



## Changing Tourism Lives in Nepal

*How Recovery & Renewal Tourism is helping Nepal build back better*

A Nepal Recovery Fund anniversary update

April 2016

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Dawa Tamang is why the Tourism Cares Nepal Recovery Fund exists – so that the industry can make a difference in tourism lives in remarkable and meaningful ways.

Dawa was one of 40 lodge and tea house owners and workers from hard-hit Langtang who participated in a special hospitality training program for displaced persons while at a temporary camp in Kathmandu.

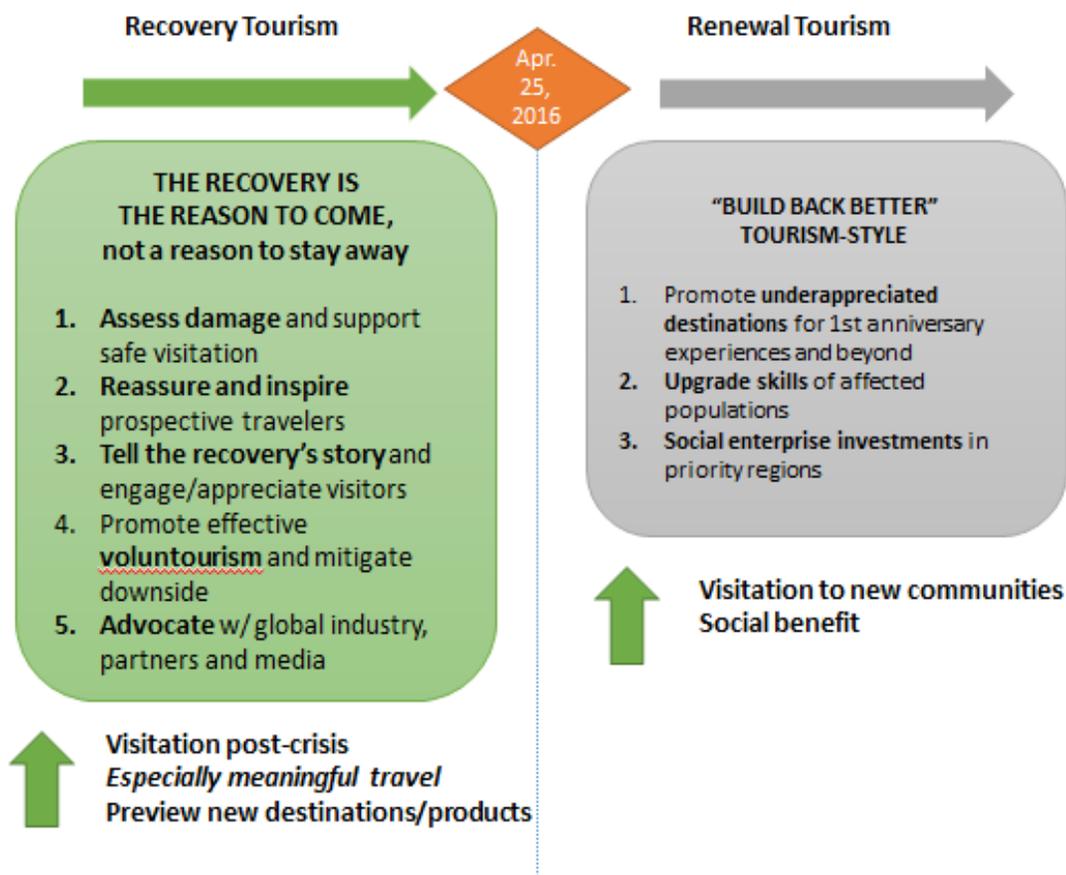
She was in the fields that moment on April 25, 2015. When Dawa rushed to the collapsed bakery where her husband worked she knew he hadn't survived. She found her two boys and is now the sole parent for her household: she took advantage of the training so that she could advance her skills, continue in her husband's profession and provide for her family.



Together with Nepal's National Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NATHM) and co-funded with the Kennedy School at Harvard University, we were thrilled to support this project. The intensive 10-day training program served a dual purpose, as one of Dawa's peers noted: "Here we are all busy with the course and taking care of the camp community. However, I am scared of going back and not being able to cope with the absence of my wife and daughter." What better use of participants' time, and a way to ease their anxiety being far from home in Kathmandu, than to upgrade their skills?

The notable NATHM sessions and certificate program exemplify the potential of the Nepal Tourism Recovery Fund, which is committed to two aspects of disaster response: (1) *Recovery Tourism*, supporting visitation to the country following the immediate relief phase leading up to the quake's first anniversary, and (2) *Renewal Tourism*, making investments that specifically help the tourism economy "build back better" for the disadvantaged, in terms of individual skills, social businesses and finding ways to highlight new destinations.

