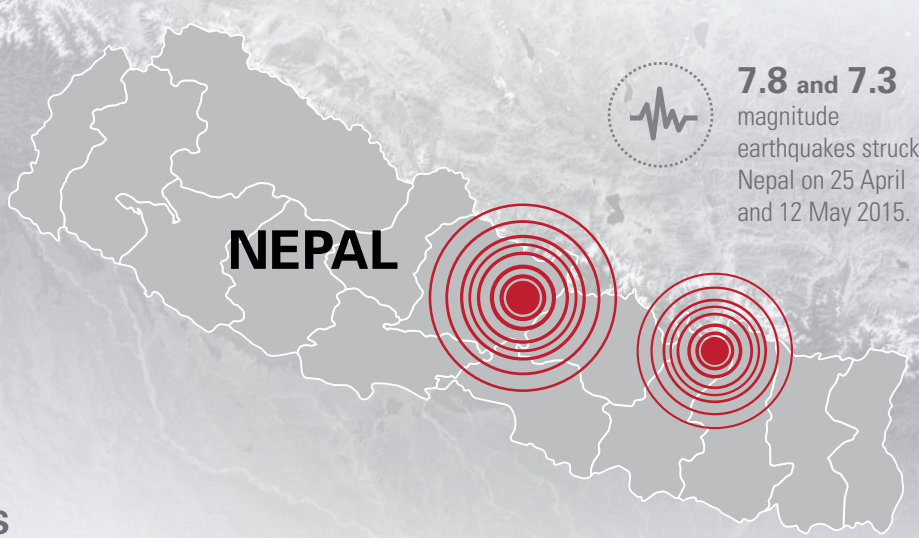
1.1 MILLION
CHILDREN AFFECTED

2.8 million
people affected

26,272
people currently displaced

35,000
classrooms destroyed or damaged

388,000
toilets partially or fully destroyed



7.8 and 7.3
magnitude earthquakes struck Nepal on 25 April and 12 May 2015.

ACHIEVEMENTS

US$120 million
emergency appeal almost fully funded

Reaching
11,333
pregnant and postnatal women

354,562
children age 6–59 months received vitamin A capsules

890,589
people reached with hygiene education materials and interpersonal communication

US$15 million
cash top-up transfer

537,081
children under five reached with MR and Polio vaccine campaign

1,324,969
people provided with water

180,570
psychosocial support to children and caregivers

434,690
vulnerable individuals received cash grant

1,572
children with SAM identified for treatment

425,469
people reached with sanitation and hand-washing facilities

881,100
children provided with learning materials and schools supplies

UNICEF'S RESPONSE

UNICEF started its response to the disaster right from Day One on 25 April 2015. It immediately released emergency supplies which had been pre-positioned in four warehouses in the country. The supplies provided a life-saving bridge before additional large quantities of supplies started to arrive in Nepal from outside the country. UNICEF launched an emergency appeal to cover the needs of the immediate response and early recovery phase. By using resources contributed towards this emergency appeal, UNICEF supported a number of life-saving activities across the areas of health; nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); education; child protection; and social protection. In addition, UNICEF engaged in helping to disseminate messages to assist children and their families stay safe and healthy during the disaster, as well as information on relief efforts in their communities.

None of the districts most affected by the earthquakes overlapped with the 15 districts that UNICEF had selected due to high incidence of poverty and had been providing intensive support to on a priority basis since the beginning of the current five-year Country Programme period in 2013. Therefore, the UNICEF Nepal Country Office had to temporarily suspend its operation in these original 15 priority districts for a month and deployed the staff working in these districts to the 14 most earthquake-affected districts in the mountains of the central and eastern parts of the country.

Programmatically, in the first few days of the disaster, UNICEF supported trucking of water and provision of water purification tablets, oral rehydration salts and hygiene kits to people living in informal camps. UNICEF also provided medical tents, which were used to provide emergency health services to people affected by the earthquake. Many hospitals in Kathmandu and health posts in the affected districts were functioning in UNICEF tents, including performing surgeries.

To prevent a measles outbreak in the informal camps that emerged all over the affected area, UNICEF supported an emergency immunization campaign targeting almost half a million children under the age of 5 years. In the months that followed, UNICEF also supported a nationwide polio immunization campaign that reached 3.6 million under-five children to keep the disease out of the country. With nearly 70 per cent of the birthing centres damaged or destroyed in the 14 most affected districts, UNICEF established 22 shelter homes in 11 districts as safe places to stay for more than 11,000 pregnant women, lactating mothers and their children before and after delivery and to receive necessary care. When winter set in, these shelter homes were further outfitted to protect those who stayed there from the cold, and blankets were distributed to keep children and women warm.

The nutrition of children was a key concern even before the earthquakes, as close to 4 out of 10 children in Nepal suffer from chronic malnutrition. A 'Child Nutrition Week' campaign by the Government and other partners with UNICEF's assistance reached more than 90 per cent of the targeted under-five children and pregnant women in the most earthquake-affected districts to assess their nutritional status, to distribute nutrition supplies and to counsel mothers and caretakers on appropriate infant and young child feeding practices despite deteriorating living conditions during the aftermath of the earthquakes.
With significant damage to water supply systems and infrastructure during the earthquakes, UNICEF also focused on providing basic water, sanitation and hygiene to the affected population. Intensive hygiene promotion was conducted to prevent illness and outbreaks such as of diarrhoea and cholera among children and vulnerable groups, especially those living in camp settings. UNICEF reached 1.3 million people with emergency and longer-term water supply services; 425,649 people with emergency and longer-term sanitation facilities; and 890,589 people with hygiene kits and information for promotion of sanitation and hygiene.

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More than a month after the first earthquake struck, children in the earthquake-affected districts could go back to school on 31 May. UNICEF helped to establish 1,793 UNICEF-supported temporary learning centres together with its counterparts and partners. It also provided education supplies for 881,000 children. To ensure the necessary emotional care for children traumatized by the earthquakes, 8,125 teachers were trained to provide psychosocial support and life-saving messages for children. UNICEF also supported structural assessment of more than 6,300 schools in the 14 most affected districts.

