

# Session 3:

## The impact of a natural disaster

Session 3 focuses on the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster, like an earthquake and the work of local and international Red Cross teams to support people affected.

It features eyewitness accounts from the Nepal earthquake and utilises a range of engaging resources to help students better understand the humanitarian impact of a natural disaster.

*NB: The Nepal earthquake was just one example of a major natural disaster that happened. You can use more recent natural disasters to supplement learning and encourage young people to compare and contrast the unique impacts, response, recovery and resilience to different natural disasters when teaching about this topic.*

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### Learning objectives

#### Young people are able to:

- > Explain and analyse the impact a natural disaster might have on individuals and local communities.
- > Explore the role of volunteers in the preparation for, and recovery after, a natural disaster.
- > Develop an understanding of the role of the Red Cross in responding to humanitarian needs after an earthquake.

### Key questions

- > What was the immediate impact of the Nepal earthquake?
- > What was the immediate humanitarian response to the earthquake?
- > How were local and international communities involved in this response?



Kathmandu, Nepal.  
25 April 2015.

Photo © Carl Whetham / IFRC.

# Introductory activities

## You will need:

- > [Access to YouTube to show a short interview film from the Red Cross](#)
- > [Vimeo question sheet \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Vimeo answer sheet \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Nepal earthquake infographic \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Person outline \(PDF\)](#)

## 1. How did Red Cross volunteers support people affected by the Nepal earthquake?

When creating this resource an interview was filmed with a Nepal Red Cross volunteer Sameer Bajracharya.

Sameer was one of many volunteers who worked in Nepal before, during and after the 2015 earthquake. He was based in one of the areas affected by the earthquake.

***“before the earthquake ...[people] didn’t talk to each other, but after the earthquake, they were there to help: neighbours and community members were actively participating in rescuing people...”***

*Sameer Bajracharya*

Get the interview ready to show on the screen and issue students with a copy of the resource [Vimeo question sheet \(PDF\)](#).



Show the film, and pause and ‘rewind’ as necessary to allow students time to identify the answers to the questions below.

- > How did the Nepal Red Cross help people to prepare for the disaster?
- > How did they help people cope when the earthquake struck?
- > How did they help people to recover after the earthquake?
- > How are people recovering?

Use the [Vimeo answer sheet \(PDF\)](#) to suggest potential answers to the task.

Discuss answers given by students.

## Further questions

- > Why do students think it is important that the Red Cross has local volunteers working at the community level across the world?
- > What difference might volunteers make when a disaster happens?
- > How do they change the speed of the response?
- > What role does language, local knowledge and community cohesion play in response and recovery?

Encourage students’ responses to the film and explain that local Red Cross volunteers are ready to help communities during and after a disaster – wherever and whenever they happen, including the UK.

Hand out the [Nepal earthquake infographic \(PDF\)](#) to help students understand the scale of the event and the humanitarian response. Encourage students to discuss the ‘disaster’ and ‘emergency response’ sections.

In the case of the Nepal earthquake, local volunteers played a vital part in the emergency response operations. Having first aid and emergency response trained volunteers with local knowledge made a huge difference when local infrastructure and transportation was disrupted and other response organisations such as the army weren’t able to immediately reach people in need.



## 2. Build a picture of a volunteer

Ask students to use the [Person outline \(PDF\)](#) to start to build a picture of a volunteer who is trained to help after a disaster.

*You will also find cardboard outlines of people in many discount stores if you prefer students to have a physical shape to draw on instead. These figures could form part of a useful display as part of the process of working through this unit.*

Encourage students to add in the skills and other characteristics they think a volunteer might need to help people before, during and after a disaster.

For example, Sameer who is shown in the video:

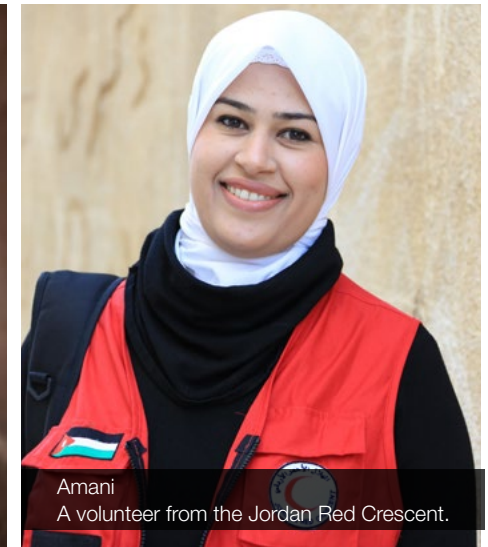
- > can support people practically and emotionally to help them prepare for and cope with an emergency situation
- > has first aid skills
- > can communicate well and prioritise activities
- > can deal with stressful situations
- > knows what to do to keep himself and others safe in an emergency
- > has compassion and wants to help people recover from a disaster.

Consider the training and support that the volunteers will also need.

Once students have completed their volunteer profile outlines, encourage them to think about the skills and characteristics they have that would help them be able to better cope with and respond to an emergency situation.



Sainte  
A volunteer from the Central African Red Cross.



Amani  
A volunteer from the Jordan Red Crescent.



Narayan  
A volunteer from the Nepal Red Cross.



Marciana  
A volunteer from the Timor Leste Red Cross.



Colin and Andrew  
Volunteers from the British Red Cross.



# Activities for key stages 3-5

Students should now be asked to complete an age-appropriate activity from the following list.

*NB: Elements of younger (or older) age group activities may still be used with particular age groups. Don't feel confined to the age bracket. You are welcome to adopt or adapt these ideas.*





# KS3: Reporting the impacts of the Nepal earthquake

**In this activity:** students will create their own media report about a natural disaster.

## You will need:

- > [Reporters cards \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Script guidance sheet \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Photos of the aftermath \(PDF\)](#)

*Lay out the resources for this task, which will involve students playing the role of reporters on the ground after an earthquake has happened.*

*Resources include the [Reporters cards resource \(PDF\)](#) and [Script guidance sheet \(PDF\)](#), along with some [photographs](#) of the aftermath of the earthquake printed out, some blank paper, sticky notes and marker pens.*

Read the context of the activity once students have arrived and sat down:

You are a news journalist. You are on the scene in a local community near to the epicentre of the 2015 Nepal earthquake.

