

THE AFTERMATH

Earthquakes will cease, but the physical, medical and emotional damages in Nepal are lasting. Hundreds of children and families have been left in helpless, life-threatening conditions, with insurmountable ruins to their villages and homes. VCN is reaching out to as many damaged children and families as possible, providing medical aid, care and support to help re-establish broken lives. We are already involved with many rescues and we hope you will consider our program's long range challenges as a necessary contribution to Nepal's earthquake recovery.

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children
nepal





A non-profit charitable, U.S. foundation assisting...
...*"the forgotten children of Nepal"*

November, 2015

NOW, MORE THAN EVER!



Preparing for a catastrophic earthquake is difficult enough in the industrialized Western world. Its impossible in Nepal, where a desperately poor population lives in survival conditions during the best of times. Nepal will never be the same after the devastating 7.8 Richter-scale quake, with many homes and villages wiped out and more than 8,800 people killed.

Many more are missing, buried under fallen rubble or landslides impossible to clear away. This is tragedy too horrendous to imagine for most of us, but stories and photos of the damages continue to reach us daily. Our commitment to Nepal continues, but on a new scale that tests our resources and ability to reach as many helpless families and children as we are able. We have been extending support where we can from almost day one, and we continue to provide to the most desperate cases and where we are confident of the use of our funds. While large international agencies are offering generous support for medical and nutrition projects, very little is being done to reach out and assist individual families and children. This is where VCN comes in. Many of the stories we are hearing are heartbreaking, with deaths of family members,

crippling injuries, loss of homes and incomes. The scale is so overwhelming that we all ask ourselves, "Where do we start?" The answer, as always, is to start with one rescue, and many more will follow, as they have. We desperately need support from friends and contributors to continue our efforts, and we hope that all of you will recognize the dire emergency needs of so many in Nepal and help us continue with these efforts. As always, all of your donations will reach their purpose. Whatever we accomplish, we do so as an extension of your generosity and concerns.

Please read the enclosed letter from our board member, Rajeesh Shrestha. Rajeesh very bravely rushed to Nepal immediately after the earthquake. His love for his country demanded he return to Nepal and do all he could to help, which he did in the most noble and committed ways. His story is dramatic and touching, and takes us into the devastation and trials he faced from his first day in the ruins.



Virtue's Children Nepal is an ALL-VOLUNTEER FOUNDATION

No funds are spent for U.S. salaries, office rent, bonuses or special benefits. Board members cover their own travel expenses. Administration costs in Nepal are minimal and are covered by board member contributions.

RAJEESH SHRESTHA'S MISSION OF THE HEART

Written by: Penelope Rose

Edited by: Denise Ferry and Allan Aistrope



It was the kind of phone call that we all would dread. On April 25, 2015, Virtue's Children Nepal board member, Rajeesh Shrestha and his wife Kabina received the dire message from Rajeesh's family – a 7.8 magnitude earthquake had devastated their county of Nepal, including their home town of Kathmandu.

Even after hearing from his parents and brothers that the family was safe, anxiety remained high as hundreds of aftershocks caused fears of remaining buildings that could collapse at any time. Most of the older buildings and residences were now rubble, many with people buried inside. Soon the catastrophe was revealed to have claimed over 8,800 lives throughout Nepal, with over 14,000 injured.

Rajeesh's family, like most Nepalis, were forced to camp outside their home for over 3 weeks, in tents and under tarps. The weather was chili and sporadic rains dampened the environment and made living conditions extremely difficult and threatening. The seasonal monsoon rains were ap-

proaching and the grounds continued to shake and heave, giving little encouragement for fast relief from the disaster. Many people were left with only the clothes they were wearing when the quake struck. Life was miserable for the entire country.

