

# The Role of Women's Self-Help Organizations in the Process of Civil Reconstruction after the April 2015 Nepal Earthquake

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In the former royal capital city of Patan in Nepal, NGO and Nepal local government established women's Self-Help Organizations (S.H.O.s) to support the Newar women who are inferior to their families to start a small business and improve their status in their home in the 1990s. The members of women's S.H.O. took literacy, business, and skill training. After the project of NGO and local government, the local women in Patan had been establishing their own organization one after another. Since then, they have been doing not only the activities of the main purpose of social development but also various activities' in response to local needs according to the actual situation.

The 2015 Nepal earthquake caused serious damage to Patan. Immediately after the earthquake occurred, the main people who rebuilt the town were only men, and the women had been staying at home taking care of their family. But 1 year after the earthquake, women's S.H.O.s have been starting to reconstruct their communities. Along with them, the farmer caste *Jyapu's* S.H.O.s has been successfully leading the reconstruction of the community uniquely. In a case of N Tole (community), S.H.O. members focus on multiple businesses and started new businesses. For example, they effectively started using the vacant room of the local disaster prevention centers and manage an exercise class for local people and daycare centers for old people. And also they are going to manage a traditional Newar dance show for tourists. In another case of P Tole, a lot of houses were partially or completely destroyed, local people decided that all destroyed houses shall be rebuilt with guest rooms on each house to aim tourism. Women's S.H.O. members are working at the construction sites as same as men. After building all the houses, S.H.O. members plan to show the traditional Newar dance and foods to tourists in P Tole.

Most of the previous disaster studies emphasizes only the vulnerable aspects of the women, but this paper illustrates that the women members of S.H.O.s in Patan can manage the reconstruction in their community utilizing their experiences and abilities though the activities of S.H.O. for long years.

## Keywords

The April 2015 Nepal Earthquake

Newar People

The Farmer Caste *Jyapu*

Civil Reconstruction

Women's Self-Help Organization(S.H.O.)

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# I Introduction

At 11:56 am Nepal Standard Time on April 25, 2015, a large earthquake of magnitude 7.8 occurred in the central and western parts of Nepal. Severe damage was observed in Nepal, China, Bhutan, Northern India, and Bangladesh. The earthquake caused buildings to collapse, avalanches, and landslides, killing 8,891 people, destroying 605,254 houses, and damaging 288,255 houses. About 188,900 people were temporarily evacuated. In the Kathmandu Valley, many buildings and temples registered as World Cultural Heritage sites, including the Durbar Square, Swayambhunath, Boudhanath and Dharahara Tower, were also damaged by this devastating earthquake. According to a United Nations announcement, about 8 million people were affected, equivalent to about 30% of Nepal's population.

From 2003 to 2015, I conducted fieldwork on the various activities of women's groups in the old royal city of Patan (Lalitpur Metropolitan City) and their impact on women as well as social changes. After the 2015 Nepal earthquake, houses collapsed and people were injured in Patan, and community restoration and reconstruction activities are still underway in the present day. In particular, among the *Jyapu* (farmer caste) communities, "creative reconstruction activities" have been seen and women's self-help organizations (S.H.O.s) are actively involved (Takeuchi 2012,2018). My research focuses on the role of women's S.H.O.s in rehabilitating the *Jyapu* communities. I conducted fieldwork nine times in between November 2015 to December 2019 focusing on post-earthquake reconstruction activities.

Part 1 of this paper gives an overview of the study areas. Such as Patan, and the Newar ethnic groups that are living there. Part 2 of this paper is going to explain the public help given by Lalitpur Metropolitan City. In part 3, I am going to discuss the history and activities of women's self-help organization in Patan and the impact of these

activities on women as well as the changes brought by the post-earthquake of the Newar society. And in part 4, the reconstruction activities of the *Jyapu* caste after the 2015 earthquake will be discussed. Two citizen-led reconstruction projects, such as "Diversified management" and "New town planning utilizing Newar tradition" will be highlighted. Finally, the role of women's S.H.O.s in these two projects will be further analyzed in detail.