You had been working on another news story, but you have now been caught up in the events and decide to tell the story of those people affected by the natural disaster.

You have your portable recording equipment with you, which allows you to make video and editing equipment and software with you, which means that you can work on some visuals to match the sound recording.

You also have your trusty notebook to write down notes, or scribble thoughts, and a plastic folder in which you can place relevant documents.

Using the script guidance sheet, students are asked to use the contents of the reporter's cards to put together the running order for a **four minute long news broadcast**. This will be shown on the news back in the UK to report the immediate effects of the earthquake on a local community in Nepal.

Their broadcast should cover:

- > The immediate impact of the earthquake – who has been affected and in what way?
- > What the survivors might need in the short term.

It could also include details about:

- > How local Red Cross volunteers are engaging in search and rescue, first aid, emotional support and logistics operations to help people who have been trapped, injured or who have lost their homes in the disaster.

Students could draw on their learning from watching Sameer's interview.

This could take students anything from one to two hours to produce properly.

## Additional resources

It may also be worth showing a few short news clips from after the earthquake to remind students of the format of this sort of reporting.

If you want to know some of the other terms involved in making videos, check out the very useful list here: <https://vimeo.com/blog/post/glossary-of-common-video-terms>

# KS4: Actions and emotions

**In this activity:** students will review a first-hand account of the Nepal earthquake, consider the sequence of events and plot reactions and emotions over time.

## You will need:

- > [Description of the earthquake \(PDF\)](#)    > [Twitter template \(PPT\)](#)
- > [Actions and emotions worksheet \(PDF\)](#)    > [Tweet activity \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Nepal emotion line \(PPT\)](#)

*This could build on the KS3 task, or the resources here could be used with KS3 students too.*

Rachel Hay, who was in Pokhara with her partner Pete Buckley at the time of the earthquake, wrote an account of the first few hours after the earthquake. She was having her lunch when the restaurant she was sitting in started to shake. As a former geography teacher, working for the Royal Scottish Geographical Society at the time, she understood what was happening straight away and left the building.

*Print off copies of the [Description of the earthquake \(PDF\)](#) in advance of the lesson. Cut out each paragraph and place in an envelope so that the order of the account of the earthquake is mixed up and not in any sort of order. Issue students with the envelopes containing the segments of Rachel's account of what happened in during the earthquake.*

## 1. Sequencing task

In pairs or small groups, students start by sequencing the paragraphs to tell the story of the earthquake, as Rachel experienced it in the correct order. You may wish to print out a couple of copies of the description in its original form, so that students can compare their answers.

Ask them to explain the clues that they used to identify the relative position of each paragraph in the response.

## 2. Identifying actions and emotions

Once students have sequenced the events, ask them to identify the parts of the story where an action or emotion happens.

*Ask them to record their observations in a table, using the template in the [Actions and emotions worksheet \(PDF\)](#).*

| Stage of the story  | Actions                           | Emotions   |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Realisation:</b> "It's an earthquake. Run!"                          | E.g. communicate what's happening | E.g. fear, confusion   |
| <b>Initial response:</b> "We grabbed our bags and ran into the street." | E.g. get to safety                | E.g. relief, fear  |
| <b>During the earthquake:</b> "The whole structure was unstable."       | E.g. assess situation             | E.g. concern for others                                      |
| <b>After the earthquake:</b> "What to do next."                         | E.g. talking to others            | E.g. worry about family, friends and others, shock, concern. |

### 3. Plotting emotions over time

Use the [Nepal emotion line \(PPT\)](#) to draw together student's ideas and plot the ways Rachel's emotions changed over time.

### 4. Extension: communicating the impacts

Many tweets were sent by people who were caught up in the activity, including a few sent by Rachel Hay. Humanitarian agencies also sent tweets as part of their work.

Think for a moment: what sort of tweets do you think were sent following the event and why?

Reasons for sending tweets might include:

- a) Information – updates on what is happening.
- b) Advice for people – where to find help, which roads are closed, what the weather forecast is going to be etc.
- c) Requests for help – charitable details, phone numbers etc.
- d) **RTs** (retweeting) other messages from related accounts
- e) Sharing media (images / short videos etc.) so that people could see the impacts.
- f) People letting others know that they are safe.

Students could create their own example tweets informing people of a hazard situation as it develops.

A [twitter template](#) has been provided to support with this.

Ask students to complete the [Tweet activity](#) to introduce this idea of information about a hazard event being provided by a short social media communication.

- > What do the tweets tell us about how people were feeling?
- > What do they tell us about the impact of the earthquake?
- > What particular support do you think they would need, judging by the things they are mentioning?

Once these have been discussed and explored, ask students to consider how might the messages change over time, as the response developed?

We'll explore longer term recovery in Session 4.

#### Further information

Tweets and other social media can be collated during an event by tools such as Storify. Here is one that was produced by the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) following the Nepal earthquake: <https://storify.com/decappeal/nepal-earthquake-updates>

The next time a major event of this kind happens, why not use Storify yourself, or task students with the job of collating a number of tweets and other social media information.

This could then act as a resource for students to interact with. Another way to do this would be to use an app called Flipboard, which works on tablets and other mobile devices as well as computers and was used in an earlier session. This similarly allows news stories to be collated.



# KS5: The role of mapping

**In this activity:** students will explore some of the maps which were produced following the Nepal earthquake. They will consider how maps are used to help co-ordinate humanitarian response operations. We also introduce the importance of logistics in emergency response situations.

## You will need:

- > [Sit rep map \(PDF\)](#)
- > [IDP camps map \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Logistics map \(PDF\)](#)
- > [Logistical challenge \(PDF\)](#)

## 1. Introduction

Following a disaster such as the one in Nepal, a major priority is access to spatial information. It is vital that humanitarian aid agencies, like the Red Cross have access to accurate maps so that they can organise, and co-ordinate their response.

Often infrastructure and key facilities are heavily affected by a disaster, which is challenging for the transportation of aid. There is a need to coordinate personnel in a fast-paced and confusing situation. If an area is remote and maps are not available, which is often the case in countries in which the Red Cross works, this can cause problems for this coordination. One option to make good quality maps available is to use OpenStreetMap, which can be described as the 'Wikipedia of maps'.

