



Core Socio-Technical Assistance Package

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1.0 BACKGROUND

Following the 25th April 2015 Gorkha Earthquake, the Government of Nepal (GoN) launched the owner driven housing reconstruction programme which combines financial assistance from the GoN with socio-technical assistance. The PDNA calls for “a cascading socio-technical facilitation mechanism for recovery support at the national, district and local level”, which when combined with the financial grant from the GoN will “empower households to lead their own recovery efforts” in compliance with “safe construction standards”.

The disbursement of the GoN financial assistance is tied to construction compliance with the first tranche of 50,000 NPRs disbursed once the household has enrolled in the programme, the second tranche of 150,000 NPRs disbursed after approval of construction to plinth level, and the third tranche of 100,000 NPRs disbursed after approval of construction to roof band/ beam level. A retrofitting grant of 100,000 NPRs is also available to households in two tranche (50,000 NPRs once household has enrolled and 50,000 NPRs after the completion of retrofitting) whose homes have been partially damaged and falls under damage grade II (major) and damage grade III (minor).

A comprehensive programme of socio-technical assistance is required to complement the financial assistance and support households through the reconstruction process. The overall objective is that **all affected households reconstruct or rehabilitate their homes and communities compliant with standards within XX years**. Achieving this will depend on the coverage, quality, and timeliness of the delivery of socio-technical assistance. This can be represented as follows

Number of houses constructed	↔	Coverage of socio-technical assistance
Quality of construction	↔	Quality of socio-technical assistance
Time to construct	↔	Timeliness of socio-technical assistance delivery

The minimum requirements for socio-technical assistance are that:

- All families and communities reconstructing and repairing their homes will have access to timely and appropriate advice to build back safer and more sustainable houses and human settlements, and are adequately supported through the inspection process.
- The availability of skilled construction workers will be increased and improved to facilitate reconstruction.
- Reconstruction will build long term community resilience.

The socio-technical assistance needs to be focused at local level to reach families and communities in time, to deliver locally appropriate and easy to understand advice, and to generate and promote awareness activities and skills development. Locally based support should track, report and respond to field practices, needs, and priorities. Achieving change in housing and housing construction requires broad based behaviour change, by households, by masons, and by communities.

The NRA and the HRRP have defined a core package of socio-technical assistance activities as follows:

- Community / Household Orientations
- Continuous Door to Door Technical Assistance (Mobile Technical Support)
- Short Training for Masons
- On the Job Training for Masons
- Helpdesk / Technical Resource Centre
- Demonstration Construction
- Community Reconstruction Committees

This document provides a description of each of the activities in the core socio-technical assistance package. Information on the coverage of these activities can be found on the [HRRP website](#) ([maps](#) and [4W data](#)).

2.0 COMMUNITY / HOUSEHOLD ORIENTATIONS (MORE THAN 1 SESSION)

2.1 OBJECTIVES

- Ensure informed, effective and two way communication with a maximum number of target households.
- Create awareness of basic information on government policies and technical standards and guidance.
- Introduce local technical support actors and activities.
- Engage with communities to record, address or relay their priorities, queries and concerns as part of tracking reconstruction, and to inform policy and programme development.
- Repeat the exercise at different points in the reconstruction of the community (i.e. 1 every 3 months)

2.2 DESCRIPTION

‘Orientation’ sessions refer to organised events which involve the presentation, provision and discussion of basic information and guidance to groups, to establish awareness and sensitisation, rather than detailed knowledge or skills. Public orientation sessions aim to reach large numbers of people quickly and with consistent information, but are also designed as group activities to emphasise on collective engagement and discussion. They provide an important opportunity for people to get authorised answers to various questions directly.

Orientation sessions may be organised at the helpdesk / technical resource centre, at other community facilities (e.g. schools), or at other temporary or open spaces, and may be carried out by any of the technical support stakeholders operational in the area. Programming of orientation sessions should be coordinated through the helpdesk / technical resource centre with Community Reconstruction Committee and the rural / urban municipality officials.