## II Overview of study area

### 2-1 Patan (Lalitpur Metropolitan City)

Patan flourished in the late Malla dynasty (1476-1768) in the 15th century, after the Malla dynasty was divided into the three kingdoms of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan. It is located 5 kilometers south of Kathmandu, the capital city, on a plateau on the south bank of the Bagmati River, inside of a circular road called Ring Road. Patan has an overwhelming number of Buddhist temples in comparison with the other two old Malla cities, Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, in the Kathmandu Valley. These old cities, former royal capitals, are still mostly occupied by Newar people. In Newar society, the concept of purity or impurity of the object or person is perceived by whether one can touch or interact with things and people. And this kind of perceived purity or impurity exist both in the daily code and in the hierarchy of the social classes (the caste system).

There are Newar people, who practice Hinduism and Buddhism. It is to be noted that both religions are intertwined and some festivals are mixed based on these religious concepts. Buddhism originally had no caste system, but in the Kathmandu Valley, Buddhists observe caste system based on Hindu philosophies. The royal palace and temples are located in the center of the city, are surrounded by four and five-story brick and timbered multi-family



Figure 1. Patan (Lalitpur Metropolitan City)  
 Source: 2007 Encyclopaedia Britannica. Inc

dwelling. Upper caste people live in the center of the city and lower caste people live on the outer edge of the city. Each caste lives their life based on the rigid caste system.

As I stated above, the city has a basic urban structure based on a religious view, and this structure is formed according to the caste structure, the mandala worldview and the concept of “pure and impure”. The urban structure is linked to traditional culture of Newar.

## 2-2 Newar people

Newar people experience all phenomena through the lens of whether something is pure or impure. Pure and impure views are derived from the world creation myth taught in Hinduism, and also from the caste system, which defines people’s occupation and ritual role. A person’s caste level, occupation and conducting of ritual roles are predetermined by ones ancestral caste level. For an example, God has the attribute of “purity”, and members of the priest caste group (Hindu priest *Deyobalm*, Buddhist priest *Gubaju*), who are believed close to God, regarded as upper caste, while in contrast, a butcher who handles meat is considered “impure”. The butcher

caste group (*Kasai*) and cleaning caste group (*Pode*) are considered to be the lower caste of society. On the other hand, despite the caste ranking, each caste group has its own deity and customs, and each has its own caste identity for its caste group (Gellner 1996: 63-68). The order of caste and the degree of purity or impurity are determined at birth of the individual and are generally considered to be fixed. In Patan alone, there are more than 50 *tals* (family names, or caste groups) (Maharajan 2002: 35). the *Jyapu* (farmer caste group) has the largest number of households of any caste group, followed by *Bale* (gold and silver Buddhist statue crafters caste), then the *Gubaju* (Buddhist monk caste), and the *Sessyo* (government job caste group). The number of households in other caste groups is not very large. Different caste people keep a distance from other caste groups, except for certain ceremonial Occasions. For an example, it is not customary for a upper caste family to allow a lower caste group or person into their house. In addition, there are restrictions against inter-caste marriage, and on “food transfer” between the different castes. Such as, the inability to receive water and food (especially rice) from people of lower caste family or group and the inability to eat with

lower caste people (Yamagami 2001). In particular, cooked rice is seen as a likely conduit for impureness because it is eaten on a daily basis. It is said that one must not share a meal place with anyone other than family members. (Yamagami 2008: 60). Today, traditional values, especially among young people with modern education, are waning and caste norms are changing. However, many elderly people live according to the traditional caste norms.

### III Public help of Lalitpur Metropolitan City

#### 3-1 Public assistance by Lalitpur Metropolitan City Office

According to the government officer in charge of earthquake reconstruction work in Lalitpur Metropolitan City Office, the damage to Lalitpur was 49 fatalities, 128 injured people, 2,300 collapsed houses, 5,000 partially damaged houses, and 75,000 affected people. The role of the city office is to provide grants to all the applicants, who are seriously injured or have damaged houses based on standards set by the Nepalese government. The damaged buildings are assessed and placed in one of three groups (red: no entry, green: safe, yellow: living will be possible after repairs), and a disaster certificate ID card is issued for the affected applicant. The Nepalese government has instructed municipalities to provide 300,000 rupees <sup>1</sup> (approximately 300,000 yen) for the rebuilding of houses. If home rebuilding criteria are met, applicants can receive financial support to begin rebuilding their homes. First time applicants receive 50,000 rupees if they pass the ground check; the second time they receive 150,000 rupees, if their work satisfies the DPC seismic standard; and the third time they receive 100,000 rupees, if their first floor



Figure 2. Damaged temples in Patan Durbar Square (November 14th, 2017 photographed by the author)

meets all the standards set by the government and is completed.