***“OpenStreetMap is key to our work, and we engage with the data produced through Missing Maps (<http://www.missingmaps.org/>) for crises preparedness and emergency response.”***

*Paul Knight, British Red Cross*

## 2. Nepal earthquake maps

The British Red Cross has a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team who create a range of maps which can be used to support humanitarian response work.

Students can access some of the maps that were used by the Red Cross after the Nepal earthquake to gain insight into how data and maps were used to support the humanitarian response.

- > A [SitRep map](#) was kept updated throughout the earthquake response to show the numbers of dead, injured and missing people; damage to homes and displacement of families; items distributed and teams deployed to different areas. Maps are layered so that users can quickly find the information that is most relevant to them.

A number of acronyms appear in this map. Definitions appear below:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>FA</b>    | First aid                              |
| <b>CADRE</b> | Community Action for Disaster Response |
| <b>NDRT</b>  | National Disaster Response Team        |

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>PSS</b>     | Psycho-Social Support                       |
| <b>WASH</b>    | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene               |
| <b>RFL/DBM</b> | Restoring Family Links/Dead Body Management |
| <b>DDRT</b>    | District Disaster Response Teams            |

- > An [IDP camps map](#) was produced when the OpenStreetMap community traced around tarpaulins immediately after the earthquake. This shows the areas in Kathmandu where internally displaced people (IDP) were no longer living in their homes and needed Red Cross support.
- > A [logistics map](#) was used by the Red Cross teams to identify obstacles which might exist in getting items both into, and around the country. It also shows the locations of warehouses.

## 3. Why is mapping important?

Using the maps as reference sources, ask students to research and present answers to the following questions:

- > What help do people need immediately after a disaster?
- > What types of information do humanitarian agencies need in order to be able to provide assistance to those who need it?
- > Why is it important that maps are kept updated during the response to a natural disaster?



## 4. The importance of logistics in emergency response

Logistics can be defined as follows:

**Logistics is the management of the flow of things between the point of origin and the point of consumption. Logistics requires careful planning while transportation is the mechanism for moving things.**

Supply students with a copy of the [Logistical challenge \(PDF\)](#).

Ask students to choose one of the situations in the logistical challenge table, each of which requires logistical support. Encourage them to assess the nature of the need.

Identify an appropriate map, which would be used to help in the chosen situation, and explain why this map would be of particular use.

Think carefully about the following things:

- > How difficult might it be to get things to people when roads or transport links are damaged.
- > Why did the Red Cross map the particular data that they did, e.g. casualties, deaths, injured, number of people displaced from homes, areas where buildings fully collapsed, partially collapsed?

Present to the group a brief report on your chosen scenario and map.

## 5. Further reading

<http://blogs.redcross.org.uk/emergencies/2015/04/map-team-joins-race-to-reach-earthquake-survivors/>

Learn more about the team creating maps that bring vital help to earthquake-hit families.

<http://www.wired.co.uk/article/mapping-nepal-after-the-earthquake>

This shows the tremendous speed at which this sort of community mapping can take shape, which is vital for the speedy distribution of humanitarian aid to those most in need of it.