2.3 SPECIFICATIONS

Session: Orientation sessions may vary between 1 hour and 2-3 hours. The day and time of day should be according to the convenience of the target participants. The event should carry GoN signage to signify the content is authorised and to promote the Government role in awareness.

Team: Orientation sessions need a combination of skills to ensure the activity meets the objectives. The team should be trained in communication skills and should be trained specifically to deliver core orientation modules. The team should include:

- **Technical resource person(s)** to support the preparation of information, presentation and explanation, and to answer technical questions during discussion.
- **Community mobilisation person(s)** to support activity planning, mobilisation of participants, presentation and explanation, facilitation of discussion.
- **Government resource person(s)**

Target: Orientation sessions may be for the general public / community, or may be organised for specific groups, for example women or youth. The participant numbers and mix (very small or very large numbers, and general or disaggregated participation) needs to be well planned as it will affect the dynamics of discussion.

Content: The content of orientation sessions depends on the context of technical support activities. In the case of one-off activities, the content may be longer and more comprehensive. In the case of wider programmes, the content may be divided into more than one session topic wise, shorter and linked to other activities. In all cases, the session should not aim to be too highly technical, but should aim to be accessible for general audiences. All content should follow and refer to the relevant GoN policies, procedures, and technical standards.

Core: Common core resource materials should be used for key common topics. This will support the team presenting and facilitating and help to ensure consistency and quality assurance. Core materials are available through NRA, MoUD and other partners including HRRP.

Local: The use of common materials should take into consideration local conditions and preferences. Not all materials will be applicable or appropriate in all areas, (for example information for steep slopes is not required in low lying plain areas). Local examples should be incorporated into the resource material, (pictures of local typologies, defects, good

practices) to increase local recognition and traction. Customising the materials should also include collecting frequently asked questions to address them in the orientation session.

Visual: Presented information should include visual resource material, this may include videos, photographs, drawings or other resources using a projector, PowerPoint or flip chart. Where feasible use real materials and models.

Interactive and two way: Avoid over reliance on one-way communication by presenters. Learning and discussion should be facilitated through interactive exercises, exploration of the experience of the participants, discussion and debate.

Reference: There should be hand out guidance for further information, or resource or reference, as a record of what was promoted or to pass on to others. This may include print materials, contacts for masons, engineers and further information or advice; calendars for events; locations of demonstrations etc.

Questions, feedback and development: The preparation for orientation sessions should include the collection of local practices, questions, concerns and priorities. Similarly, the questions and discussion during the session should be documented and inform the further development of common resource materials among teams delivering orientation sessions. Monitoring and feedback to the session is equally important to inform the development of content and to advise the team on communication issues in presentation and facilitation.

2.4 ACTIVITIES

- **Coordination:** with the Palika / Ward, District / VDC level information centre, Community Reconstruction Committee, local government, national government, and other agencies.
- **Liaison:** Discussion with the community / target group representatives.
- **Planning:** Date, time and location, as convenient as possible for the participants.
- **Promotion:** Advance notification of the session to mobilise participants.
- **Logistics:** Facilities, display, handouts, electricity, refreshments,
- **Preparation:** Resource material, or customisation of standard materials, collection of frequently asked questions.
- **Orientation Session:** including presentations, discussions etc.
- **Proceedings:** Questions and discussion. Reporting.
- **Participation:** Recording of participants, numbers, and origin. Reporting.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** See note on monitoring and evaluation of technical support activities.

2.5 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- Orientation sessions build credibility and momentum and get consistent information to a large number of people. This support can be targeted to priority areas of maximum need and activity.
- These sessions should help policy makers and implementing agencies to understand concerns and priorities and advance responsive programming.
- It requires well trained and skilled resource persons to engage and hold audience attention and answer questions well.
- Resource materials are difficult to produce and use well, posters, PowerPoint etc.
- It requires time commitment and it is difficult to get people to return for additional topics and updates. Sessions can become negative or political.