As of December 2019, 6,300 victims in Lalitpur have received first-time grants. Second grants have been awarded to 25% of the initial recipients, and third grants to 20% of the first recipients. In all, 7,373 people have received support from the City Office between 2015 and August 2019. After the earthquake, the regional development bureau under the City Office had distributed shelters and tents, as well as baby clothes and diapers to pregnant women and mothers with babies. One week after the earthquake, large tents provided by UNICEF were set up in the gardens of the City Office and in the fields of Ward 8. About one month after the earthquake, children gathered, painted, and danced. At that time, children were given notebooks, pens, and erasers, as well as snacks by the local government officials.

#### 3-2 Public assistance by the Ward office <sup>2</sup>

After the earthquake, ward offices received relief supplies for the residents from City Offices, International organizations, NGOs, and others. Ward 8 <sup>3</sup>, The most damaged area of Patan, received more relief supplies than any other ward. The City Office

<sup>1</sup> According to the conversion rate of 1 NPR = 0.95 JPY (as of September 25, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> The data in this section is based on interviews with officials in Ward 8 and Ward 4 (August 2019).



sent 100,000 rupees (approximately 100,000 yen) as donation, medicines, and other food supplies to the ward office. Besides that, several items were donated. Such as, daily necessary items, food from the Central District Administrative Office (CDO), tents from the Red Cross, and acetaminophen from the several NGOs ENPHO and YUM, which are actively involved in the public health sector. According to many of the ward offices, a few days after the earthquake, ward office staff formed a rescue team and they began to work again. At that time, the role of the ward office was mainly to distribute relief supplies, received from each organization. In addition, although not a ward, the *Jyapu Samaj*<sup>4</sup> donated 10,000 rupees (approximately 10,000 yen) for each injured *Jyapu* member as a measure of public assistance.

The Ward 4 office stood out by its effective response. International NGOs sent donation, rescue supplies (gloves, helmets, boots, picks, and masks) and tents to each ward office, and their first task was to distribute them to the residents. Seven days after the earthquake, the Ward 4 office had provided the plaza as a public shelter, built tents, and provided food to residents. They were able to operate smoothly because they had providentially received earthquake disaster training from an International NGO, the day before the disaster took place. As a result, they were able to anticipate the disaster more effectively than other ward offices in this area.

## IV Formation and development of women's self-help organizations

### 4-1 What does mean the

## women's self-help organization (S.H.O.)?

Women's S.H.O. was first established in the year 1991, by a local NGO that targeted Newar *Jyapu* (farmer caste) women in Patan. CDS (Community Development Section)<sup>5</sup> in Patan had formed seven women's S.H.O.s between 1996 and 1999. Although, there have been no other projects since 2000, the CDS has been supporting S.H.O.s and conducting a number of operational trainings. Women with knowledge of the women's S.H.O.s have begun to establish other new S.H.O.s by them in the community of Patan, where they live. They have been playing an important role to empower the women social as well as economically. In addition, they have been working based on the needs of their communities and caste groups.

There are also some other groups that choose not to register their establishment with the CDS because they prefer to work for their own interests rather than for the government. There are several requirements for registering women's S.H.O.s with the CDS. For an example, there must be more than 30 members, there must be one week of training in the establishment, the CDS can dictate how the S.H.O. will be managed, annual visits to the CDS must be made, meetings must be attended and reports of the organization must be submitted, and leader of the organization must be changed every three years alternatively. To register with CDS scheme has so many benefits for women. Such as they can get training in arithmetic, reading and writing, vocational training such as courses in using sewing machine and hairdressing, aptitude training, public speaking, and guidance in hygiene and nutrition from a health center.