This is the Recovery & Renewal Tourism framework that has guided the investments of the fund:



Now, more than ever, is an extraordinary time for travelers to visit Nepal; it's a time for especially meaningful travel, from the extra hospitality and gratitude stemming from the unique energy, to stories and inspiration from recovery. After a slower recovery period than hoped for, tourism to Nepal is picking up, aided by the lifting of travel warnings and high profile visitors such as David Beckham, Prince Harry and Leonardo DiCaprio. It's the ideal time to go and experience the wonder and inspiration that is today's Nepal.

The following investments have been identified for the fund to-date, which received \$90,000 in contributions; these grants account for 74% of the total, with the remaining balance being invested in the next 4 months.



## Recovery Tourism Investments

- [www.NepalNow.org](http://www.NepalNow.org) (Nepal Now team with the Nepal Tourism Board) – Nepal’s recovery information source and social media campaign, Nepal Now is a platform that shows the world that today is the time to visit.
- Voluntourism best practices and recovery projects. Post-disaster is a critical time to harness effective voluntourism for recovery and to minimize orphanage voluntourism. We consulted with tour operators on volunteer programs and engaged a wide range of local partners. One model program using travelers to bring dollars and skills to Gorkha is from [Ace the Himalaya, with the Clymb.](#)
- Crisis preparedness and management training for tour operators, and advocacy for Nepal (Adventure Travel Trade Association – [AdventureEDU](#)). The ATTA relationship fulfills two shared goals: increasing visibility for Nepal through AdventureWeek Rebound Nepal and the media, and training 40+ local operators in safety and risk management policies.
- What is to come: the 2016 Meaningful Travel Map to Nepal and related anniversary tourism activities.



## Renewal Tourism Investments

- Lodging Management Certificate for 40 Langtang tourism professionals (National Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management). For just \$1,800, including food and transport, we co-funded the 10-day training for 40 displaced persons, which will lead to better service and incomes. Learn more from the [Nepali Times story](#) and a Tourism Cares [blog post](#).
  - “Langtang II” – re-equipping lodges and tea houses: a continuation of the certificate program co-funded with the Harvard Kennedy School and the Rasuwa Relief, we are canvassing establishments that are reopening and are providing seed capital to get their accommodations back in business in time for the Langtang memorial trek and the increase in visitors expected for the anniversary.
- New jobs for 6 visually impaired Nepalis through massage therapy (Seeing Hands Nepal). With our support Seeing Hands Nepal, which maintains three top-rated massage clinics (Pokhara, and Patan and Thamel in Kathmandu, with plans for expansion), is training 6 new massage therapists, dramatically improving their quality of life. Therapists make US\$400+/month, more than double the next best employment, scarce teaching jobs. This



coveted opportunity drew 51 applicants from 31 of Nepal's 75 districts, with some making multi-day treks to Kathmandu to make their case in person.

- Technology access and education for tourism businesses, and tourists, in Tuckhe, Mustang. 66% of READ Global Center users reported a boost to their income, in addition to documented benefits for women, teachers and students: that's why we've invested in rebuilding the information technology room of the damaged READ Center for literacy and education in Tukche –to help not just visitors but locals, too.
- What is to come, tbd: a community restaurant in Dhulikhel, part of the social enterprise portfolio of Change Fusion Nepal; additional investments in community tourism in Langtang; a tourist guide to cultural heritage and restoration in the Kathmandu Valley.



These grants have been approved by the Global Committee of the Tourism Cares Board of Directors, co-chaired by Robin Tauck of the TRIP Foundation and Chris Seek from Solimar International. A final report and accounting of the fund will be provided in late summer upon full disbursement; Tourism Cares is donating all program management and indirect costs.

**The impact of the Nepal Recovery Fund is only made possible by the 220+ companies and individuals committed to tourism-for-tourism disaster recovery! Gratitude is owed to all contributors, who are making a difference in Nepali lives, including these major donors:**

The Travel Corporation  
Abercrombie & Kent  
MaCher  
TripMate  
Virtuoso  
AIG  
Alexander + Roberts  
ASTA

Collette  
Cox & Kings  
Globus  
Passport Online  
Tauck Ritzau Innovative Philanthropy  
Valerie Wilson Travel  
White Mountain Hotel & Resort  
The Bob Whitley Memorial Fund

**We want to hear from you** and all those in our community who care for Nepal. Please send your comments, questions and ideas to Mike and the team ([mike.rea@tourismcares.org](mailto:mike.rea@tourismcares.org))!

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