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes, UNICEF also provided technical and financial assistance to child welfare authorities and partners to prevent family separation and unnecessary placement of children in 'orphanages' when there were caretakers. It helped to identify and reunify unaccompanied and separated children promptly; provide psychosocial support to affected children and families; mitigate the risk of trafficking (including through unlawful intercountry adoptions); and prevent other forms of exploitation. As a result of these efforts, 39,337 unaccompanied, separated and vulnerable children were identified while 13,317 unaccompanied, separated and vulnerable children were provided with emergency support.

In July, UNICEF helped to implement an Emergency Top-up Cash Transfer Programme that reached 434,690 particularly vulnerable people in five categories who had been enrolled in the Government's regular social assistance grant in 19 earthquake-affected districts. These included children of Dalit (a traditionally marginalized community) under 5 years of age; senior citizens aged 70 years and above (or 60 years and above in the case of Dalit); widows and single women aged 60 years and above; people with disabilities; and highly marginalized indigenous ethnic groups. Each of them was provided with 3,000 NPR (approximately US$30) as a 'top-up' cash benefit. This provided much needed relief to the concerned, particularly vulnerable population and was used to meet basic daily needs such as food, medicine, household essentials and clothes.

In addition to the emergency supplies and services, UNICEF has been supporting the affected population by disseminating life-saving messages. Within a week of the first earthquake, UNICEF partnered with Radio Nepal, the national broadcaster, to air a programme entitled *'Bhandai Sundai'*, or 'Talking-Listening', over a period of three months. Furthermore, UNICEF helped to broadcast over 100,000 minutes of radio messages related to staying safe, relief efforts, health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection in partnership with 191 community radio stations.

At the same time, given the enormity of the losses and damages, there is still a long way to go for Nepal to fully recover from the aftermath of these devastating earthquakes. Relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts were significantly hampered for more than four months after mid-September due to political strife, associated difficulties for the movement of essential supplies across the southern border, and acute fuel shortages. The country and its people continue to face many challenges even a year after the earthquake.

Many families are yet to move into permanent structures and continue to live in makeshift shelters next to their destroyed homes. Children along with their families continue to fight the vagaries of weather – whether it is rain leaking from the roofs, storms blowing off the tin and tarpaulin, or the cold that has an impact on their health. Many children continue to study in unsafe buildings. Temporary learning centres, where available, are in need of repair and upgrade into more durable transitional structures before permanent buildings are finally constructed. Teaching and learning in temporary shelters with thin partitions continues to be a challenge in many schools.

In most of the earthquake-affected districts, health care continues to be provided in tents, which are vulnerable to heavy rains and stormy weather. Although some prefabricated buildings were provided for health posts, it will still take time to provide all health facilities with more durable and proper structures.

Scarcity of water is a challenge in many areas, with villagers having to spend extra hours to fetch water for household use. While the earthquakes damaged many water schemes that still need to be reconstructed, there is also a need to find alternative solutions for many areas in the earthquake-affected hills where the water table has been disturbed and has resulted in traditional water spouts and springs running dry.

FUNDING UPDATE

An inter-agency Flash Appeal totalling US$423 million was launched on 8 May 2015 for an initial three-month emergency response to the earthquakes. The UNICEF component of this appeal was US$51.1 million. The appeal was subsequently revised on 2 June, extending the period to be covered to 30 September 2015. Out of the US$422 million requested in the revised appeal, UNICEF requested US$62.5 million to cover immediate needs until the end of September. At the same time, in view of the enormity of the impact and damage, UNICEF developed a response plan to cover a longer period in the form of 'Humanitarian Action for Children' (HAC) up to 31 March 2016 with the total appeal amount of US$120 million. HAC included not only activities during the initial relief phase, but also those which addressed early recovery needs. Against this appeal, UNICEF received US$117.9 million as of 6 April 2016 thanks to generous contributions from a number of government, multilateral and private donors.

The period covered by HAC provided funds for the immediate response and early recovery and has been well funded. At the same time, there is still a long way to go for Nepal towards full recovery and reconstruction of the earthquake-affected districts. In addition, in view of there being no 'no-risk zone' in Nepal when it comes to large-scale earthquakes and other disasters due to the country's geophysical conditions, there is an important need to apply the lessons learned from the experiences this time to the rest of the country and make the development process and outcomes more resilient to disasters. More concretely, this means to include disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness as an integral part of the regular development process. This is the only way to minimize losses, damage and disruption at the time of the next disaster, including a likely large-scale earthquake, which is not a matter of IF but WHEN. For these purposes, UNICEF in Nepal will continue to require resources and assistance from its generous supporters, and is currently finalizing a new proposal that covers the period beyond HAC.

Table 1. Reports against HAC Appeal – Programme-wise Funding Status as of 5 April 2016

PROGRAMME AREAS	HAC APPEAL	PROGRAMMABLE RECEIVED	DIFFERENCE
	A	B	C=A-B
Education	25,000,000.00	19,860,243.01	5,139,756.99
WASH	25,000,000.00	11,489,868.28	13,510,131.72
Health	24,000,000.00	11,399,170.65	12,600,829.35
Child Protection	11,000,000.00	7,002,622.36	3,997,377.64
Nutrition	11,000,000.00	7,209,911.49	3,790,088.51
C4D	1,000,000.00	2,774,430.85	-1,774,430.85
Social Protection	17,000,000.00	23,560,000.00	-6,560,000.00
Sector coordination and field support	6,000,000.00	12,253,321.01	-6,253,321.01
Total	**120,000,000.00**	**95,549,567.65**	**24,450,432.35**
Balance to be allocated		22,351,955.44	
Grand total	**120,000,000.00**	**117,901,523.09**	**2,098,476.91**

BEYOND ONE YEAR

Despite all the challenges the people in Nepal have faced in the past year, their resolve to rebuild their future remains strong. The financial assistance that started to be provided by the National Reconstruction Authority in certain communities in March and April 2016 is expected to accelerate in the coming months. There is hope that the Government and development agencies will work together to make the process of recovery and reconstruction the beginning of a more resilient development process and truly realize 'Build Back Better'.

This past year, many children experienced loss and trauma, feelings of trepidation, anxiety and apprehension as to what would ensue. With the resumption of school activities approximately a little over a month after the earthquakes and now the completion of the academic school year, children are gradually becoming more hopeful of their future. The enrolment for the new academic session has started, and children and their parents look forward to resuming normal activities as best as possible despite the temporary structures in which the live and study.