3 Ward 8 consists of 12 *toles* (communities), with about 2,200 houses and a population of about 12,000. In Ward 8, the number of collapsed houses exceeded 400, and the region was the most affected by the earthquake in Lalitpur. The first quake, followed by several aftershocks, left between 50 and 60 people injured. In Ward 8, there were no deaths, but a resident of Ward 8 was walking on a street in another ward and died of a heart attack after seeing the university wall collapse in front of him.

4 *Jyapu Samaj* is a large farmer caste group self-help organization that comprises 40 communities of farmer caste groups living in Patan.

5 CDS (Community Development Section) is an administrative organization under the umbrella of City Office.

Women's S.H.O.s go against the traditional Newar values of keeping to one's own caste group, as they serve all women in the community regardless of which caste group they belong to. However, women have established S.H.O.s in each tole (small community), so in Patan, where traditionally people are segregated by caste group, members of the same S.H.O. are allowed to interact with others of different caste groups.

As of November 2018, there are 300 S.H.O.s in Patan. Some groups have more than 20 years of experience. Until the year 2000, many women were unable to join as a member to a group because their families opposed them from going out of their homes. However, women's S.H.O.s had been established in every tole by the year 2010.

At meeting, women can get various kinds of information from the government and they get an opportunity to learn about sanitation, garbage separation and recycling methods, which they can practice at home. Women's S.H.O.s are serving the tole and bringing so many benefits, therefore, S.H.O. member's husbands and other members of the family can allow the women to participate in the training. At the time of the national election, administrative officials taught S.H.O. members about what is the meaning of a political party, what is the meaning of citizens vote and how to cast one's own vote. During Election time, candidates frequently campaigned in each tole and invited not only tole leaders but also the women's S.H.O. leaders to campaign events.

## 4-2 The life changes of women who belong to S.H.O.s

The gender structure of Newar society has changed since Patan's Newar women began to join S.H.O.s. As mentioned earlier, traditionally, Newar women were restricted to the private area of their husband's house and parents' house, and they could not go out freely without the permission given by their family. Once they started participating in S.H.O.s, women became more accustomed to leaving their

homes and doing various outside activities, including group meetings and events.

One of the characteristics of S.H.O.s for the Newar women, is to conduct "small entrepreneurship activities" (such as microcredit, vocational training, literacy training). Such activities aim to develop women's financial independence, which is the original purpose of development. In addition, S.H.O.s organize many community activities, such as participating in festivals, cleaning up communities, establishing community clinics according to the needs of the tole. Each tole is active, with its S.H.O. performing a variety of new community activities to meet its needs.

While initially many men strongly opposed the women from joining S.H.O.s and working outside the home. However, now they have come to know and recognize that S.H.O.'s community work has a positive impact on the tole. Since the establishment of S.H.O.s in Patan, women have gained a social role in the tole, expanding women's freedom and raising women's social status like never before. In this way, S.H.O.s have unintentionally changed the traditional gender structure.

## V The community reconstruction process and the role of women's self-help organizations

The community reconstruction process and the role of women's S.H.O.s were selected for research because of their high level of women's involvement in the community reconstruction process. In this study, I will focus mainly on two toles in Patan, referred to as N Tole and P Tole in order to preserve anonymity, which after the earthquake started new urban development projects in which women's S.H.O.s are active in the process of reconstruction. In doing so, I will discuss how women's S.H.O.s are involved in the project and their role in the community

reconstruction activities.

## 5-1 Reconstruction project : “Diversified management” based on women’s ideas in N Tole

### a. Overview of N Tole

Talking about N Tole is located at Ward 20 in Lalitpur City and it has about 150 houses and a population of about 400. Most caste groups that live in the community have the last name “Maharjan”. The N community is known for its historic *Quina Gane Dyo* (the god Ganesh) temple, which holds the festival of *Jal Binayak Jatra*. The festival starts on the evening of the full moon in November. On that day, in the evening around 6 pm, *mankaa guthi*<sup>6</sup>, a men’s band performing during ceremonies, begins to play. In recent years, women have been allowed to participate. Men carry a portable shrine with *Quina Gane dyo* inside, and women dance and play musical instruments while parading through the town of Patan.

In N Tole, the damage from the earthquake was minimal. Four houses were nearly collapsed, but most houses were just cracked. There were no fatalities. For two months after the earthquake, community members stayed in tents in a large parking area run by N Tole.