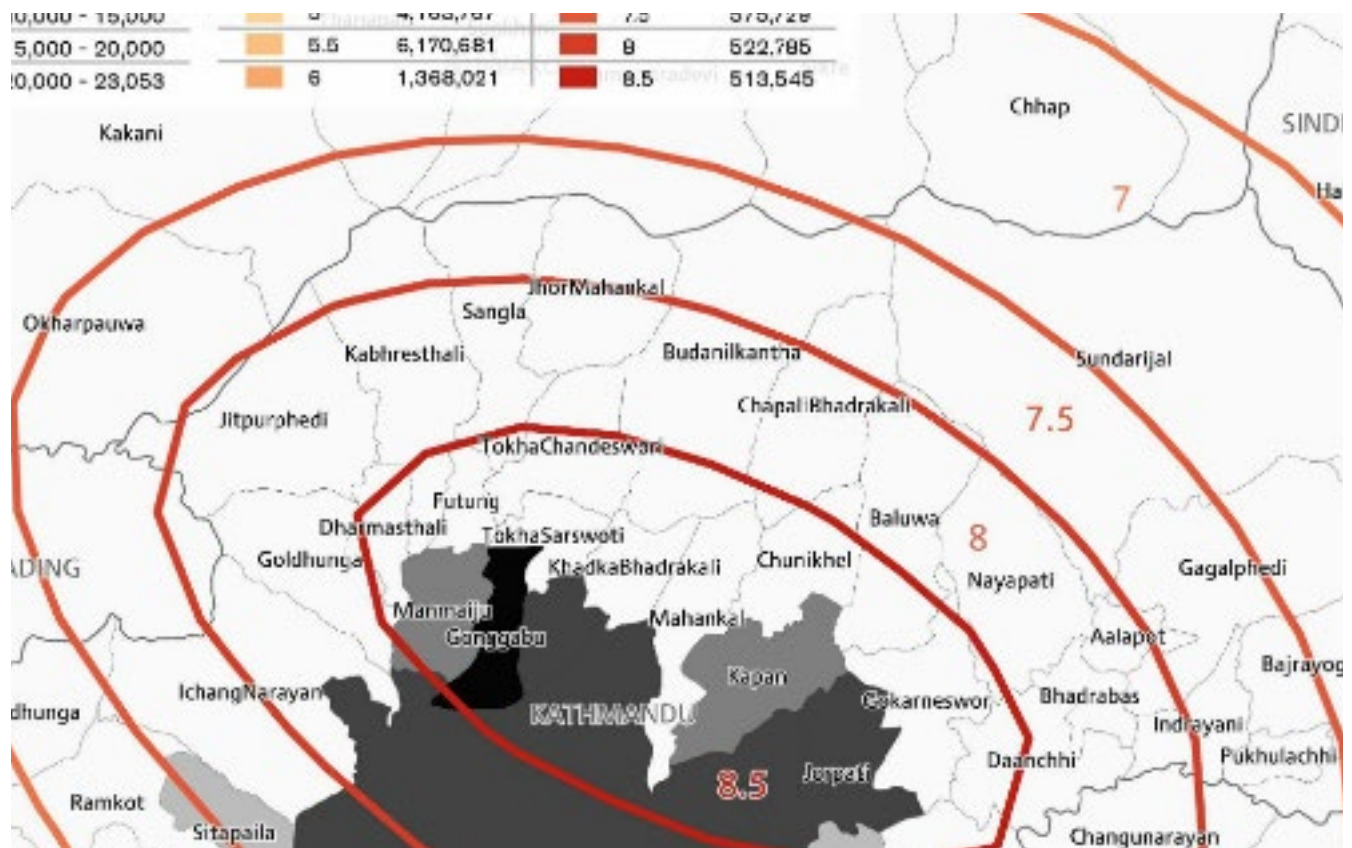
## 6. Get involved

The MapSwipe app is an easy way for students to participate in mapping on their smartphone and help the work of Missing Maps.

It is available to download from different app stores, and was produced by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

Students could be set a challenge to map a particular area of land each week to support the work of aid agencies.

See <http://mapswipe.org/> and [@TheMissingMaps](#) for more details.



# Supporting resources for Session 3

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## How did Red Cross volunteers support people affected by the Nepal earthquake?

Watch the video which was specially filmed for this resource.

<https://vimeo.com/162543449/c5030159ea>

We interviewed Nepal Red Cross volunteer Sameer Bajracharya, one of many who worked in Nepal before, during and after the earthquake.

**“before the earthquake ...[people] didn’t talk to each other, but after the earthquake, they were there to help: neighbours and community members were actively participating in rescuing people...”**

**Watch the film and pause and ‘rewind’ as necessary to identify the answers to the following questions:**

How did the Nepal Red Cross help people to prepare for the disaster?

How did they help people cope when the earthquake struck?

How did they help people to recover after the earthquake?

How are people recovering?



# How did Red Cross volunteers support people affected by the Nepal earthquake?

## Suggested answer sheet

### How did the Nepal Red Cross help people to prepare for the disaster?

- > Simulations.
- > Ran courses.
- > Fire extinguishers placed in locations.
- > Cupboards removed from walls.
- > Demonstrations.
- > Drills – Drop, Cover and Hold training.

### How did they help people cope when the earthquake struck?

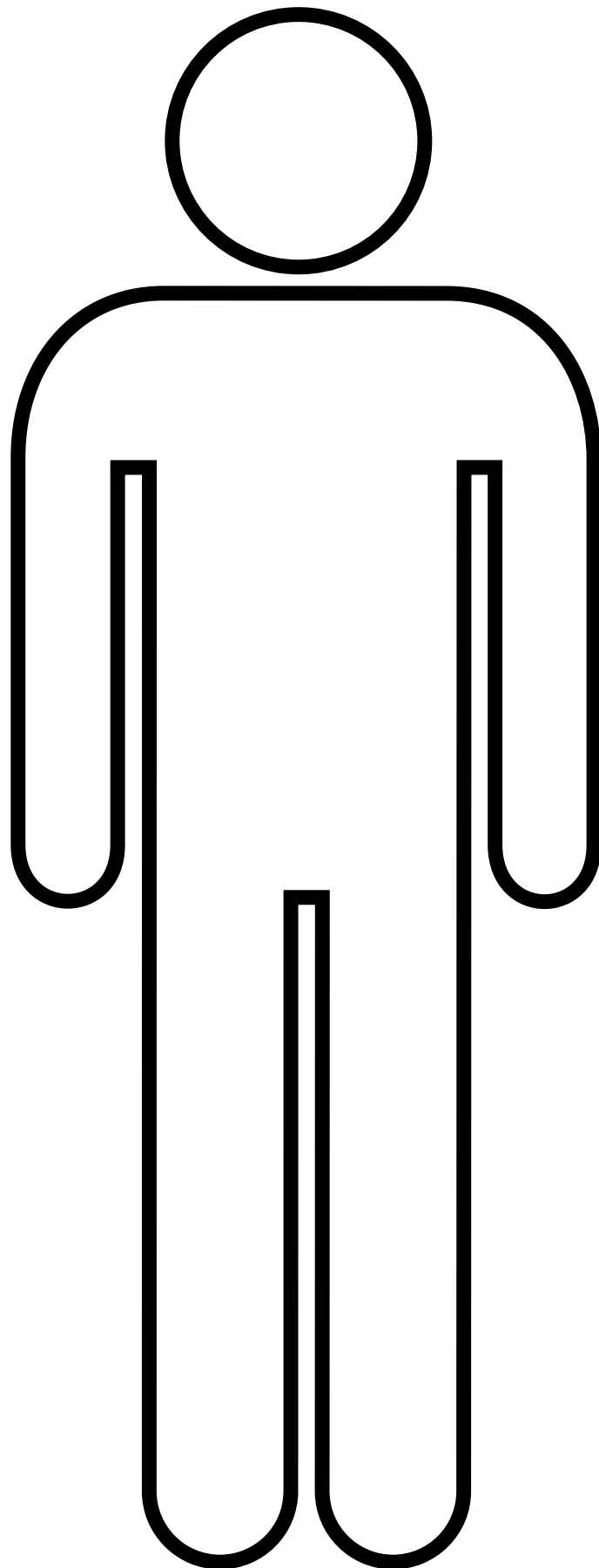
- > Identified dangerous buildings and assessed the damage.
- > Calming people down by listening to their fears.
- > Evacuated people to open areas, e.g. a field where they were safe.
- > Local volunteers thought about where to find food safely, and coordinated food supply from local shops.
- > Search and rescue started on the day of the earthquake and carried on for two days after.
- > Providing first aid treatment for survivors.
- > Co-ordinated with the police, and Nepalese army to rescue other victims.

### How did they help people to recover after the earthquake?

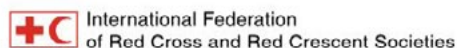
- > Fourth day after the earthquake, focused on WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- > Distributing tarpaulins for shelter
- > Giving cash to help people buy the things they needed immediately

### How are people recovering?

- > Some people are still recovering from the shock of the event.
- > Some are still without proper sanitation.
- > There are still lots of places where assistance is needed.







