



ROTARY MENTAL TRAUMA RELIEF CAMP IN SINDHUPALCHOWK

Theme: Humanitarian, Disaster Relief and Response

Project Objective: Establish trauma relief camp for children and parents of landslide and flood victims in Sindhupalchowk district.

Specific objective : To protect and prevent 50 children and parents from mental illness as a result of the landslide

Project Managed by : Rotary Club of Dhulikhel/CDRA Nepal

Project implemented by : Rotaract Club of Budol / Youth Club of Ramche village

Project Activities: Indoor and outdoor closed camp for 7 days with various sessions of counseling, trainings, demonstrations and games.

Project Budget : Rs.707,000.00 (US\$ 7,364)

Project submitted to : Rotary Clubs in Australia, New Zealand, USA and UK

Introduction

On Saturday, 2 August 2014 at 12:30 AM in Jure of Sindhupalchowk district, a massive landslide swept away more than 136 homes and killed 157 villagers. Only 34 dead bodies have been recovered and 123 people missing are considered dead as they were buried in the landslide and chance of rescue is poor. The landslide blocked the Sunkoshi River, forming a natural lake of 3 kilometers by 500 meters and 50 meters deep above the landslide area and displacing more than 5200 people. Places as far as Bihar, India were threatened by the dam bursting and causing flash floods. As many as 436 people were displaced after the landslide. Jure Bazar and Tekanpur village were mostly affected due to the landslide.

Project Action

In response to this terrible situation, Rotary Club of Dhulikhel, along with many other charitable groups have donated food, supplies, clothes, tools, water filters, and much more. However, these are all physical donations that are meant to treat physical health. One thing overlooked by these organizations is the well being of the refugees' mental health. The refugees have experienced a traumatic event. They have lost homes, families, schoolmates, and friends.

Some have helped to recover and identify bodies; others are still processing their massive loss. In a country where mental health is highly stigmatized and not well addressed, it is important that these people receive mental counseling because the government will not provide it. These victims need someone to talk to who will not judge them or label them as "crazy," such as a counselor or psychiatrist. Otherwise, people will bury their distress, confusion, and frustration and never talk about their grief. Burying these intense emotions can lead to depression and other mental illnesses such as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. The refugees may eventually be well fed and find a new home to settle into, but their mental health, which is just as important as their physical health, will be damaged. Now is the time to address their stress and grief before the pain does long-term damage.

It is suggested that a team of counselors and mental health professionals set up camp in Sindhpalchowk. They will visit the refugees and have sessions where people can talk about their experiences as a group, as well as one-on-one with a professional. These people can procure healing strategies from these counselors and start to express themselves. The health professionals may also evaluate the refugees to see if they are showing early signs of a mental illness. It is better to start treating a mental illness early so that the patient will not be in pain for long or develop a mental illness that will harm them later in life.

Children especially need this counseling. They may not understand why everyone around them is sad, why some of their friends are missing, and why they cannot return to their homes. The landslide destroyed the local school, Bansanghu Secondary School. 31 of its students and some of the teachers were killed as well. The remaining 61 students of the original 177 are receiving counseling by one counselor, provided by the Save the Children organization. However, this single counselor is not enough to handle the stress of all these children, as well as the rest of the refugees. Having someone talk to connect to these people and help them understand these tough times will help them avoid problems later in life. It is hoped that setting up a mental health camp will preserve the refugees' mental health.

In this 7-day health camp, it is also planned to have vocational trainings and activities to keep the children busy. Refugees will be brought in from the area, given temporary housing, food, and information. There are targeted to be 50 students and parents in one camp session. Every day, there will be a program on mental health, counseling, and vocational trainings. Children will be occupied with games and taught a dance so that on the last day, there will be a celebratory performance. After this health camp, refugees will be able to understand and treat their grief. They will have the resources to seek help if they continue to have mental health problems, and they will know that there are people out there who can help them recover. By providing trainings, this health camp gives refugees the confidence to begin working and make an income to support their families. This confidence boost will not only help them financially, but also mentally as they begin to rebuild their lives after these traumatic events.

Project Team : The project will establish a temporary mental relief center in Ramche village and hire professional counselors, mental health experts, a yoga instructor, and a game teacher everyday for two, 4 hour sessions (a total of 8 hours per day of sessions). The sessions will be conducted in different topics to relieve victims' mental pain from the landslide and flood. Food and refreshments will be served during camp days.

Detailed Budget:

Allowances for counselor and instructors

| Budget Item | Nepali Currency | US \$ |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|
| Allowances Yoga Instructor | 7,000.00 | 73.00 |
| Professional counselor | 21,000.00 | 219.00 |
| Medical team | 9,000.00 | 94.00 |
| Medicine and medical supplies | 50,000.00 | 521.00 |
| Sports materials (indoor outdoor) | 120,000.00 | 1,250.00 |
| Kitchen and nutritious food management | 350,000.00 | 3,646.00 |
| Transportation | 50,000.00 | 521.00 |
| Establishment of camp with seating & sleeping arrangement | 100,000.00 | 1,042.00 |
| Total | 707,000.00 | 7,364.00 |

Rotaract volunteers will manage the day to day Trauma Relief camp in Ramche Sindhupalchowk district.

Interested Rotary Club can contribute the Project in the following Bank Account

Name of Account: Rotary Club of Dhulikhel

Bank Account # : 00505030008918

Name of Bank: Nepal Investment Bank Ltd.

Bank Address: Araniko Highway, Banepa-10, Nepal

Swift code: NIBLNPKT

Thank you so much for your cooperation and Support