### b. Activities of women’s S.H.O. in N Tole before the 2015 earthquake

N Tole has a women’s self-help organization that was established in 1999. As of November 2017, N’s women’s S.H.O. had 92 members. This S.H.O. was established to conduct three main activities: vocational training, literacy training, and microfinance. Every member pays a small amount every month and the money thus collected is put into a large fund. Members can borrow money from this fund and can take loan to open small businesses

on their own. In addition to the original development activities, the S.H.O. is currently carrying out various activities based on women’s problems and community needs.

For an example, members of this women’s S.H.O. perform community activities, such as blood pressure measurement, routine health checkup, cleaning roads and temples for residents in the Tole. Last year, they repaired houses damaged by the earthquake. (All the damaged houses in N Tole have now been almost repaired.) Also, leisure activities, such as excursions and banquets are organized for members. In one notably successful venture, of this women’s S.H.O. was to convince the city office to clean a previously unused garbage area and turn it into a parking lot. The S.H.O. members operate the parking lot. They have hired security guards from security companies because it is dangerous at night. Since there is almost no parking space in Patan, therefore this parking management venture is successful and also profitable. The profits from the parking operation are deposited into the community’s Sakhakari (financial union), but when the community needs a large amount of money for events like community festivals and banquets and the donations are often made to the community from this fund.

### c. After the 2015 Earthquake

In N Tole, before the disaster, the women’s S.H.O.s had cleaned up a garbage dump in the community and used the space as parking lot, with the help of men. For two months immediately after the disaster, the space was provided for free of charge to establish evacuation tent camp for Tole members.

Although the women’s S.H.O. has been active in women’s activities and for the Tole for some time now, members said that they had little time to work for the women’s S.H.O. immediately after the earthquake. According to interviews with women living in Patan, after the earthquake, children’s

6 *Guthis* are social organizations that are used to maintain the socio-economic order of Newar society. *Mankaa Guthi* is one type of *Guthis*. The members of *Mankaa Guthi* play traditional music instruments on the ritual occasions

schools were closed for a long time, and many working men had to take a long time off from their office work. Even when they returned back to their work, the men were afraid that the earthquake might reoccur, and they continued to leave the office voluntarily and many of them used to return back home as early as possible for a while. Women were often busy and had to take care of their family members. In other words, many women were not able to leave their homes immediately after the disaster.

On the other hand, immediately after the earthquake, men were able to work toward recovery. Men already had a network outside the home, which they relied a lot to get financial and technical support for N Tole and successfully they were able to build a community disaster prevention center in N Tole.

#### **d.Launching the project “Diversified management”**

One year after the earthquake, women’s self-help organizations finally started working for reconstruction <sup>7</sup>. At that time, the women’s S.H.O. in N Tole had three projects to help people in order to rebuild their lives once again, after the earthquake through diversified management.

The first project focused on tourism. The first component of this plan was to hold a show once in a month and sell tickets to tourists. The show would include Newar dance and live music and a traditional Newar style banquets prepared by local residents. In order to serve this purpose, women’s S.H.O. members started to conduct banquet cooking training sessions to give training to its residents. Also, three years ago, they created a *macha pucha* (children’s group), and they asked the children (both boys and girls) of their community between the ages of 8 and 16 to learn dancing and playing instruments like flute, drum from the members of *mankaa guthi* (men’s traditional band). The second component of the tourism plan was to organize a program like homestay program for

tourists. Therefore, several vacant houses in the Tole were cleaned and renovated in order to accommodate around 10 people at one time. Homestay hosts used to serve Newar dishes. Therefore, the S.H.O. women had undergone cooking and cleaning trainings.

The second project was to use an empty or vacant house in the Tole, in order to manage boutique stores. Women’s S.H.O. members used to keep the store open and tailor kurta (punjabi dresses) and sari. According to interviews, in November 2017, the location of boutique stores had already been finalized in the Tole and were in the process to open soon. The S.H.O. hopes to create employment for women through such boutique management.

