

Updated: April 30, 2015

So what next for people abroad generally?

While we are eager to help at this moment, we have been focused on the very first few days of the disaster. Everyone is focused on this event at the moment, but only some of us will care about it in a week's time and stay tuned in the months and even years to come.

Here are some recommendations from a disaster response specialist who has been involved in disaster response in multiple contexts, including the Haiti and Japan earthquakes and the recent Ebola outbreak. While her views are her own, they come grounded in years of work in disaster-hit areas after the immediate relief work gets done:

1. Fundraise right now, even if you don't know exactly where to direct it to yet: The attention of the world is fleeting so now is the best opportunity to fundraise as much as possible.

- If directing donations and contributions, in the immediate timeframe, local communities/organizations and international NGOs that have established country presences are best-positioned to provide relief. So recommend that people

□ donate to local organizations/contacts that you know AND

□ donate to international NGOs (big and small) that are established/reputable/have presence in Nepal.

- It is alright not to donate all your money right away. **In the next few weeks, you'll have a lot more information about what is actually needed, what communities are heavily affected, and what each organization is planning to do.** At that time, you can continue to direct the funds raised to the organizations that are at work.

2. Use your local knowledge to connect people on the ground with the international response that is gaining momentum

- What communities/neighborhoods are you familiar with? Do you know informal and formal community leaders? Do you know great local organizations? You can organize this information, so it can be shared in the UN OCHA cluster meetings, so international organizations will be more aware of them.

- At the same time, help the local NGOs understand how the big international machine is working, so they know how to plug in/partner/gain access to the coordination meetings and financial resources that will become available. They might also get hired by the international organizations.

3. Organize local business information working with people on the ground

- **A big part of the recovery is economic recovery, with businesses and supply chains opening back up.** The response will need a lot of hardware and building supplies, construction services, office supplies, vehicles and logistics, food and grocery, etc and it would be great for local businesses to benefit from as much of the money coming in as possible.

- Take a look at <http://haiti.buildingmarkets.org/> for how this information can be organized to give more visibility to local businesses in front of the international community. If it is organized into a document or website, you can put it in front of people in international NGOs in Nepal, and into the clusters.

A personal note from Stef

If people are interested in going and volunteering, my org All Hands Volunteers (hands.org) is assessing for a volunteer recovery project. You can sign up to receive Nepal updates as plans come together. It would be great to have local and international Nepalis involved! Also, if you have local contacts, please email me (stefanie.chang@gmail.com) and I'll forward to the assessment team.

Thank you!!!

Full bio

Stefanie Chang has worked in international disaster relief, management and recovery for over 7 years. She spent five years building [All Hands Volunteers](#) (formerly Hands On Disaster Response), launching disaster response programs in Indonesia, the Philippines, Peru, Bangladesh, Haiti, Japan and most recently in Sierra Leone. Her work earned her a [2011 Cordes Fellowship](#), and she currently serves on the board of All Hands.