## NEPAL EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement continues to support communities affected by the 25 April and 12 May 2015 earthquakes in Nepal.

### THE DISASTER



**8,856**  
people killed



**22,309**  
people injured



**5.6 million**  
people affected



**602,257**  
homes destroyed



**285,099**  
homes damaged



**30,754**  
classrooms  
destroyed or  
damaged

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE



**7,977**  
volunteers deployed



**56,250**  
people received  
healthcare



**247,839**  
people received safe  
water



**496,724**  
families (about 2.5  
million people)  
received food



**650,000**  
people received  
emergency shelter  
materials or tools



**41,707**  
families (200,000  
people) received cash  
to help with  
immediate needs

### EARLY RECOVERY



### RECOVERY PRIORITIES



#### Health

Protect community health, build resilience



#### Livelihoods

Restore people's ability to earn a living



#### Construction

Support people to build back more safely, and rebuild or rehabilitate schools and health posts



#### Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

Sustainably reconnect water and sewerage, improve hygiene

## Reporter's cards

Here are some of the sights, sounds and items that you have captured in your role as reporter.

**Vt** = Footage of events (along with the length in minutes and seconds e.g. 1'15")

**Au** = Audio (along with the length)

**N** = Notes (hand-written)

**Ar** = Artefact – something physical which you have picked up and could have an image of, or be handling while talking to the camera (a piece to camera as it's called)

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Vt: Collapsed buildings – a pan across a street which has rubble strewn across it, making it very difficult for any vehicles to get through without it being cleared. (30") | Vt: Child's shoe in the rubble. (5")   | Au: Whistles of rescuers calling for silence, so that they can listen for signs that someone is trapped under the building they are working on. (8") |
| Vt & Au: Interview with a Red Cross volunteer from the village, who has been helping to coordinate the local response. (1'30")  | Au: Sounds of people in despair as they wait for news of their relatives. (15")                                      | N: A list of questions which you will ask a survivor, a local rescue worker, and a local politician if you get the chance to meet them.              |
| Ar: A postcard to show what a building looked like before it was destroyed in the earthquake.   | Ar: A hand-written list of people who are thought to be missing from a school that was demolished by the earthquake. | Vt: Short clip of people taking selfies with damaged buildings behind them.  |
| Au: The sound of a building collapsing with a warning shout seconds before. (10")   | Ar: A picture of a child handed to you by a parent. They are missing.  | Ar: A mobile phone with a smashed screen.  |
| Vt & Au: Finding a mobile phone in the rubble, showing a text message asking someone called Ravi to get in touch.   | N: A list of timings of events that have happened since the earthquake.  | Ar: A plastic water bottle full of water – your only water that you have left.   |

## Script guidance document

This activity asks students to imagine themselves as news reporters, and to produce a report on the Nepal earthquake. It should last about **four minutes**.

There are opportunities for students to produce a podcast, or some other format of report. This could involve the use of an appropriate app on a tablet, or a piece of software such as Audacity.

### Guidance on the format of news items

You will need an **‘anchor intro’**. An anchor intro quickly sets up the story you are going to tell, and puts it in context, without giving away too much. It should also introduce you as the reporter, and perhaps provide a short description of where you are standing, the time of day etc. and what has just happened.

### Think of the ‘narrative’ or story you want to tell.

As you write your narration, try to tell a story with a beginning, middle, and end. Draw listeners into the story by setting the scene, introducing some questions, some of which you will go on to answer. Use narrative elements and change location at least once. Use sound effectively e.g. the wailing of a siren – or perhaps it is the absence of the noises that are usually there that tells the story.

### Have some different ‘voices’ other than yours

This could be a brief interview with someone.

### The focus for your broadcast should be on

1. The immediate impact of the earthquake – who has been affected and in what way?
2. What the survivors might need in the short term.
3. How local Red Cross volunteers are engaging in search and rescue, first aid, emotional support and logistics operations to help people who have been trapped, injured, or who have lost their homes in the disaster.

### Simple tips

- > Be conversational in your style.
- > Don’t use too many difficult words.
- > If you are using initials of organisations, you need to explain them first.

### Additional resource

The BBC School Report page has a series of useful resources for students and teachers.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/teacher\\_resources](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/teacher_resources)





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## Sequencing activity

Rachel Hay, who was in Pokhara with her partner Pete Buckley at the time of the earthquake, wrote this account of the first few hours after the earthquake.

Print off and cut each paragraph into strips. As an initial activity, students can then be asked to sort events into their correct sequence.

### Description of the earthquake

There was the beep of a horn and a futile look down the street for the truck that was causing the vibration. We searched for the answer on each other's faces, but we already knew. The flower pots next to us were wobbling uncontrollably, signs on the street were shaking... the tremors were intensifying.

We jumped to our feet and momentarily glanced around at the other people who, moments before, had been calmly drinking tea and eating cinnamon rolls or masala omelettes. Pete voiced the reality: "It's an earthquake. Run!" There was the sudden sound of chairs scraping the floor, and the continuing low rumble of the tremors. We grabbed our bags and ran out into the street, relieved that we were on the ground floor.

Once outside, I looked up to my right and saw bricks falling from a construction site further along the street. The whole structure was unstable and it seemed certain that it would crumble. I stared aghast at a lone construction worker who stood transfixed at the top of the building, near where the bricks were dislodging themselves, clinging to the rudimentary bamboo scaffolding. Why wasn't he running to save himself? I knew the answer: up there, the shaking would make movement almost impossible.

A frightened solo traveller, Franziska, followed us out of The Black & White café, still clinging to her half-full glass of lassi, and asked, "I'm travelling on my own. Can I stay with you guys?" The three of us ran across the road to get away from the buildings, and waited for the seemingly endless tremors to stop. It was as if we were standing on water and we felt dizzy and terrified.

It took over one minute for the shaking to subside, then we attempted to chat to Franziska (while the geographer in me contemplated epicenter, magnitude, impacts and aid). I thought of Kathmandu and our friends there, and of all the small villages and ramshackle buildings that we had passed on our eight-hour bus journey to Pokhara from Kathmandu the previous day. Had the people we had seen and met along the way survived? When would we be able to let our friends and family know that we were safe, and stop them from worrying?