At the same time, in an environment where monsoon rains will soon come and there are many risks of other disasters, UNICEF will continue to remain vigilant. UNICEF will also facilitate the application of lessons learned from this disaster to help children and their families living in other parts of the country and the Government to be better equipped and prepared for disasters, whether earthquakes, floods, landslides or food shortages. Every disaster, along with the devastation it causes, also offers an opportunity to do things better next time. This is what will guide UNICEF in its programmes, not only in the earthquake-affected areas, but also in its regular development programme districts.

Nepal 2016
One-year-old little Arpita, pictured here with her mother, was not just an earthquake baby... she was a baby born in the epicentre Barpak on 25th April 2015.

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HEALTH

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Throughout the year, UNICEF focused on responding to major critical health needs and restoring essential health services in the earthquake-affected districts. As an immediate response, UNICEF supported the Government in establishing 10 emergency care sites and restoring health services by providing 326 tents, 324 emergency health kits, 400 sets of surgical equipment and 1,080 midwifery kits to health facilities in and around Kathmandu. One of the major priorities was to ensure continuous and equitable access to life-saving interventions for pregnant women, post-partum mothers and newborns and children. Through its counterparts and partners, UNICEF established 22 transition shelter homes in 11 earthquake-affected districts, providing safe places for pregnant and lactating women to stay just before and after delivery, together with continuous provision of care and services. These shelter homes served more than 11,000 mothers and children. Furthermore, UNICEF reinforced the shelter homes to protect beneficiaries from the harsh winter cold.

Maternal and newborn care services were restored at 56 birthing centres in the affected districts. UNICEF supported the vaccination of almost half a million children under 5 years of age against measles-rubella and polio, and supported the nationwide polio immunization campaign, reaching 3.6 million under-five children to maintain the polio-free status of the country. Similarly, UNICEF provided life-saving medicines for treatment of diarrhoeal diseases including cholera for 406,181 children. UNICEF engaged 330 social mobilizers through its partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to reach over 792,000 people at the household and community level with key life-saving information on health, nutrition and hygiene.

In the coming months, UNICEF will build 74 earthquake-resistant and fully equipped prefabricated health facilities with birthing units in nine earthquake-affected districts. The focus will be to help strengthen health facilities and train health staff to provide quality maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services. UNICEF will continue to support immunization campaigns, the installation of disaster-resilient cold chain systems, and improvement of the supply chain of vaccines at the district level. In addition, UNICEF will support the Ministry of Health to integrate Disaster Risk Reduction into the Nepal Health Sector Strategy implementation plan (2015–2020).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

537,081
children under the age of 5 years in the earthquake-affected districts received measles-rubella and polio vaccines during an emergency immunization campaign.

406,181
children under the age of 5 years had access to life-saving services for diarrhoea.

11,333
pregnant and postnatal women had continuous and equitable access to primary health care services through UNICEF-supported 22 transitional shelter homes in 11 most-affected districts.

792,000
people were reached with key lifes-aving counselling in health, nutrition, and WASH through 330 trained social mobilizers in 11 affected districts.

125,000
vials of measles-rubella vaccines, 3,487,667 vials of oral polio vaccines, 50,000 vials of BCG vaccines, 20,000 vials of tetanus-diphteria vaccines were provided to the Ministry of Health for immunization programme.

105,000
long-lasting insecticidal bed nets were distributed to communities in the 14 affected districts, targeting pregnant women and children.

326
medical tents, 321 inter-agency emergency health kits, 400 sets of surgical equipment, 1,080 midwifery kits and 53,000 baby suits were supplied.

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Table 2.

HEALTH	Cluster 2015 Target	Cluster Total Results	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
Children aged 6–59 months in the severely affected districts vaccinated for measles	504,000	537,081	504,000	537,081
Children under 5 years of age in the severely affected districts with access to life-saving services for diarrhoea	560,000	406,181	280,000	406,181
Mothers and newborns in the severely affected districts reached with essential and emergency care	83,700	N/A	41,850	46,522

NUTRITION

UNICEF has helped develop a nutrition recovery framework, which has been endorsed by the Government and Nutrition Cluster members and is now the national framework for nutrition recovery programme.

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Throughout the year, UNICEF's Nutrition response in the 14 most affected districts focused on the five proven nutrition interventions[1] to protect the lives of the most affected and disadvantaged women and children. Over 10,000 female community health volunteers, more than 4,000 health workers and about 1,000 civil society members were mobilized in the mass screening of children aged 6 to 59 months to assess their nutritional status, distribution of nutrition supplies, and provision of counselling to mothers and caretakers on appropriate infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices. In addition, along with the Ministry of Health and Population and the Nutrition Cluster members, UNICEF initiated an innovative campaign entitled 'Child Nutrition Week'. The campaign successfully reached more than 90 per cent of the targeted under-five children and pregnant and lactating women with essential nutrition services. Furthermore, UNICEF provided support in the form of technical assistance, funding, emergency supplies, Nutrition Cluster coordination, and IYCF and behaviour change communication activities.

UNICEF has helped to develop a nutrition recovery framework, which has been endorsed by the Government and Nutrition Cluster members and is now the national framework for the nutrition recovery programme. Under this, UNICEF will continue to focus on various activities including periodic nutrition assessments and surveillance, support of household food security and livelihoods, and implementation of key nutrition interventions, also known as the 'Five Building Blocks' for better nutrition outcomes.

[1] The five proven nutrition interventions ("Five Building Blocks") are as follows:

1. Promotion, protection and support for breastfeeding of infants/children aged 0 to 23 months;
2. On time and appropriate complementary feeding to children aged 6 to 23 months;
3. Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFFP) targeting to children aged 6 to 23 months and pregnant and lactating women;
4. Management of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) through Therapeutic Feeding Programme (TFP) for children aged 6 to 59 months; and
5. Micronutrients for children and women (Vitamin A and MNP for children aged 6 to 59 months, deworming to children aged 12 to 59 months, and Iron Folic Acid for pregnant and post-natal mothers.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

373,546
During the Child Nutrition Week, between 28 June and 4 July 4 2015, 373,546 children aged 6 to 59 months old (94 per cent of target) were screened using MUAC (mid-upper arm circumference), and 825 children with severe acute malnutrition (33 per cent of target) were admitted to the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme

152,697
pregnant and lactating mothers benefited from counselling on breastfeeding and risks of artificial feeding (91 per cent of the target population).

