



UNV Nepal: Our monthly brief story

Subash Gyawali

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In the small city of Surkhet in the Inner Tarai region of Nepal, we met with our friendly UN Volunteer Subash Gyawali who is volunteering at the Regional Emergency Operation Center. Subash is 27 years old and is originally from Baglung, a city in Western Nepal. He owns a master degree in environmental studies and worked for a government trust for 3 years before joining UNV.

With his great smile, Subash explained us his fundamental role for disaster management in Nepal.



Background

Since Nepal is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world due to its topography and climate, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has helped to build a network of Emergency Operation Centers at the national, regional and district levels in order to strengthen disaster preparedness and response.¹

The Regional Emergency Operation Center of the Mid-Western Development Region² of Nepal where Subash works serves as an important coordination and communication point for disaster information in this network.

¹ The EOCs have been established as part of the *Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Programme* of UNDP. See p. 7 for more information.

² See location on p. 5. The name of Subash's office will probably change because of the federalization of Nepal and the administrative restructuring currently taking place in Nepal.

Subash's work

One important aspect of Subash's work is emergency and disaster response. Every day, Subash and his other colleagues receive information about the different hazards (floods, landslides, fires, etc.) which have occurred during the day from the different District Emergency Operation Centers of the Mid-Western Development Region of Nepal. He then uploads this information on the Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal³ and transmit it to the National Emergency Operation Center which collects comprehensive data from all the different districts of the country. When needed, Subash also contacts relevant local governmental and non-governmental actors in order to facilitate timely and coordinated response.



Recently, Subash was particularly busy with the devastating floods which have hit Nepal, including three districts of the Mid-Western Development Region. He had long and hectic days compiling information on the ongoing situation (human losses, injured and missing persons, destroyed buildings, etc.) and preparing situation bulletins to update national authorities, media, aid agencies and other local stakeholders. He was also monitoring the flood forecast and providing information to the community level in order to evacuate people to safe places when needed, which helped to reduce the number of casualties.

³ See p. 6 for more information.

In addition to disaster response, Subash also works on emergency and disaster preparedness. As part of this work, he helps to develop several community based disaster management programs such as awareness raising activities, first aid trainings, as well as search and rescue trainings. Involving various actors (Nepal Police and Army, Red Cross Volunteers, Community Volunteers, etc.) with whom Subash interacts, these programs are aiming to enhance their capacity as first responders during disasters. From time to time, Subash also attends meetings organized by the government and civil society in order to discuss and plan how to jointly work on reducing risks of disasters.

Finally, when he doesn't have any other pressing issues, Subash also works on the monthly report of the different hazards which have occurred in the Mid-Western Development Region.

Volunteerism

When asked what volunteerism represents to him, Subash explained us that it is for him “a service that you do from your heart” and that he is personally doing it “for his country and his community”.

While volunteering brings him a “personal satisfaction to contribute to a better Nepal (...) without expecting anything in return”, Subash believes that his experience as a UN Volunteer has also “boost up his personal and professional skills” at the same time.

“Volunteerism is a service that you do from your heart.”



Subash in front of the Regional Emergency Operation Center of Surkhet



Location of the Regional Emergency Operation Center of Surkhet

6

UNV NEPAL MONTHLY STORY: SUBASH



Subash explaining the monthly summary of hazards to UNV Programme Officer Martina Voss



Subash in his office, talking about his daily tasks with UNV Programme Officer Martina Voss



Subash with UNV Programme Officer Martina Voss and Youth Volunteer in Coordination Quentin Fayet

If you want to know more about the work of Subash....

- Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal

A reliable information resource is essential for disaster preparedness. Mobilization of personnel and supplies after a disaster needs to happen quickly and efficiently. This led to the establishment of the Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal which helps synchronizing disaster related information and interventions in Nepal.

Website: <http://www.drrportal.gov.np>

- Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Programme (CDRMP)

In 2011, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Program to help the Nepalese government develop long-term risk disaster risk reduction plans. This program aims to strengthen the institutional capacities and legislative framework of disaster risk management in Nepal.

Website:

http://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/operations/projects/environment_and_energy/cdrmp/home.html



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Nepal