

## LOCATION OF PARTNERSHIP



## CONTEXT

In April and May 2015, two devastating earthquakes hit Nepal, killing over 8,000 individuals and injuring nearly 22,000. While many of the acute medical needs of patients were met in the weeks following the disaster, the need for follow-up care; including readmission for medical complications, reconstructive or secondary surgery, wound care and physiotherapy continued for months. This remains critical in the prevention of life-long impairments or disabilities. Sixty-eight per cent of injuries assessed and assisted through IOM's Patient Referral Transport Service were injuries to lower limbs, which have a significant impact on a person's mobility and engagement in livelihood

activities, particularly in rural areas where farming is a major source of income.

IOM, in coordination with the Injury and Rehabilitation Sub-Cluster and the Curative Services Division within the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), identified a need for district level "step-down care", a form of transitional rehabilitation care to address the rehabilitation needs of persons with earthquake-related injuries. In November 2015, in partnership with AmeriCares, IOM opened the Injury Rehabilitation Unit (IRU) to patients with the objective to reduce the long term effects of earthquake sustained injuries and support individuals in their recovery and regain maximum functionality.

## IOM - AMERICARES PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

With an estimated 2,100 injuries in Sindhupalchowk, the district was prioritized for the establishment of the model "step-down care" facility. In coordination with the District Health Office in Sindhupalchowk and the District Hospital, the 20-bed IRU in Chautara was quickly established and began providing comprehensive, high-quality services to earthquake-injured individuals triaged by the district hospital. To respond to the various needs of the injured, the IRU provides intensive physiotherapy, medical rounds, round-the-clock nursing care, health promotion/education sessions and psychosocial support. Within the IRU a "Transit Home" was created where patients and their caretakers can live independently before being safely discharged in the community. Upon discharge, patients are also put in contact with vocational training programmes in the district.

Until May 2016, the IRU cared for 100 patients. By end of September 2016, the IRU aims to support 40 additional patients. The length of stay for each patient ranges between two weeks and four months depending on the severity of his/ her condition. All referrals to the IRU are triaged and overseen by the District Hospital Chautara. Unique in Nepal, being a short duration, high intensity care facility supported by a multidisciplinary team, IOM worked with WHO and the Injury and Rehabilitation Sub-Cluster members to establish the IRU as 'demonstration site' for step down care at the district level. This has included tours for rehabilitation partners, training of Nepali physiotherapists, and the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for handover to health authorities for use in future disasters where mass casualties are a factor and for specialist health facilities.



## THE NECESSITY OF PARTNERSHIP

IOM and AmeriCares have worked together since 2005. AmeriCares has partnered with IOM to save lives and extend access to health care and medical referral services to tens of thousands of vulnerable migrants, internally displaced persons and residents of local communities suffering from natural disasters in 18 countries in Africa and Asia, most recently Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines and the Nepal Earthquake as well as, the Ebola Outbreak Response in Liberia. In May 2013, IOM and AmeriCares signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which reaffirms both Organizations' commitment to join forces in the development and implementation of programmes and interventions in the fields of health and emergency, as well as emergency preparedness, psychosocial support in emergencies, labour migration, counter-trafficking, health technical assistance, post-conflict demobilization and rehabilitation, poverty reduction, promotion of economic growth and support for human development.

## PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS

- Established access to medicines and medical equipment within IOM Nepal's emergency health operations;
- Establishment and operation of the IRU in Sindhupalchowk District, Nepal, with 57 beneficiaries within its first four months of operations;
- Additional health human resources available to the IOM Nepal health program through two secondments by AmeriCares;
- Drafting of SOPs for the Provision of Step Down Care in a Post Disaster/Mass Casualty Setting based on the IOM Nepal experience.
- Co-funding to support the construction and operation of the project with a shared vision to create a model for future disasters.

**AmeriCares contributed funding, two secondees based at the IRU, as well as essential medicines and medical equipment. Beyond the operations of the IRU, AmeriCares currently supports the development of SOPs for the Provision of Step Down Care in a Post Disaster/Mass Casualty Setting based on IOM's experience in Nepal, collaborating with IOM on the vision to create a model for future disasters.**

## ADDED VALUE OF THIS PARTNERSHIP

Based on positive outcomes achieved as a result of the global partnership between IOM and AmeriCares since 2005, including the experience in Nepal, it is the intention of both organizations to expand the scope of the partnership, to include joint resource mobilization, and technical collaboration. Both IOM and AmeriCares aim to develop a joint multi-year partnership plan.



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