326,091
children aged 6 to 59 months old received a two-month supply of Multiple Micronutrient Powder (MNP) (101 per cent of the target population) and 354,562 (98 per cent of the target population) benefited from vitamin A supplementation while 24,902 women (88 per cent of the target population) received a two-month supply of iron and folic acid.

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Table 3.

NUTRITION	Cluster 2015 Target	Cluster Total Results	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
Children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition in severely affected districts who are admitted in Outpatient Therapeutic Programme	2,500	1,575	2,500	1,575
Children aged 6 to 59 months in severely affected districts who received Multiple Micronutrient Powder to improve their diets and prevent nutritional deficiencies	323,775	326,091	323,775	326,091
Mothers of children aged 0 to 23 months old living in the severely affected districts who received information and counselling on breastfeeding and complementary feeding	168,000	157,660	126,000	142,731

WASH

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Throughout the year, UNICEF's WASH response in the 14 most severely affected districts focused on the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene materials together with intensive hygiene promotion to prevent illnesses such as diarrhoea among children and vulnerable groups. Following the earthquakes, UNICEF and its partners provided emergency water supply through trucking of water to the camps of the affected population, drinking water treatment options with water storage vessels, bulk chlorination of water systems, and sanitation through the construction of emergency latrines and bathing facilities.

After the most acute phase of relief, UNICEF began to support more sustainable solutions including repairs and expansion of communal toilets within community settings, and provided support for the repair of household toilets. Further, UNICEF provided family hygiene kits and hygiene education to promote improved hygiene practices. UNICEF reached over 1.3 million people with emergency and sustained water supply services, 425,649 people with emergency and sustained sanitation, and 890,589 people with hygiene kits and information for hygiene promotion. Furthermore, UNICEF prepared for the monsoon and potential cholera outbreak with separate contingency plans and stockpiles. Together with joint efforts with partners and the Government, this preparation proved to be crucial in containing the cases of cholera identified in Kathmandu during August and September and avoided fatalities from it. Over the year, UNICEF was able to reach and engage the neediest and most vulnerable population through its 19 national and community-level partners based on strategic planning.

In the next few months, UNICEF will support the Government and work with partners to provide affected communities with tools and training to plan and manage their water and sanitation systems. Safe water will be provided through the assessment of 3,000 water schemes followed by their repair and rehabilitation. Furthermore, UNICEF plans to work with the Government and its partners to ensure proper WASH services in 500 health facilities and at least 300 schools. Provision of longer-term sanitation support including hygiene promotion to the affected households is also being planned as part of this comprehensive package.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

1,324,969
(642.610 male and 682,359 female) people received emergency and longer-term water supply services.

425,469
(206,440 male and 219,209 female) people benefited from emergency and loger-term sanitation.

890,589
people received hygiene kits and information for hygiene promotion.

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Table 4.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE	Cluster 2015 Target	Cluster Total Results	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
People in the severely affected districts with access to a sufficient quantity of water of appropriate quality for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene	4,095,059	3,276,972	840,000	1,324,969
People in the severely affected districts with access to adequate sanitation and hand washing facilities	1,870,225	698,092	840,000	425,469
People reached with hygiene education materials and interpersonal communication	2,112,390	3,611,576	840,000	890,589

EDUCATION

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As a result of the earthquakes in 2015, more than 35,000 classrooms were destroyed or damaged beyond safe use, jeopardizing the education of almost 1 million children in Nepal. Over 179,300 children aged 3 to 18 years benefited from the 1,793 temporary learning centres (TLCs) that UNICEF established through its partnership with NGOs in the 14 most affected districts. These TLCs provided children with a safe learning environment during the year. Education supplies have been provided for 881,000 children, and 8,125 teachers have been trained in psychosocial support and life-saving messages for children. UNICEF also supported structural assessment of more than 6,300 schools in these most affected districts.

UNICEF also supported the back-to-school public information campaign, which reached over 1 million people through various media channels. The messages focused on information that returning to school would help children return to normality, receive psychosocial support and learn key disaster-preparedness messages to keep them safe.

The prolonged shortage of fuel after the closure of borders with India not only worsened the situation of affected people, but also constrained the movement of supplies and logistic support for programme implementation and its monitoring. Despite this bottleneck, UNICEF, over the past year, continued to implement various activities with national and international partners that have a strong presence in the affected districts.

Looking forward, UNICEF will focus on recovery and reconstruction activities at the national level and in the 14 most affected districts. This includes provision of over 800 semi-permanent classrooms, training of teachers and distribution of education supplies in areas with highest need. UNICEF will support the training of School Management Committee members so they can be engaged and involved in comprehensive school planning and oversight of recovery work undertaken within their communities. UNICEF will collaborate with the Government to support earthquake-prone districts to move ahead with the semi-permanent and permanent structures from the TLCs. UNICEF has been supporting the Ministry of Education to provide inputs on education to the Government's Post-Disaster Recovery Framework (PDRF), and will support implementation of the programmes under the PDRF in coordination with the Government and development partners. In addition, UNICEF is supporting the Government in developing policies, concepts and strategies for disaster risk reduction and school safety to be included in the new education sector plan for the period of 2016 to 2020.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

1,793
Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs) were set up, benefiting 179,300 children

881,100
children have been provided with education supplies.

8,125
teachers have been trained on psychosocial support and life-saving messages for children.

1 million
people were requested through newspapers, radio and television spots to reassure children, teachers and families that returning to school would help children return to normality and learn key messages to keep them safe.

15,000
In collaboration with the Education Cluster and the National Center for Educational Development, UNICEF developed and printed 15,000 copies of a two-volume teacher activity book, providing practical guidance for teachers on psychosocial support and risk reduction.

1,300
teachers were registered under UNICEF-supported Teacher Hero Network – an SMS-based network that provides information and gathers feedback from teachers in affected districts.

1,098
boys and girls with disabilities have been reported to have benefited from the response of the Education Cluster, as per the Education Cluster Partners.

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Table 5.