3.0 CONTINUOUS DOOR TO DOOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (MOBILE TECHNICAL SUPPORT)

3.1 OBJECTIVES

- Track and respond to construction and reconstruction activity
- Provide motivational support and technical guidance in advance of and during construction
- Explain and discuss information also communicated through media and training
- Identify information needs, through recording of construction trends and of frequently asked questions

3.2 DESCRIPTION

'Door to door' or 'On-site' support by mobile teams aims to reach households and their masons at origin, where advice and guidance can respond to individual and local issues. Mobile support provides sustained continuous engagement, reinforcing training and other inputs, and the two-way process of communication. Mobile support may be provided by Government teams, teams from Partner Organisations (POs), or a combination. Programming of mobile team support should be coordinated through the helpdesks / technical resource centres.

3.3 SPECIFICATIONS

Field mobile teams: Mason and social mobiliser

Field mobile teams should include technical and community liaison skills. Mobile teams should have experienced masons with earthquake resistance construction knowledge and skill to provide technical advice and to practically demonstrate correct practices. Mobile teams should have social mobilisers, supporting local interaction, communication, feedback, documentation, and reporting. Field mobile teams may be drawn from experienced and skilled persons in the target community, and use their local area and community knowledge and contacts to facilitate the work.

Monitoring and support teams: Engineer and experienced community organiser

Field mobile teams should be back stopped and supported by additional technical expertise and experienced social mobilisation personnel in monitoring and support teams. More complex technical queries or field issues, training or demonstration activities require engineering support. Areas and issues of social complexity require greater communication support. Monitoring and support teams should assist and work closely with field mobile teams through training, continuous mentoring, programme and activity planning, response to referred field issues and trends, reporting and analysis.

Women and Youth:

Mobile teams and monitoring and support teams should reflect the population profile and incorporate women and youth representatives where feasible, or should ensure they have strategies to engage with a range of people during their field work, including women and youth, but also the specific needs of elderly, disabled, long term ill, or other profiles.

Training:

All field mobile teams and monitoring and support teams should have the following training inputs to ensure they are equipped to provide quality technical advice, and to communicate effectively:

- **Communication training:** Communication and social mobilisation skills, community organising, negotiation and facilitation.
- **Technical training:** Basic technical training on construction quality, hazard resistant construction, water, sanitation and other topics.
- **Assessment, reporting, monitoring and evaluation training:** training in the collection, analysis and reporting of field information, including the use of common tools and formats, to support programme activity planning, and the wider M+E process.

- **Continuous training:** Training for field staff should be a continuous process, with refresher training on the same topics, addition of new topics, review discussion of field issues and field experiences, on job mentoring by more experienced staff, feedback and evaluation by the target communities.
- **Exchange:** Technical and social mobilisation personnel should be encouraged to share and exchange knowledge and skills, through joint planning and activities.

3.4 ACTIVITIES

- **Introducing support:** Inform households and communities of the structures and sources of support, including government, helpdesks / technical resource centres, and local implementing agencies.
- **Introducing information:** Inform households and communities of basic technical information, better and safer construction, principles, standards and guidance. Authorised common reference materials should be used to ensure quality and consistency in this communication. Distributing authorised print or other visual information materials to target households and communities.
- **Organising and promoting events:** Mobile teams assist in the organisation of promotional activities at the rural / urban municipality level information centres or in the local area, including orientation and focus group sessions, model houses and demonstrations, meetings, promotion and entertainment events. Field staff assist with planning, logistics, mobilisation of participation, implementation and collection of feedback, using their close contacts with the community.
- **Promoting training:** Mobile teams assist in the planning and implementation of training activities, identifying training needs, creating demand for trained workers, organising training, mobilising participants, assisting in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- **Providing site specific technical advice:** Mobile teams explain and interpret the GoN guidance according to the specifics of the site and client. This includes site selection, design, specification and budget advice, demonstration of key details, quality assurance advice. Advice should be provided to the household and to the boss managing the work on site. Complex cases should be referred to monitoring and support engineering teams for follow up.
- **Providing household specific advice:** Mobile teams assist households and communities in decision making apart from construction, including facilitating conflict resolution, mobilising and facilitating cooperation, budgeting and project management advice, identification of vulnerability issues.
- **Tracking construction activities:** Monitoring and reporting the rate and location of construction activities, the type and quality of construction including patterns of defective practices, tracking availability, quality and costs of materials.
- **Tracking vulnerability:** The most vulnerable members of a community may not participate in or be represented in public discussions. The field teams may track particular cases of extreme vulnerability, in terms of shelter and housing conditions, family circumstances or other criteria.