Rajeesh's family began reporting on the desperation among their fellow countrymen. Thousands were homeless throughout Nepal, with no food or clean water available. The injured were without medical aid or emergency care. The Nepali government was unprepared for this calamity and for several days was unable to provide the emergency assistance so desperately needed. Rajeesh's brothers voluntarily took up arms and began to purchase what food and supplies they could. They searched out and delivered to the most desperate families and victims in Kathmandu neighborhoods. Rajeesh felt helpless and realized that he had to return to his home country to assist in





helping in whatever way he could. When the Kathmandu airport finally reopened, he was able to fly to Nepal and join his family in their efforts to provide relief to the suffering, earthquake victims.

Rajeesh found rubble everywhere in his beloved homeland. Every family he encountered was directly or indirectly affected by the destruction. Fear and uncertainty were felt continually every day. Almost all businesses and shops in Kathmandu were unable to reopen due to the damaged buildings and interruption of supplies. The city was physically and economically paralyzed.

As Rajeesh had the support of Virtue's Children Nepal, as well as donations from U.S. friends, he and his brothers had resources to purchase food, bottled water, tents and emergency medical supplies and provide to many homeless and injured in Kathmandu Valley. They witnessed for themselves the survival struggles of a brave, resourceful and stoic Nepali population.

The humanitarian concerns were paramount, but Rajeesh was also deeply disturbed to find the historical monuments of Nepal in ruins. Many of the UNESCO heri-

tage sight buildings and temples and were destroyed, and the few that remained standing were near collapse. These structures had major religious significance for a devout Hindu and Buddhist population which worshiped daily at these altars. As Rajeesh understands so clearly, the heart of the Nepali culture has, for thousands of years, been devotion to the gods symbolized in these temples and statues, and now so much of it is broken or lost to the earthquake.

With Rajeesh's hand-on involvement and the continued

rescue efforts of his brothers in Nepal, Virtue's Children Nepal was able to provide extensive support to many victims whose tragedies were heartbreaking and whose needs were desperate and immediate. Many whom we encountered, had lost fathers, mothers, children or other family members – one woman we are helping had lost her husband and two children. Some children we aided were left paralyzed by injuries suffered when their homes collapsed. While the Nepali government and international agencies were eventually able to reach survivors with emergency medical aid and supplies, their efforts have not addressed the need for personal attention and long term support for the many broken families and the physically wounded. The lasting effects of the earthquake devastation will present lifetime challenges, especially for children. The numbers of children orphaned by loss of home and family will be tremendously high. ***Virtue's Children Nepal will do all we can to assist and rescue these young victims, but your support will be needed. As you can, please help us in this effort with your contributions to our cause.***



VCN PROGRAMS:

EARTHQUAKE RATTLED, BUT ON COURSE.



BAL SARATHI is the school that we generously support. The school offers free education and nutritional meals to over 100 outcaste children, 6 days a week. Fortunately, for Bal Sarathi, the earthquake occurred on the Saturday school holiday. All of the children were elsewhere and were spared injuries. The school building was damaged, but survived and is in need of serious repairs. Enough work has been attended to that Bal Sarathi is in operation again, but funding is badly needed to return the school to normal operations. A long series of intense aftershocks followed the earthquake, and for safety reasons, most of the Kathmandu population was forced to remain outdoors for over three weeks. During this challenging time, the staff of Bal Sarathi went to the streets and prepared free daily meals for hundreds of hungry children and desperate earthquake victims.

PAROPAKAR BOYS' ORPHANAGE Didn't collapse entirely, but was heavily damaged. The miracle is that the boys were in the orphanage at the time of the quake, but managed to escape

uninjured. Falling bricks and timbers missed the children, but their long time home was ruined. The orphan boys in residence there have been shifted to a secure facility outside the city, and VCN will continue its yearly provisions to these boys, of clothes, shoes, sports equipment, blankets and other supplies that improve their living circumstances, so badly needed now.

PAROPAKAR GIRLS' ORPHANAGE, which VCN constructed five years ago, survived well. Our 25 girls were forced to live outdoors under plastic tarps until the earthquake aftershocks quieted down (almost 1 month), but they did so in good spirit and cooperation. When the all-clear signal was given they gratefully reclaimed their home. The building was damaged, but not enough to threaten the safety of the girls. Now we have an on-going effort to make essential repairs and continue with our support and attention to the children.

