

## Episcopal Relief and Development for Nepal after Earthquake

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck Nepal on April 25 was centered between the capital, Kathmandu, and the city of Pokhara, 130 miles west.\* The original quake and powerful subsequent aftershocks leveled neighborhoods, businesses and iconic religious sites, particularly those in older or poorer areas where structures were made of mud brick. The [death toll as of May 5 exceeds 7,300](#), with search and rescue operations still in progress.

Episcopal Relief & Development is responding to immediate needs for food, shelter and clean water in earthquake-impacted Nepal through the ecumenical ACT Alliance, and is exploring further opportunities for action through other partners in the region. The organization is in contact with the Anglican Diocese of West Malaysia regarding its appeal for the work of the Deanery of Nepal (part of the Diocese of Singapore), and may also support partners in northern India and southwest China.

"Responding through the ACT Alliance as an initial step allows Episcopal Relief & Development to relay the care and support of our community to those in Nepal who are hurting from the earthquake and its aftermath," said Abigail Nelson, the organization's Senior Vice President of Programs. "Our support is essential as the Alliance leverages strong local partnerships to assess and meet the needs of thousands of people for food, shelter and clean water.

The ACT Alliance issued an official appeal on May 1 detailing proposed activities to reach approximately 125,000 people in the most severely affected districts of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Dhading, Gorkha, Sindhupalchowk, Lamjung and Kabre. Although some of the estimated 2.8 million people displaced by the earthquake are returning to their homes, shelter is a top priority for the 70,000 families whose homes were destroyed and the

additional 900,000 people who are sleeping outside their undamaged homes for fear of aftershocks. The ACT Alliance aims to reach 12,000 families with supplies and training to construct temporary shelters, and provide support for 2,500 vulnerable households to rebuild their permanent homes. Additional priorities include the provision of food and household items, as well as supplying clean water and installing or rehabilitating sanitation systems in camps and established neighborhoods. ACT Alliance members in Nepal have already distributed ready-to-eat food, blankets and tarps for emergency shelter to over 2,100 families in informal displacement camps around Kathmandu.

You may respond to the crisis by sending your contribution directly to St. Luke's or to the Episcopal Relief and Development on their web site with contribution marked for Nepal. ERD envelopes are also available at St. Luke's.