EDUCATION	Cluster 2015 Target	Cluster Total Results	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
Children in severely affected districts accessing Temporary Learning Centres	466,800	357,600	183,640	179,300
Teachers working in severely affected districts trained on psychosocial support and dissemination of key life-saving messages	19,000	16,325	8,106	8,125
Children benefiting from emergency early childhood development (ECD) kits and emergency school kits	1,000,000	881,100	1,000,000	881,100

CHILD PROTECTION

Throughout the year, UNICEF's approach has been to enhance the national capacity by strengthening existing child protection systems and to ensure that laws, policies, regulations and services across all sectors are operational and properly executed. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, UNICEF provided technical and financial assistance to child welfare authorities and partners to prevent family separation and unnecessary placement of children in 'orphanages' when they had caretakers; promptly identify and reunify unaccompanied and separated children; provide psychosocial support to affected children and families; mitigate the risk of trafficking (including through unlawful inter-country adoptions); and prevent other forms of exploitation. One priority was to ensure that children were not exploited at the time when the society's attention was focused on rescue and relief and the vulnerability and risks were increased by multiple folds in the aftermath of crisis. UNICEF played a key role in supporting the Government's immediate decision to temporarily suspend inter-country adoption and the registration of new 'childcare homes' or orphanages. (Nepal has more than 700 registered childcare homes with more than 15,000 children, but 85 per cent of the children have at least one parent.) Prohibition of transfer of children from one district to another without prior consent of the District Child Welfare Board was also introduced to prevent unnecessary separation of children from their families.

UNICEF will continue to work with relevant government and non-government partners to ensure that more robust child protection systems at the district and national level are in place. It will include new legislation on children, the National Plan of Action on Children and the Child Protection Information Management System. UNICEF will continue to support the identification of and provision of support to vulnerable children including referrals and links to appropriate services. It will also focus on providing psychosocial support together with strengthening the capacity of child protection service providers to address child protection concerns during both emergencies and normal circumstances. Community-based mechanisms will also be further strengthened to prevent violence, exploitation and trafficking of children and women.

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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

180,570
children and caregivers were provided with psychosocial support.

244
child-friendly spaces were established (129 fully UNICEF funded, 115 support in kind with recreational kit, tents and other supplies).

39,337
unaccompanied, separated and vulnerable children were identified and registered.

13,317
unaccompanied, separated and vulnerable children were provided with emergency support.

86
police check points were established and/or strengthened to prevent and respond to trafficking and other protection-related issues and cases.

1,851
(437 girls, 825 women, 413 boys, 176 men) vulnerable/at-risk people were intercepted by police from possible trafficking and protection risks.

3,445
women groups were mobilized to prevent and address violence, abuse and exploitation, including gender-based violence.

74,970
children's clothes were distributed in the affected communities.

7,720
blankets were distributed to the vulnerable children, and pregnant and lactating mothers.

209
tents were distributed to establish child-friendly spaces and government offices destroyed by the earthquake.

Table 6.

CHILD PROTECTION	Cluster 2015 Target	Cluster Total Results	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
Children in severely affected districts received community-based psychosocial support as well as specialized psychosocial service	235,000	383,075	165,300	180,570
People in the severely-affected districts reached by community groups to prevent and address violence, abuse and exploitation, including gender-based violence and trafficking[2]	143,500	204,010	143,500	161,877
Children identified as separated or unaccompanied as a result of the earthquake reunited with their families or placed in proper alternative care	100% of identified cases	516	60% of identified cases	516

[2] The Cluster does not have targets agreed for this indicator, hence cluster targets and results are the same as those of UNICEF. However, other agencies have been proving services to prevent and address gender-based violence. Cluster information on the number of people reached by community groups and their outreach activities, beyond UNICEF and its implementing partners, is 42,133. The total of UNICEF results and other agency contributions is 204,010.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

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UNICEF provided financial and technical assistance to the Government to implement an Emergency Top-up Cash Transfer Programme (ETCTP) for vulnerable groups between June and November 2015. The US$15 million ETCTP aimed to meet immediate household expenditure needs and to increase household resilience by reducing the use of negative coping mechanisms such as reduction of food intake. The beneficiaries of existing government social assistance programmes in 19 earthquake-affected districts were provided with 3,000 NPR (US$30) in addition to the regular government payments. The ETCTP reached five categories of particularly vulnerable populations: 1) children of Dalit (so-called 'untouchables') under 5 years of age; 2) people with disabilities; 3) widows and single women aged 60 and above; 4) highly marginalized indigenous ethnic groups; and 5) senior citizens aged 70 years and above (or 60 years and above in case of Dalit). An independent assessment has verified that 93 per cent of intended beneficiaries (434,690 people) received the emergency top-up cash transfer and that the cash was used to meet multiple basic daily needs such as food (81 per cent of households), medicines (45 per cent), household essentials (37 per cent) and clothes (32 per cent). Both beneficiaries and government officials had positive perceptions of the programme, with a strong preference for cash assistance rather than in-kind assistance among beneficiaries. Following the success of the first phase, a second phase of the emergency cash transfer programme has been planned to reach all children under 5 years of age (estimated as 250,000) in the 11 most earthquake-affected districts. The concerned preparatory work has been initiated with the Government and partner NGOs. The programme aims to provide a cash benefit of 4,000 NPR (US$40) to all children under 5 years of age. In addition, the programme seeks to ensure the universal birth registration of children under 5 years of age in these districts.

UNICEF is working with the Government to strengthen the social protection system to make it more responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups in both normal times and times of crisis. This includes continued collaboration with the Government to scale up the existing Child Grant Programme to provide long-term security to all children in the affected districts and across the country.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

15 million
US$ was allocated to support 434,690 most vulnerable people in the 19 earthquake-affected districts under the ETCTP, helping them to meet their most basic needs in the aftermath of earthquakes and to better cope with the devastation and deprivation.

ETCTP

The ETCTP's basic effectiveness was proven with an independent assessment and provided a basis for making the country's social protection schemes more shock-responsive.

"The Cool Granny"

© UNICEF NEPAL/2015/APAUDEL

Bishnu Maya BK carries her one-year-old grandson Chiran BK everywhere she goes. "He is a part of my heart," she says. "His parents are busy in the fields or doing the household chores all day, so this little one is with me almost around the clock."