PATH OF LIGHT is the free school and nutritious lunch program that we started five years before, for child laborers living

and working in brick factory compounds. Just prior to the earthquake, we had rented a new facility for our school. Fortunately, the building withstood the quake well and the children continue with their education, and free meals. Now there is constant demand for bricks to rebuild damaged homes and buildings, and our school staff works tirelessly to keep their children attending school and free from forced labor.

SCHOLARSHIPS for 53 disabled, blind, poor or orphaned students proceed normally. None of our students were injured from the earthquake, but nearly all had their lives turned upside down from the disaster. Some lost family members and friends, and most lost their rental rooms and personal items due to serious damage to their residences. Finding new housing was extremely challenging, as the competition for secure housing was intense, with so many buildings unsafe or in ruin. We provided generous emergency funding to the students, to help them re-establish their lives. The scholarship support continues and all of our students have relocated and are attending classes again.

MINCO home for orphans. We have 7 girls in this home now. All were in their rental home at the time of the earthquake, but everyone escaped in time, even though the house was badly damaged. It was extraordinary timing for these children and their guardians, as arrangements had just been finalized to shift to a new house. The orphanage family had a secure location to move to after it was deemed unsafe to remain where they were. Gratefully, their new home survived the quake well. The girls are safe, secure and attending school.

WE WORK TO DIRECTLY RESCUE AND SUPPORT THE MOST DESTITUTE AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN IN NEPAL.

- * Support and provisions for orphanage homes for boys and girls.
- * Support for the Bal Sarathi free school and lunch program, serving over 100 low-caste children.
- * VCN sponsored home and education for 7 orphaned girls.
 - * Scholarships for over 75 orphaned, blind and physically impaired students.
- * VCN sponsored "Path of Light" School, providing free education and nutritional lunches for child workers from brick factory compounds.
- * Services and donations to elderly victims of leprosy.

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Our progress in Nepal is completely dependent upon the generosity of supporters who believe in our goals and wish to join a team effort for the rescue of impoverished and neglected children in Nepal. When you plan your charitable participations, please consider the purpose of our work and the maximum extent to which our contributions are utilized for the direct support for the children we serve.

A NON-PROFIT, ALL-VOLUNTEER, CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Virtue's Children Nepal is a U.S. 501 (c)(3), charitable foundation. Donations to our organization are tax-deductible and acknowledgement letters are provided for donations received.

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Virtue's Children - Nepal

invites you to join

KarmaQuest

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and Adventure

Travel on a

customized, cultural tour of the Kathmandu Valley and Pokhara, and a jungle safari in Chitwan National Park to benefit orphans and physically impaired children in Nepal. A highlight of this journey will be a visit to Paropakar Orphanage in Kathmandu, where you will become acquainted with incredibly courageous and delightful orphan boys and



girls. A portion of the cost of this trip will be donated through Virtue's Children Nepal to directly benefit these children or other orphans with emergency aid or educational support. Virtue's Children Nepal board member Wendy Brewer Lama and her husband Karma Lama are directors of KarmaQuest, an award-winning adventure travel company based in Half Moon Bay, California. They have designed this special tour to highlight the medieval wonders and UNESCO Cultural Heritage treasures of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur cities, while giving you a taste of village life in Nagarkot, a bird's eye view of Mt. Everest on "an unforgettable mountain flight, a restful stay in serene Lakeside Pokhara and a three-day, guided jungle safari excursion in Royal Chitwan National Park. Customized treks to the Everest region will also benefit Virtue's Children Nepal and its work in Nepal. Please inquire for details.

Your travels with KarmaQuest will benefit from Wendy and Karma's extensive knowledge of Kathmandu and Nepal, and their ability to introduce you to cultural insights and new, cross-cultural friendships through their expert Nepali guides. To learn more about KarmaQuest and their trips, partners and beneficiaries, please see www.KarmaQuests.com or contact Karma and Wendy at karmaquest@earthlink.net, or telephone at (650) 560-0101.