Third, they planned to use the empty space in the community disaster prevention center, in order to create a community day care facility for the elderly people. This would be made available to about 100 elderly people in the community. At present, the S.H.O. members are currently applying to open the facility with the ward office. When there were no such events to take place, this community disaster prevention center was closed most of the time. Therefore, they wanted to use this center for such good reason.as much as possible. The plan was to open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm as day care for the elderly people. Activities would include communal play, dance, and also for exercise class. A doctor used to visit once a month, in order to check the health condition of the elderly people.



Figure 3. Members of women’s S.H.O. in N tole (April 25th, 2018 photographed by the author)

The elderly day care service plan was aimed to

<sup>7</sup> The border blockade between Nepal and India was in turmoil from September 24, 2015 to February 2016. With logistics stagnating, supplies of daily necessities, which had relied on imports from India, fell sharply in Nepal and fuel and drug shortages became severe.



create employment for women's S.H.O. members. And the day care service for the elderly allowed to give free space for women who have elderly family members to leave and find work outside of their homes. In addition, even if a disaster strikes, they can feel reassured that elderly people are in a safe place like disaster prevention enter. If a disaster occurs during use, there is no need to move elderly people out of their homes in terms of disaster prevention. It is believed that it will also reduce the burden on everyday families and will be beneficial for all residents of the community.

## 5-2 Reconstruction project: “New town planning utilizing Newar tradition” in P Tole of Patan

### a. Overview of P Tole

P Tole is located in Ward 3 of Lalitpur City, with a population of about 700 and there are around 115 homes. All inhabitants belong to the peasant caste (family name: Maharjan). Maharjan have traditionally worked in agriculture, but now they have no dedicated farmers and have sold most of their land or built new houses there, leaving little land for farming. Usually, most of the people in this area farm only for their own consumption. At present, the most common profession in P Tole is making hand crafted Buddha statues and to work in offices. In recent years, the number of young people studying abroad and working abroad have increased a lot.

P Tole was the worst affected area of Patan in the Great Nepal Earthquake, with 60% of homes were collapsed and inhabitants were unable to live in their houses. However, no one was died directly from the earthquake, but two people were died due to the shock of such a traumatic event.

The biggest problem in the post-disaster community was that there were many poor people living in houses that had collapsed so badly due to the earthquake, they could not afford to rebuild their homes once again. Some inhabitants have given up in rebuilding their homes and gone back hometown

to live with their relatives, while others have rented apartments. Even now, four years after the disaster, some people are still living in the evacuation shelters because they cannot even afford to pay monthly rent of an apartment.

### b. Launching the project “New town planning utilizing Newar tradition”

After the earthquake, P Tole discussed how residents could restore and rebuild the community. It was thought that economic disparities would be a major problem if the community was rebuilt individually.

A leader in P Tole, Mr. R.M, chairman of the NGO Maya Foundation and president of a diamond company, suggested the idea of “New town planning utilizing Newar tradition” to residents. The purpose of this project was to invite tourists to their community, in order to revitalize the town, preserve tradition, generate income for the local people, and also to raise the standard of living in the tole. The Maya Foundation (NGO) was trying to create a new town by paying for a portion of the reconstruction costs and attempting to attract tourists to P Tole. The first floor of each house is a craft shop or café; the second floor is a space for guest rooms for tourists; and the third and fourth floors are the owner's living quarters. Room reservations are handled by a central office that arrange an accommodation for guests to a guest house. This is to ensure that every guest house has an equal chance to have guests. The aim is to give all residents equal work opportunity. Initially, the plan was to build 82 project houses (7 chokes), but the number of houses increased to 87 because the large number of applications were submitted. This project was set to be completed within three years.

### c. Activities of the women's S.H.O. in P Tole

The women's S.H.O. in P Tole has 110 members, who pay 220 rupees a month (200 rupees are a deposit, 20 rupees are a donation to the Tole). When the earthquake occurred, they cleaned the rubble off the road so that people could pass through. Every

day since the start of the project, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., they helped with the manual labor of reconstruction and provided food and drinks to the people working on the site. At first, there were many volunteers, but after a year and a half, the men gradually stopped coming to the site because they were busy with work. The women's labor has thus become invaluable because Tole leaders are worried that the labor force would be reduced and as a result the construction period would be extended further.