Bishnu Maya and her family live in Shikharpur Village of Sindhupalchowk, the district with the highest death toll in the earthquakes of April and May 2015. As a single woman from the *Dalit* Community (so-called untouchables), Bishnu Maya has been receiving social security allowance from the Government of Nepal of about US$ 5 per month. Following the earthquake, however, she received an additional top-up cash grant equivalent to US$30 through UNICEF's support. She was among almost half a million vulnerable population of the earthquake affected districts, who had been receiving the government's social security allowance, that benefitted from this cash assistance.

Bishnu Maya had lost most of her possessions when earthquake damaged her house. But when she received the quarterly allowance instalment along with extra top-up cash, she was quite pleased for it helped her regain a bit of financial independence.

"Now I don't have to ask for money with my son every now and then," she said. "I can draw upon from my secret pouch whenever there is a need."

She says it helped her take better care of her grandson too.

"I used some of the money to buy nutritious food for my grandson," she says. " Aside from that, whenever this little one demands, I have also been able to buy him little toys from the village."

"This has made me a cool granny," she says with a laugh.

Table 7.

SOCIAL PROTECTION	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
Vulnerable people including Dalit children under 5 years of age, persons with disabilities, widows, senior single women, vulnerable indigenous groups and older persons in 19 severely affected districts receive an emergency top-up to their regular social assistance grants	400,000	434,690

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D)

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UNICEF worked with the Government and partners to develop a comprehensive Communication for Development (C4D) strategy to respond to the earthquake emergency situation. In the absence of a formal humanitarian cluster for C4D, a working group on 'Communicating with Affected Communities' was formed and chaired by UNICEF to effectively coordinate the communication response among partners. Within a week of the earthquake, UNICEF partnered with Radio Nepal – the national broadcaster – to air a programme entitled 'Bhandai Sundai', or 'Talking-Listening', over a period of three months. The programme addressed issues such as psychosocial counselling, situation updates, protection, disability, health, nutrition, WASH and education. On receiving grievances from communities, the programme directly called concerned authorities to address them, thus not only gathering information but also ensuring accountability for affected populations. Similarly, UNICEF teamed up with local celebrities to produce a traveling edutainment show entitled 'Bhandai Sundai Gaon Ma', or 'Talking-Listening in Villages'. The programme reached communities in remote areas with critical messages and drew tremendous positive responses. Furthermore, UNICEF facilitated 191 community radio stations to broadcast over 100,000 minutes of messages related to staying safe, relief efforts and messages on health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection. UNICEF assessed and provided 16 community radio stations with rehabilitation supplies and trained local technicians in repairing damaged radio sets. UNICEF also partnered with youth networks to directly reach communities in the most affected areas.

A year on, UNICEF continues its C4D initiatives in the earthquake-affected districts, with a focus on resilience and further strengthening communities to better prepare and respond to future emergencies. Following the success of the first season of the radio programme 'Bhandai Sundai', the second season is now on air with three weekly shows covering issues such as human trafficking, post-earthquake situations and the needs and concerns of affected populations related to the recovery and rehabilitation process. UNICEF is supporting community feedback mechanisms in the affected districts to eliminate information gaps between the Government, the media, humanitarian agencies and communities, and providing correct and relevant information to them.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

1 million
people in most affected areas were reached with critical and life-saving messages and information.

100,000
minutes of key messages were disseminated through 191 community radio stations.

13,300
minutes of on-air psychosocial counselling, key life-saving messages and information were provided to listeners through the 'Bhandai Sundai' ('Talking-Listening') radio programme. Around 1,200 phone calls were received on the show.

1.8 million
copies were distributed of the 19 communication materials that were developed.

Support
was provided for the assessment, capacity building, restoration and rehabilitation of damaged community radio stations.

12
highly affected districts were reached through youth volunteers and entertainment-education initiatives in partnership with popular celebrities of Nepal.

Coordination
A Communicating with Affected Communities working group was established to promote coordination of communication efforts among partners.

Table 8.

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D)	UNICEF 2015 Target	UNICEF Total Results
People in severely affected districts reached with critical life-saving information	1,000,000	1,000,000

UNICEF NEPAL/2015/KTHAPA

CHILDREN'S VOICES

Exactly three months after the April earthquake, 'Children's Consultation Report' was launched, encapsulating recommendations based on interactions with 1,800 children of the 14 most earthquake-affected districts. The recommendations from the children fed into the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment led by the Government and the South Asia regional-level policy dialogue on child centred disaster risk reduction, as well as various other programmes and policies.

As a second step to these consultations and to further leverage the momentum of child-responsive disaster risk management, an additional 680 children in five earthquake-affected districts were recently consulted. They also included children from the epicentre of the earthquake of 25 April 2015.

Jointly organized by UNICEF and Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision and Terre Des Hommes as a follow-up to the children's consultation conducted in May 2015, the second round of consultations is intended to be a channel for conveying the voices of adolescents to the ears responsible for formulating local and national policies and programmes on making communities and related facilities and services more disaster resilient.

The consultations provided feedback from the quake-affected children on the various challenges they face following the disaster. This feedback included the challenges of having to live in temporary shelters and study in temporary learning centres, of not having proper WASH facilities at home, in shelters or in schools, the lack of adequate nutrition, and the physical and mental stress triggered by the earthquakes and the numerous aftershocks.

Taking stock of the challenges and recommendations voiced by the children, a report will be launched around the one-year anniversary of the earthquakes. It will highlight the continuous challenges that children are facing, and help to promote responsiveness to child- and youth-related issues and their opinions in the recovery and reconstruction process.

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Barpak to Bajura (B2B)

As a part of ongoing work on building resilience and the capacities of communities to better prepare for and respond to future emergencies, UNICEF is planning to take the lessons learned from the earthquake districts to other areas of the country through the Barpak to Bajura (B2B) initiative. This two-way initiative uses video-conferencing technology to enable children and youth affected by earthquakes to share their knowledge and experiences with children and youth in districts of the western part of the country where the threat of imminent earthquakes looms large.

The e-sharing events will kick off in the coming months connecting children from Barpak in Gorkha District, epicentre of the 25 April earthquake, with children in Bajura, a district facing many challenges in the remote, far west mountains of the country. To maximize effectiveness, this technology and idea will be integrated gradually into existing earthquake response activities, with children and adolescents in the driving seat.