3.5 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- Door to door or on site advice and support aims ensures targeted follow up for all other communication and training efforts.
- The team on the ground need to have adequate capacity to deliver appropriate and correct advice effectively.
- Personnel and logistics costs can be considerable, mobile staff need to efficiently deploy.
- Mobile teams should increase local capacity and develop local champions and advocates.

4.0 SHORT TRAINING FOR MASONS

4.1 OBJECTIVES

- Increase availability of skilled labour to work on the housing reconstruction
- Develop skills of existing masons on earthquake resilient reconstruction

4.2 DESCRIPTION

7 day training course for people who were working as masons pre-earthquake in order to build on their existing masonry skills and further develop their skills in earthquake resilient construction. Follow up, or refresher, training is essential to make sure that masons are supported in the practical application of the earthquake resilient construction methods.

4.3 SPECIFICATIONS

Trainers: engineers or senior masons that have completed the 7 day training of trainers

Participants: must be exiting masons, i.e. working as masons pre-earthquake. Preference should be given to earthquake victims, women, and those that did not participate in similar trainings before.

Training Curricula: DUDBC approved 7 day training curricula. [Urban](#) and [rural](#) versions of the curricula available covering different typologies.

Continuous training: Training should be a continuous process, with refresher training on the same topics, addition of new topics, review discussion of field issues and field experiences, on job mentoring by more experienced staff, feedback and evaluation by the target communities

4.4 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- Trained human resources will be locally available to support the reconstruction
- People trust the masons who can provide motivation for safer construction
- Masons income will be higher after the training
- Cost to households for masons will be higher due to higher demand for trained mason

5.0 ON THE JOB TRAINING FOR MASONS

5.1 OBJECTIVES

- Increase availability of skilled labour to work on the housing reconstruction
- Develop new masons to contribute to the reconstruction

5.2 DESCRIPTION

50 day training course for people who want to become masons. Follow up, or refresher, training is essential to make sure that masons are supported in the practical application of the earthquake resilient construction methods.

5.3 SPECIFICATIONS

Trainers: engineers (supervising construction work), lead masons as main trainers ([Lead Mason Training on Earthquake Resistant Residential Building Construction Directives 2017, \(Nepali\) \(Unofficial English Translation\)](#))

Participants: priority should be given to women, and others who are likely to remain in the community and work on the reconstruction.

Training Curricula: CTEVT approved 50 day training curricula.

Continuous training: Training should be a continuous process, with refresher training on the same topics, addition of new topics, review discussion of field issues and field experiences, on job mentoring by more experienced staff, feedback and evaluation by the target communities

5.4 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- Increase the local trained human resources to support the housing reconstruction
- Provides a livelihood option for unskilled people in the community
- It's a time consuming and long process so will not fulfil immediate reconstruction requirements
- People are trained on one type of building construction and may not be able to support other types of building immediately after the training

6.0 HELPDESK / TECHNICAL SUPPORT CENTRE

6.1 OBJECTIVES

- Provide a fixed point for reconstruction support and advice
- Act as a hub and back stopping support for mobile technical assistance teams
- Facilitate access to information and resources on reconstruction, recovery, and community resilience

6.2 DESCRIPTION

Helpdesks / technical resource centres can be in a permanent location or may be a mobile setup. Opening times should be communicated widely so that the community know when they can access the centre. There should be technical and social mobilisation staff available at the centre to provide support through events and meetings, as well as drop in sessions. The helpdesks / technical resource centres should also provide back stopping and monitoring support for the mobile technical support teams.