According to my fieldwork, I have conducted in November 2018, S.H.O. members have been training for three months in Newar dance and traditional instruments for tourism shows. These dances are to be performed for guests in restaurants and stages in P Tole guest houses. In the fall of 2019, the women performed dances, which they had mastered.



Figure 4. Members of women's S.H.O. in P Tole (November 18th, 2018 photographed by the author)

#### d. Project Issues

What is currently a problem is the financial difficulties of residents engaged solely in agricultural activities. These residents can borrow funds, but their ability to repay the loan is in question.

There is a consensus that division of property will be a major problem in the near future. In Newar culture, when it comes to the division of property, a wall is built to divide the house equally amongst sons, so it becomes a narrow house. Houses are being rebuilt the same size as before the earthquake, so the sizes of rooms vary depending on the house. In the future, when it comes to divide the property, there will be an issue like who will get the guest room. As guest houses are a new concept, Newar people have

yet to establish cultural norms for dividing a guest house. Some families have decided that one sibling will become the owner of the guest house while the other siblings will receive a portion of the house's original value or future earnings from the guest house.



Figure 5. Scenery during a break in construction work in P Tole (April 27th, 2018 photographed by the author)

## VI Conclusion : Examination

This paper, through fieldwork, has shown how the civil reconstruction process in Patan has been carried out since the Great Nepal earthquake and how women's self-help organizations have been involved in the reconstruction process. The Nepalese government mainly focused on the more severely damaged suburbs of Kathmandu. Therefore, in the Patan, public assistance was insufficient. For an example, the government did not create enough temporary housing for victims in Patan. For this reason, the residents independently took the lead role for the community reconstruction activities. In this paper, the *Jyapu* settlements were examined, along with the role of women's S.H.O.s in the N Tole's "Diversified management" project and the P Tole's "New town planning utilizing Newar tradition" project. The farmer caste was chosen because women in this area have so far been the most active in women's S.H.O.s and they are also active in reconstruction.

Both the N and P communities started tourism venture after the disaster. These reconstruction efforts are aimed at creating jobs for all community

members and reshaping life in the N and P communities. It is noteworthy that women's points of view are included in reconstruction. For an example, in N Tole, women supported the idea of a senior day care service because they want to work in order to earn money. Care for elderly family members usually falls to the women in the family, but it is very tiring and time-consuming work. Having a day care service helps the women to take care of their elderly family members while freeing them to work outside the home. The equality of all community members is here emphasized.

As the "Disaster and Gender" (Enarson 2000, Tsunozaki 2007) study pointed out, during natural disaster, women are likely to be vulnerable and be unable to access to relief supplies because of their lack of education and social rights. Even in Patan, the family responsibilities and roles in the home that women had before the disaster were amplified and expanded by the occurrence of disasters and emergencies, thus confining them to their homes. The women's S.H.O. was able to do almost nothing for roughly a year. However, over a year later, finally women were able to begin their work outside the home as S.H.O. members. In N Tole, the women's S.H.O. had played a central role in reconstruction, using buildings, human resources, and unique cultures in the community to plan for sustainable tourism, and gradually rebuild. The project is underway.

In addition, in P Tole, using the empty space of the Disaster Prevention Center as day care for the elderly on a daily basis is a unique idea from the perspective of women at home. Men who work outside during the day cannot run a day care, and women are often engaged in the area of care at home. As women already possess the knowledge and ability to take care of elderly people. Therefore, it was very easy for them to gain the required very little training.

In Patan, women's S.H.O.s, established in the 1990s and 2000s, have gained organizational management skills through the experience of women's activities and have expanded their social roles in communities.

One of the reasons women were able to participate in recovery is that women's S.H.O.s have improved their organizational management skills and other abilities through various activities over many years.

In this paper, the role of women's self-help organizations in reconstruction was discussed. Reconstruction aimed at tourism has provoked instances of what can be termed "remaking and creating culture". For an example, guest rooms for foreigners feature different ceiling heights, Western-style toilets, curtains and beds, in order to fulfill the need and requirement of the foreign customers. There are also several unsolved issues, such as how to divide the guest rooms into property in terms of legal condition. In the future, I would like to address and analyze those unsolved issues from the viewpoint of tourist anthropology.

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