Transformation through *Rupantaran*

The *'Rupantaran'* (meaning 'Transformation' in Nepali) training package for adolescents aims to empower youth with social and financial knowledge and skills so they can realize their rights and become agents of change in their families and communities. Following the earthquakes in 2015, the training package was adapted with a strong focus on disaster preparedness and response to be implemented among adolescents in the earthquake-affected districts. To make the content more relevant in the post-disaster scenario, the training course was shortened by half – all interactive activities have been replaced with examples focusing on emergency and resilience. The 14-module sequence has been modified to better address issues that adolescents face in the context of emergencies. The package is expected to be rolled out in the earthquake-affected districts in May. It should enable adolescents affected by the earthquakes to take action in and to promote disaster risk reduction and resilience-building in their communities.

When the earthquake struck Nepal last year, the quiet village of Barpak suddenly came to the limelight. Everyone wanted to go, hear and help the people of Barpak. Many did. However, not much was done to listen to the voices of children and adolescents there. Following the earthquake, children even walked for miles to collect relief items and ran errands at par with the adults. However, the specific challenges they were grappling with were largely overlooked.

Against this backdrop, UNICEF's partner Changa Foundation went to Barpak and consulted with adolescent children. That was the first time the children of Barpak had been given a chance to express their griefs and challenges collectively through group discussion, body mapping and other tools.

"So many programmes had been organized in Barpak for the adults but this consultation is the first one to include adolescents like us," said Jaswan Ghale, 16 years old, from Barpak.

"When we shared our experiences, the emotions deposited deep down came forth and we were very relieved," Sabina Sunar, 15 years old, of Barpak said. with a smile. "It felt good and empowering."

-PHOTO COURTESY: CHANGA FOUNDATION

SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS

In the past 12 months, UNICEF has worked with its counterparts and partners to distribute vital supplies to children and their families affected by the earthquake of 25 April and its numerous aftershocks. The supplies include tents; hygiene kits; vaccines; water purification solutions; vitamins and therapeutic foods; medical supplies and kits; bed nets; materials for information, education and communication; school, recreational and early childhood development kits; among others. As of 12 April 2016, the total value of UNCIEF supplies received amounted to US$34.75 million, out of which US$30.85 million worth of supplies had been distributed.

The distribution of these life-saving supplies along the difficult terrains of Nepal posed a great challenge. Further, the monsoon rains from July to August and the more than four-month long fuel crisis caused by political strife beginning 20 September, as well as the harsh winter and snowfall in the mountainous region, affected the transportation of relief and recovery supplies in numerous places in hard-hit districts.

To ensure that the humanitarian supplies reached their intended beneficiaries, UNICEF launched a new pilot system called 'Supply Chain Monitoring and Tracking System' (SCMTS) in Kathmandu, Dolakha, Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk – four of the 14 most affected districts in Nepal. The SCMTS is a real-time monitoring and reporting system of distribution and quality of life-saving supplies that UNICEF provides by the use of mobile applications available on smartphones and other handheld devices. In the first round of trial, supplies such as ready-to-use therapeutic food, hygiene kits, school-in-a-box and midwifery kits were identified as 'tracer supplies', proxies to know the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the supply chain.

Barcoding application allows management of delivery of supplies through automated and real-time recording and tracking of receipt and handover of supplies. Another application called UniSupply allows monitoring and follow-up of the actual distribution of supplies by partners to intended beneficiaries for effective programme implementation. The third application, Product Feedback Application, helps to ensure the quality products for beneficiaries by facilitating the cycle of feedback and product improvement.

The project aims to enhance UNICEF's accountability to the targeted populations in the affected districts by enabling better traceability of humanitarian supplies throughout the supply and delivery chain. This process includes receipt by UNICEF, handover to implementing partners, distribution to and use by beneficiaries, and assurance of accountability to beneficiaries and donors in terms of delivery and quality. Following the review and evaluation of the pilot project in the second and third quarter of 2016, the project will be rolled out in other affected districts.

Nepal 2015
Porters and a local health official carry UNICEF-provided vaccines across a suspended bridge on the way to a measles, rubella and polio vaccination campaign, to be conducted at Barpak health post. Barpak in Gorkha district was the epicentre of the April 25 earthquake.

UNICEF NEPAL/2015/KPANDAY

PARTNERSHIPS

Over the past year, the international community has responded swiftly and generously to the immediate needs of the children of Nepal.

As of 6 April, UNICEF had received US$117.9 million from its donors, with which it has been able to support 1.1 million children in the 14 most severely affected districts. Thanks to these generous contributions, UNICEF could provide clean water; water buckets; water purification tablets; soap; sanitation facilities; hygiene kits; tents and tarpaulins; health supplies and equipment; vaccines; shelter homes for pregnant and lactating women; vitamins and therapeutic foods; temporary learning centres; school-in-a-box and other educational supplies; psychosocial support; protective services for the prevention of violence, trafficking and family separation; cash assistance to the most vulnerable populations; and technical and financial assistance to the counterparts and partners that make these supplies, services and resources well delivered and used.

UNICEF would like to sincerely thank the governments of the following countries and countries that contribute to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for their generosity and support:

- Australia
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Denmark
- Finland
- Japan
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Norway
- Romania
- Sweden
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Thailand
- United Kingdom
- United States

UNICEF would also like to extend its warmest gratitude to the UNICEF National Committees and UNICEF country offices of the following countries for their strong support from their private sector fundraising activities.