6.3 ACTIVITIES

- **Facilitating coordination:** provide physical space for coordination (community meetings, meeting between the community and partners, focal place for coordination between the community and authorities, etc.) and provide coordination information (government contacts, activities, and plans, POs contacts, activities, and plans, local activities, and referral for further information).
- **Providing Information and Advice:** provide authorised information on a wide range of topic (material quality, standards and guidance for new construction and retrofitting, standards and guidance for water supply, sanitation, drainage, retaining walls, and other household and community services and infrastructure), collect and report local information on local labour (masons, steel fixers, carpenters, contractors, etc.), suppliers, and fabricators, facilitate consultation on, and access to information on relevant topics (risk mapping, community planning, infrastructure activities, risk reduction, livelihood activities, social and community development activities, etc.), and facilitate land and property related advisory services.
- **Facilitate training and awareness activities:** the centre may act as a hub for training activities in the area, and report, monitor, and evaluate training activities. The centre may act as a hub for awareness and technical support activities in the area and report, monitor, and evaluate awareness and technical support activities.
- **Monitoring Reconstruction:** collect and report information on the housing market (housing typologies, construction typologies, construction costs, rental costs, sources of finance, labour, material), quantity and distribution of local construction activity (repairs, reconstruction new construction, extensions, costs, etc.), and quality of local construction activity (materials, workmanship, defects etc.).
- **Collect and report community feedback:** frequently asked questions on a monthly / quarterly basis, feedback to technical support activities, events, demos, training, awareness, and satisfaction surveys.
- **Reporting, monitoring and evaluation of programme activities:** establishment of baseline data knowledge, attitudes and practices according to common methodology, reporting of training and awareness activities, reporting of direct implementation activities, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of assistance activities, knowledge, attitudes and practices, and satisfaction surveys, recommendations and suggestions.
- **Fixed display information:** providing print and graphic information that is updated regularly to include new policy and technical guidance, and should reflect communication campaign themed topics. Information may be fixed directly to walls, pinned to boards, laminated or glazed, it may be movable to use in different locations. Display information should target the greatest number of audience, through positioning in public areas, and if possible making information visible outside business hours and to passers-by.
- **Clinics:** organised availability of technical support, at a fixed time, date and location, to respond to queries and requests for advice on specific topics. Clinics may consist of public presentations and discussions, or only advice sessions, the queries and advice should be recorded and reported. GoN authorised information materials should be used as resource and reference materials where appropriate.

- **Backstopping for mobile technical teams:** act as a focal point for mobile technical teams working in the area, support mobile technical teams with documentation of reconstruction work, compilation of FAQs and providing responses for teams, supporting mobile technical teams to document and address challenging / new technical issues.

6.4 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- A single resource centre to get the information about the reconstruction. Beneficiaries can easily make contact to the right person and find the right information
- Can benefit the whole community not just the housing beneficiaries

7.0 DEMONSTRATION CONSTRUCTION

7.1 OBJECTIVES

- Explain and promote construction information, in an accessible and practical way.
- Supplement available reference materials, including for training and awareness activities.
- Ensure technical guidance is based on and appropriate for local conditions, preferences, and priorities.
- Test and confirm technical solutions under local conditions, including sites, materials, skills and costs.
- Facilitate supervised practical training opportunities under quality control conditions (OJT).
- Provide a focus for awareness activities, including local discussion and feedback, and for durable long term reference for improved construction.

7.2 DESCRIPTION

Demonstration construction may be full or scaled down size, or may be addressed through model houses constructed in the local area, with associated training and promotion. Models may include loose materials and unfinished (skeletal) construction long term for maximum communication value, whereas at model house sites, it may be more difficult to secure loose materials and unfinished work long term. Model house sites are likely to be more convenient to demonstrate large scale and site specific construction issues. Demonstration construction should address the range of local practices and preferences, including for example local traditional and conventional construction, a range of income groups, to ensure it provides solutions as wide as possible local stakeholders.