It was difficult to ascertain when the tremors actually stopped, as our legs kept shaking for a while longer. A few people, including the waiters from The Black & White Café, crossed the road and went back indoors soon after the tremors stopped, but the majority remained on the lake side of the street for a while longer. It felt quite absurd when we eventually returned to the café and requested our bill! Like us, the waiters were of course in shock, and said that while there had been very small tremors for the previous two weeks, this was the biggest and longest earthquake they had ever experienced. They were remarkably matter-of-fact about it and remained professional, even though they must have been incredibly concerned about family members and friends.



I felt scared as Franziska and I climbed the stairs to her room on the second floor, while everyone else waited outside. The nervous tension was palpable and I was keen to spend as little time as possible on the second floor of the hotel. While Franziska quickly collected a few of her belongings, and picked up the two large bottles of water that had fallen from the chest of drawers during the quake, I used the bathroom (praying that an aftershock wouldn't strike!). I waited outside the room for Franziska, and anxiously looked across at the red-brick building, and also at the hotel directly across from me, wondering if the large crack was new, or had existed before the earthquake. I nervously looked down at the street two floors below, and saw Pete waiting anxiously for us. At that moment, everything began to shake intensely again. I felt torn: wait for Franziska or run for it? I chose the latter, while screaming Franziska's name. The stairs seemed to jerk and shift as I ran, and I felt sure that the ceiling would cave in on top of me. How would Pete explain to my parents that after surviving the main shock, and against my better judgement, I was killed on the second floor of someone else's hotel, just because I needed the loo!? Pete was yelling my name and the hotel owner was yelling for Franziska. I ran to Pete then, along with the hotel owner, ran past the red-brick building. Fortunately, Franziska was not far behind us. I was suddenly terrified that the two earthquakes we had experienced so far had actually been foreshocks in the build up to an even bigger event.

We waited for a while in the street with a group of locals who were frantically trying to get hold of their relatives and friends in other parts of Nepal, and with other tourists who were trying to access wi-fi to reassure their loved ones back home. Mahima, a friend in Kathmandu, phoned us to ask if we were safe. We asked her to contact a mutual friend, currently living in Honduras, to ask her to post a message on Facebook on our behalf to let our friends and family know that we were safe. After a love-hate relationship with Facebook, its huge value during a natural disaster was immediately apparent. It was such a relief to get a message out and reduce the stress and worry that our families back in the UK would certainly feel when they woke up to the headlines.

Unbelievably, The Snow Leopard Hotel's wi-fi was still working and when we ventured close enough to use it, it was amazing to see that the earthquake already featured on the BBC News website. Twitter seemed to load more effectively than any other websites, so we relied on it for updates. Twitter has been invaluable for keeping in touch with the outside world, and for accessing useful information about the on-going crisis. One of my contacts joked that I was in 'one helluva [sic] Geography lesson!'

Surprisingly quickly, mobile phones and social media were bringing us snippets of information from the capital, Kathmandu. We heard that the Dharahara Tower, which we had seen only the week before, and had considered climbing, had collapsed. I felt sick thinking of all the people who would have been trapped on it as it fell. I later read that one man lost six family members, including his daughter, in the collapse. How can one person cope with the immense stress of that? We then heard that Kathmandu and Patan Durbar Squares had been severely damaged. With Saturday being the holy day in Nepal, there were sure to be many Hindus and Buddhists worshipping in the old temples. Did they all get to safety? I dread to think what the impact would have been had the earthquake struck either on a school-day, or at night, when more people would have been at risk of being indoors when buildings collapsed. Another sickening realisation was that if the earthquake had struck at exactly the same time the previous Saturday, Pete and I would have been in amongst the temples of Kathmandu Durbar Square, in the wrong place at the wrong time, and our families might still be waiting for news on our whereabouts. Trekking in the Langtang area was also on the cards for Saturday 25th April...

Now, five days after the M7.8 earthquake, we have experienced numerous aftershocks, ranging from barely perceptible to M6.7, and have been ready to run at any moment, with a bag of supplies always to hand. The fear and uncertainty, combined with the unending flow of images and soundbites from Kathmandu, are exhausting, even though we are in a relatively safe area, and do not have family or property here. We can only imagine the stress and suffering of those in the worst hit areas in Kathmandu who are living in make-shift camps, with very limited supplies of water, food and medicine. I wonder whether the media have communicated the current situation across the country accurately, including the geographical variations of the impacts. The footage of the death and destruction in Kathmandu is a complete contrast to conditions here in Pokhara, where no buildings collapsed and where shops, cafes and restaurants have operated as normal (probably more through economic necessity and the need for routine than anything else) since the day after the earthquake. When we tell our friends and family about what it is like here in Pokhara, they can barely believe it, given the depressing images they are constantly seeing on their screens.

We are incredibly fortunate that, all being well, we can board a plane to Edinburgh within the next few days and leave this terrible and uncertain situation behind. But what will happen to Nepal and its people when the media's lens moves on, as it inevitably will? Nepal was already one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked 145th out of 187 countries on the United Nation's 2013 Human Development Index. What will the international community do to help to alleviate the suffering here? Will there be a coordinated plan to ensure that rigorous building codes are enforced, and will other crucial lessons be learned from this disaster that can increase Nepal's resilience to earthquakes in the future? One thing is certain: Saturday's earthquake and the aftershocks lasted just minutes, but the people of Nepal will need support from other nations for a long time to come.

Originally published at: <http://rsgs.org/first-hand-account-of-the-nepal-earthquake-rachel-hay-rsgs-education-officer/>

## Actions and emotions worksheet

Identify the key points in the account of the earthquake where an emotion, or an action linked to an emotion is identified. Note these down in the table below.

| Stage of the story  | Actions                                  | Emotions                    |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Realisation:</b><br>“It’s an earthquake. Run!”                         | <b>E.g. communicate what’s happening</b> | <b>E.g. fear, confusion</b> |
| <b>Initial response:</b><br>“We grabbed our bags and ran into the street” |  |                             |
| <b>During the earthquake:</b><br>“The whole structure was unstable”       |  |                             |
| <b>After the earthquake:</b><br>“What to do next”                         |  |                             |



## Description of the earthquake – Rachel Hay

There was the beep of a horn and a futile look down the street for the truck that was causing the vibration. We searched for the answer on each other's faces, but we already knew. The flower pots next to us were wobbling uncontrollably, signs on the street were shaking...the tremors were intensifying.