National Committees:

- Andorra
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Canada
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
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- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
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- Ecuador
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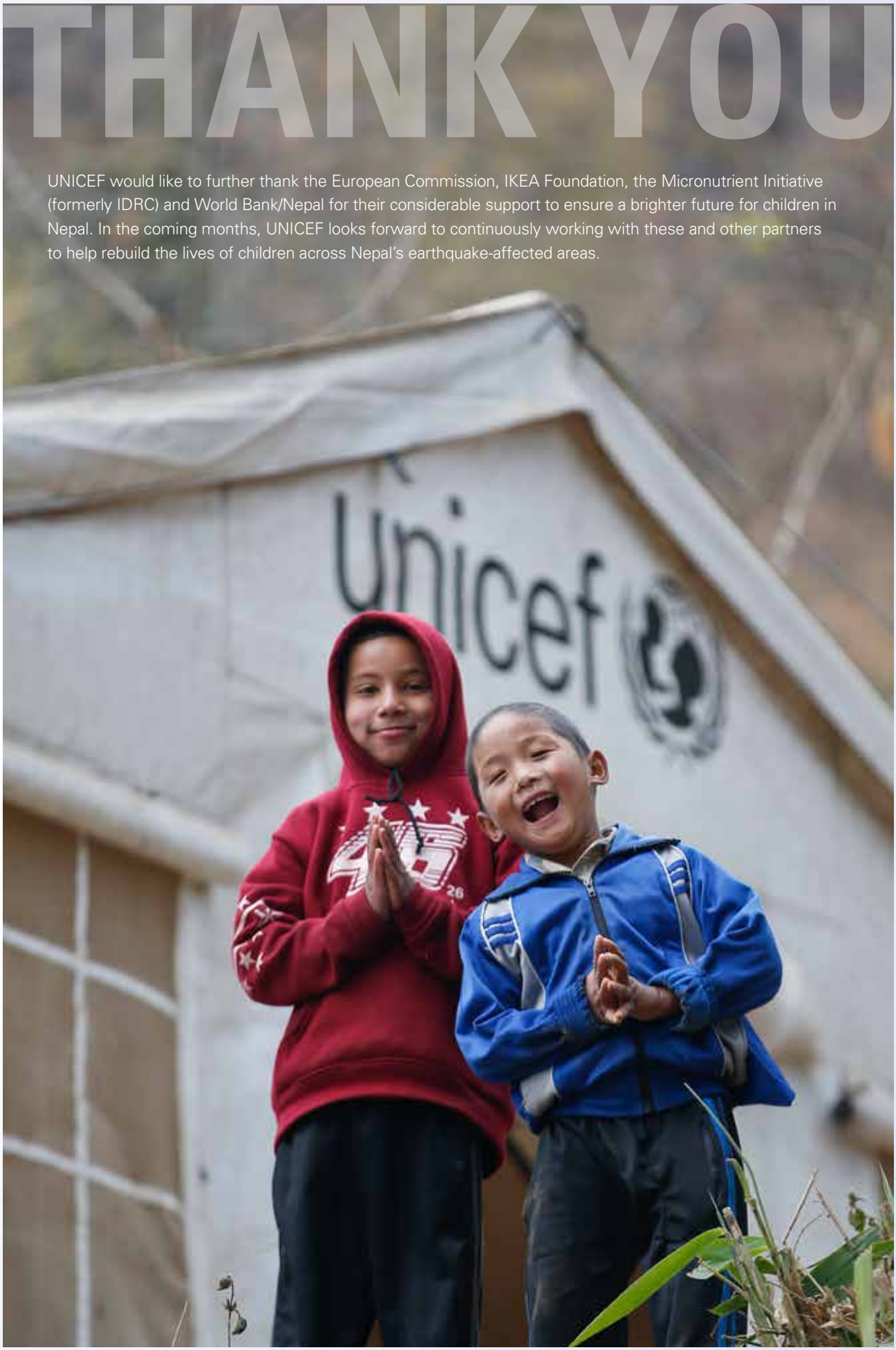
- Mexico
- Nepal
- Peru
- Philippines
- Romania
- Serbia
- South Africa
- Thailand
- United Arab Emirates
- Uruguay
- Venezuela
- West Bank and Gaza

THANK YOU

UNICEF would like to further thank the European Commission, IKEA Foundation, the Micronutrient Initiative (formerly IDRC) and World Bank/Nepal for their considerable support to ensure a brighter future for children in Nepal. In the coming months, UNICEF looks forward to continuously working with these and other partners to help rebuild the lives of children across Nepal's earthquake-affected areas.



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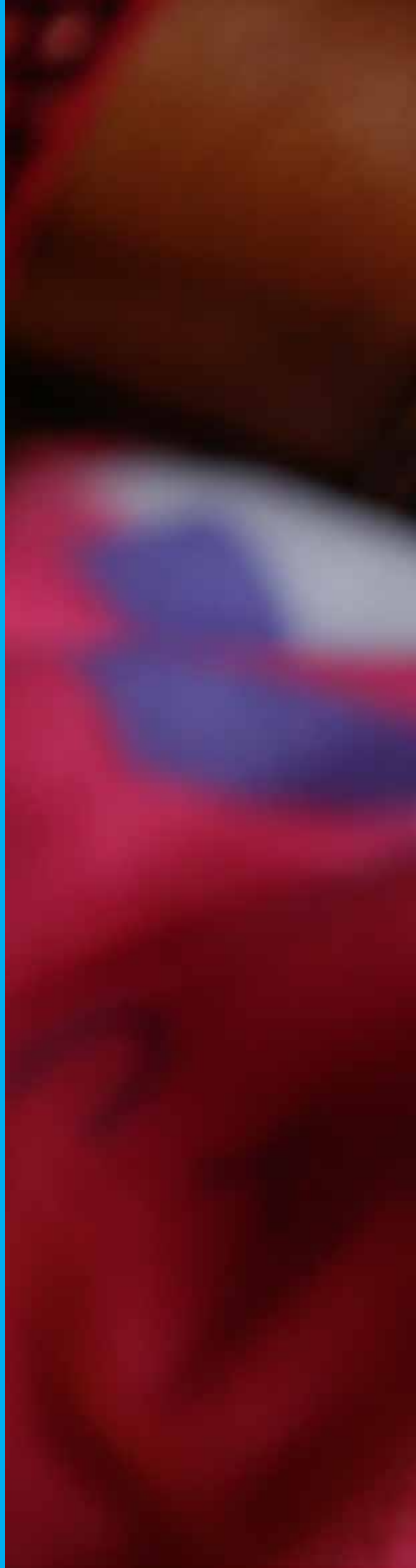
The feet of a 3-day-old boy following a warm oil massage from his grandmother Chinmaya Shrestha in a shelter home supported by UNICEF in Gorkha District, the epicentre of the April 25 earthquake in 2015
Photo credit © UNICEF Nepal/2016/NShrestha



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