7.3 ACTIVITIES (DEMONSTRATION AND CONSTRUCTION MODELS MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING)

- **Soil Tests:** Demonstration of local soil types and their implications for foundation and building design, demonstration of how to carry out site bearing tests.
- **Materials:** Demonstration samples of good and bad construction materials, including explanations of criteria and simple tests for correct selection. (Sand, gravel, stones, blocks, steel)
- **Steelwork / Reinforcement:** Demonstration of correct steel detailing, full size details or scaled down details, showing correct connections and fabrication (foundations, anchorage, columns, beams and bands, framing of openings, sizes, spacing, rings and hooks, laps and splices). Steel reinforcement should include vertical and horizontal extensions to the building. Steel models should have key details at full size, the frame may be full size or scaled. Frames may be fully exposed or with part concrete cover.
- **Concrete:** Demonstration of correct concreting, including information on the constituent materials, mix, placing and striking. This information may be combined with the reinforcement model or separate.
- **Masonry:** Demonstration of stone masonry / brick masonry / other building typologies to show quality assurance criteria. Stone masonry may include foundations, plinths, load bearing and retaining walls, stone selection, placement, quoins, through stones, bonding, mortar and pointing. Brick masonry may include plinths and aprons, corners, openings, bonding, mortar and pointing. In areas with steep sloping sites, demonstration of retaining wall construction options are important.
- **Roofing:** Demonstration of pitched and flat roofs according to local preferences and practices, this may include timber framed, CGI, permanent and temporary roofs, and reinforced concrete flat roofs.
- **Plumbing, water and sanitation:** Demonstration of water collection and management, including rainwater harvesting, plinth protection and site drainage, water storage, cisterns and tanks, water filtration. Demonstration of sanitation solutions, individual and group, low and high cost, dry and flush systems. Guidance on quality assurance, operation and maintenance. Demonstrations of household and community water and sanitation should include promotion of associated health and hygiene information for example water treatment, handwashing etc.
- **Electrical:** Demonstration of safe domestic installation.

- **Finishing:** Demonstration of plastering, tiling, painting and other finishing works. This includes explanation of finishing works in terms of protection and building durability.
- **Cooking:** Demonstration of safe and hygienic cooking facilities and practices, including food storage, food preparation and cooking. Demonstration of energy and fuel efficient cooking.
- **Livelihood activities:** Demonstrations of house and household based livelihood activities, such as rural and urban horticulture, poultry or other livestock accommodation.

7.4 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- Practical, visual and real material information is better to communicate construction information than drawings.
- Increases the range of information and resource material available locally and the role of the helpdesk / technical resource center in technical support
- Models and demonstrations require technical accuracy and resources.
- Models need anticipation for their maintenance, demonstrations need promotion to maximise participation for the investment.
- Can be viewed as something that needs to be exactly replicated, when it is really a guide for the technology in a building.

8.0 COMMUNITY RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEES

8.1 OBJECTIVES

- Increase community participation in, and ownership of the reconstruction
- Support households to work together and to support community engagement with POs working in the ward and community
- Improve coordination between communities, local authorities, and all other stakeholders working on reconstruction
- Provide a community based platform for reconstruction and development planning and preparedness

8.2 DESCRIPTION

Community committees, made up of one president (selected from the community), five members (of whom a minimum of three must be female), and one member secretary. The committee members will have a tenure of one year.

8.3 ACTIVITIES

- **Reconstruction planning:** Community engages in the planning and delivery of aid efforts and has the capacity to collectively address implementation of development and preparedness plans
- **Coordination:** Co-ordinate with local bodies and other stakeholders for institutional development, capacity development and other activities regarding financial and social prosperity
- **Information sharing:** support technical assistance and information sharing at household and community level
- **Community engagement:** lead community engagement in the reconstruction, including community reconstruction plan development, collecting questions and concerns and linking with relevant stakeholders to address concerns, supporting households to understand the reconstruction process, particularly areas such as grievance addressal
- **Women and Youth:** to the greatest extent possible the committees should reflect the population profile and incorporate women and youth representatives where feasible, or should ensure they have strategies to engage with a range of people during their work, including women and youth, but also to address the specific needs of elderly, disabled, long term ill, or other profiles.

8.4 ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

- Easy to motivate people for safer construction
- Support to accelerate reconstruction as a campaign
- Help to make easy acceptance of any support from centre level to beneficiaries
- Will support for the inspection process and also can give support to convince house owner to correct if any deficiencies exists in the construction