We jumped to our feet and momentarily glanced around at the other people who, moments before, had been calmly drinking tea and eating cinnamon rolls or masala omelettes. Pete voiced the reality: "It's an earthquake. Run!" There was the sudden sound of chairs scraping the floor, and the continuing low rumble of the tremors. We grabbed our bags and ran out into the street, relieved that we were on the ground floor.

Once outside, I looked up to my right and saw bricks falling from a construction site further along the street. The whole structure was unstable and it seemed certain that it would crumble. I stared aghast at a lone construction worker who stood transfixed at the top of the building, near where the bricks were dislodging themselves, clinging to the rudimentary bamboo scaffolding. Why wasn't he running to save himself? I knew the answer: up there, the shaking would make movement almost impossible.

A frightened solo traveller, Franziska, followed us out of The Black & White café, still clinging to her half-full glass of lassi, and asked, "I'm travelling on my own. Can I stay with you guys?" The three of us ran across the road to get away from the buildings, and waited for the seemingly endless tremors to stop. It was as if we were standing on water and we felt dizzy and terrified.

It took over one minute for the shaking to subside, then we attempted to chat to Franziska (while the geographer in me contemplated epicenter, magnitude, impacts and aid). I thought of Kathmandu and our friends there, and of all the small villages and ramshackle buildings that we had passed on our eight-hour bus journey to Pokhara from Kathmandu the previous day. Had the people we had seen and met along the way survived? When would we be able to let our friends and family know that we were safe, and stop them from worrying?

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majority remained on the lake side of the street for a while longer. It felt quite absurd when we eventually returned to the café and requested our bill! Like us, the waiters were of course in shock, and said that while there had been very small tremors for the previous two weeks, this was the biggest and longest earthquake they had ever experienced. They were remarkably matter-of-fact about it and remained professional, even though they must have been incredibly concerned about family members and friends.

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Nepal emotion line

> Identify the key points in the account where an **emotion**, or an **action** linked to an emotion is identified.

> In pairs or small groups add these to the table in the worksheet.

> Use slides 3-6 to record group suggestions.

> Use slides 8-11 to plot emotions at different stages.

> Plot the overall emotional 'journey' on Slide 12.

Realisation

"It's an earthquake. Run!"

| Actions                           | Emotions             |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| E.g. communicate what's happening | E.g. fear, confusion |
|                                   |                      |
|                                   |                      |
|                                   |                      |
|                                   |                      |
|                                   |                      |

Initial response

"We grabbed our bags and ran into the street"

| Actions | Emotions |
|---------|----------|
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |

During earthquake

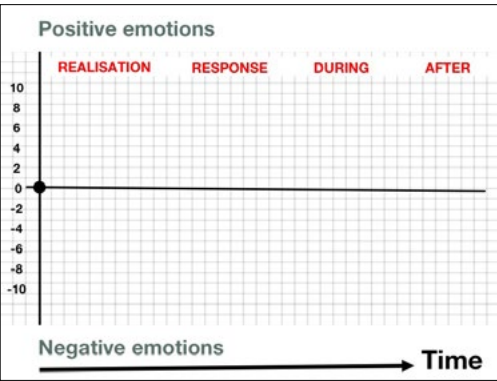
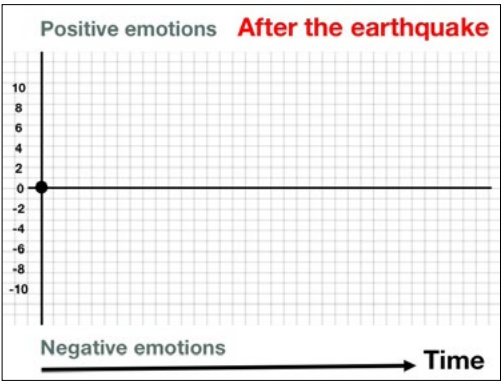
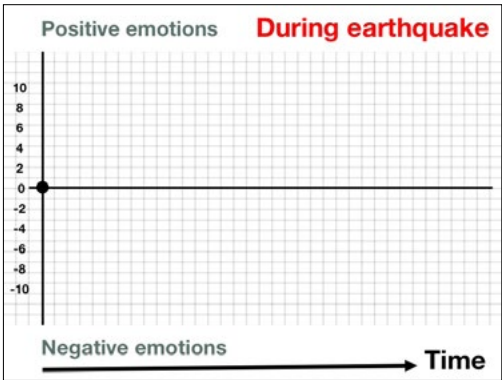
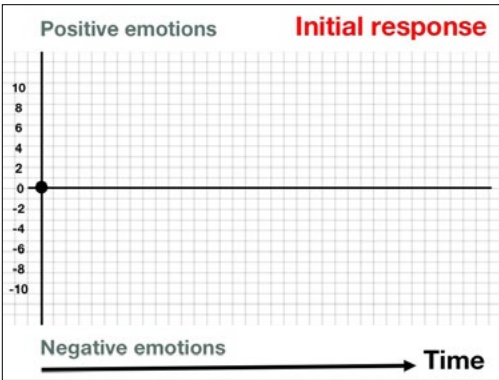
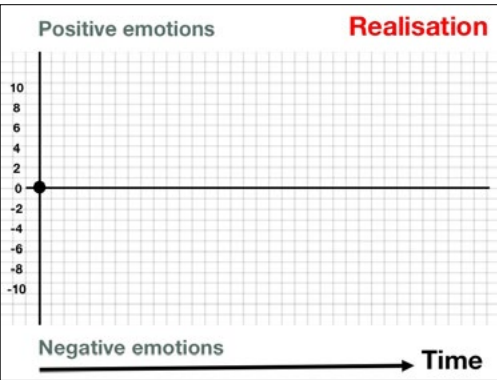
"the whole structure was unstable"

| Actions | Emotions |
|---------|----------|
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |

After the earthquake

"What to do next"

| Actions | Emotions |
|---------|----------|
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |
|         |          |





## Tweet activity



**Kanak Mani Dixit**  
@KanakManiDixit

 Follow

Dharara, 62m, fell towards the southwest. It was Saturday holiday & up to 200 had taken tickets to climb for a view.

3:09 PM - 25 Apr 2015

**What information can you gain from this tweet?**

**What additional questions does it lead to?**

**Where would / could you go to find the answers to these questions?**



# Twitter template

What's happening?

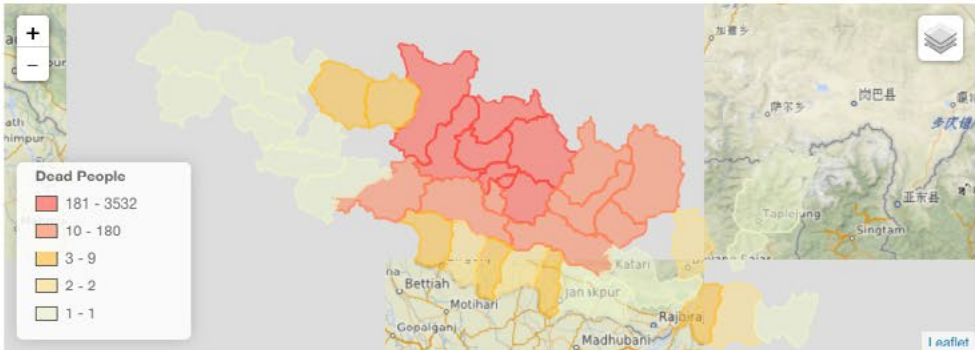


140

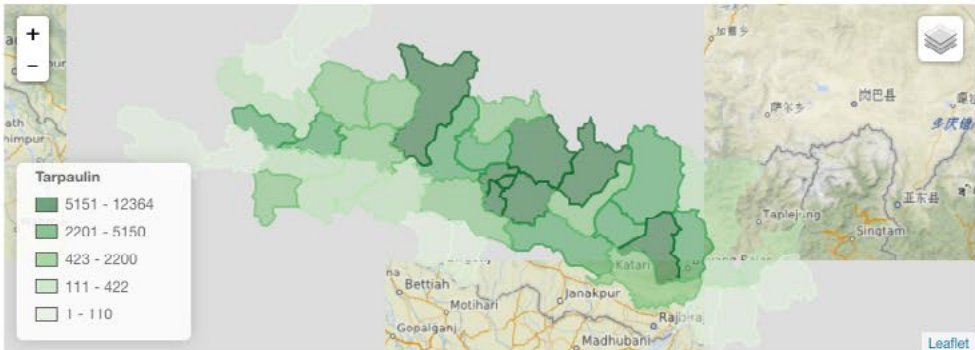


Tweet

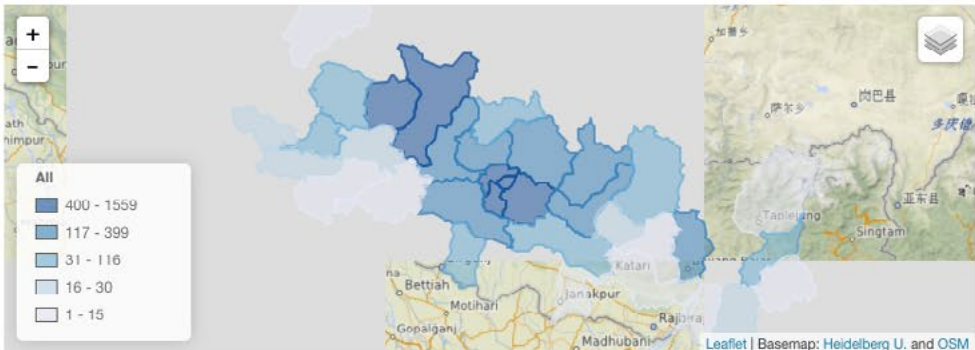
Choose layers to show using the button on the top right of the maps. Hover the maps with the house to display figures at District level.



| District | Total   | Damage Type            |
|----------|---------|------------------------|
| - 100%   | 8857    | Dead People            |
| - 100%   | 275     | Missing People         |
| - 100%   | 17932   | Injured People         |
| - 100%   | 1160516 | Affected Families      |
| - 100%   | 649815  | Displaced Families     |
| - 100%   | 638979  | Fully Dest. Houses     |
| - 100%   | 300639  | Partially Dest. Houses |

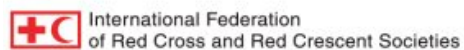


| District | Total  | Distributed Item |
|----------|--------|------------------|
| - 100%   | 11332  | NFRI-Full-set    |
| - 100%   | 111150 | Tarpaulin        |
| - 100%   | 28322  | Blankets         |
| - 100%   | 133314 | ORS              |
| - 100%   | 51526  | Hygiene-kits     |
| - 100%   | 602448 | Aqua-Tab         |
| - 100%   | 79186  | Soap             |



| District | Total | Responders         |
|----------|-------|--------------------|
| - 100%   | 4482  | FA                 |
| - 100%   | 678   | CADRE/Rescue       |
| - 100%   | 76    | NDRT               |
| - 100%   | 36    | PSS                |
| - 100%   | 140   | RFL/DBM            |
| - 100%   | 214   | WASH               |
| - 100%   | 170   | DDRT               |
| - 100%   | 2151  | Other              |
| - 100%   | 23    | Intnl. Deleg./Vol. |
| - 100%   | 7970  | All                |





## Kathmandu IDP Camps







|  |  |
|--|--|
| Assess where you should send emergency tarpaulins which can be used to provide temporary shelter for those whose houses have been damaged. | Identify which roads have been damaged as a large shipment of medical aid needs to be sent by road.  |
| Identify suitable landing areas for a helicopter carrying trained rescue personnel to badly affected areas.                                | Suggest the best locations for a mobile communications unit, which offers free calls for people to let their relatives know they are safe. |
| Identify a safe evacuation route for a group of school children who are going to be travelling in a school bus.                            | Work out which roads might be at risk of being closed by landslides if heavy rain falls soon after the earthquake.                         |