



Press Release
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Thousands Benefit From The ROTA-Vodafone Qatar Project In Nepal

Doha, Qatar, 14 September 2013: Thousands of Nepali residents have benefitted from the four-year joint Reach Out To Asia (ROTA) and Vodafone Qatar initiative to improve the quality of education and build resilience to natural disasters into schools in Nepal.

The \$3,000,000 project was carried out with support from Mercy Corps, ROTA strategic international partner- Action Aid Nepal, and other local groups including, the Forum for Awareness and Youth Activities (FAYA); and the Nepal Red Cross Society. The project was known as 'Improving Quality of Education and Building Resilience in Schools'.

Nepal is prone to natural hazards. Out of 198 countries, it ranks 11th and 30th respectively with regards to earthquake and flood vulnerability. Each year, resulting disasters cause around 13,000 deaths in addition to significant loss of land and education infrastructure. Natural hazards destroy school buildings, as well as physical access to them. In many cases, schools are used as safe shelter by communities during disasters.

Working in 22 villages in the Kailali District of western Nepal, The Vodafone Qatar-Rota partnership, through the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) project, has improved the lives thousands of students and teachers in many schools since the mission started in 2010.

The effectiveness of Vodafone Qatar-ROTA project in Nepal was witnessed in July early this year, when the far West Nepal faced heavy rainfall during the third week of July 2013. As a result, many VDCs in the Far West were flooded and inundated.

“The DRR training from the project helped us immensely in reducing the flood impact”, explains the President of Shree Shiva Lower Secondary School, Shantaram Chaudhary. “Apart from the flood mock drill, we had also learnt about the Early Warning System in the trainings, so, when it



started to rain heavily, I was unable to sleep and I called the gauge reader of Likma River and we were informed to prepare ourselves, because there would be heavy flooding,” Chaudhary added.

He further explains that he quickly shared this information with his community leader and he relayed this information to everyone in the village so they could all prepare themselves. “Everyone who got this information was able to escape the worst effects of the flood, because they had already safely located their important documents and other valuable items,” said Shantaram Chaudhary.

According to the President of Shree Shiva Lower Secondary School, even people whose houses were inundated by the water were not severely affected by the flood. They had gathered their important materials, including food items, and had taken them to Shiva School.

“We were saved by the mock drills. Otherwise, we would have lost everything, the way we lost it in the 2009 flood. If they had not provided us with this training, I think our losses would have been greater compared to now. Now you can see we have our food, grains, important documents and even our cows and buffalos are safe and no one was injured by the flood on 19th July. Mock drills and the Early Warning System saved our lives and livelihoods”.

Furthermore, the ROTA-Vodafone Qatar project to improve the quality of education in Nepal has been a good success. Though, Nepal has made headway in its efforts to reduce poverty; nonetheless, it still remains as one of the poorest countries in the region. Even with an impressive enrollment approaching 89% of primary aged school children, the quality of education is still poor as this number reflects the move towards community schooling, rather than homeschooling.

Setting out to increase awareness, knowledge and capacity of school committees, teachers, parents and children, Rota introduced Child Centered Learning (CCL) at Grade 2 and Grade 3 levels in 75 schools, while 300 teachers and head teachers have been trained in how to implement CCL techniques in their schools.

Expressing satisfaction on the success of the Nepal project, Dana Haidan, Head of Corporate Responsibility at Vodafone Qatar said, *“Our partnership with Reach Out to Asia is a long-standing commitment that reflects our belief in the importance of collaboration between the private and NGO sectors as each compliments the other with their set of unique skills and expertise and their*



joined forces optimize the impact that ensure the benefits of the communities in need are widely spread.”

“At Vodafone, we believe our role goes beyond offering products and services, which is why we established this partnership with Reach Out To Asia in 2009 as we aimed to contribute to community development in Qatar and also in other countries where the support is needed such as Nepal and Indonesia.”

Meanwhile, Essa Al Mannai, Executive Director at ROTA in his comments said, *“We are delighted at the success of our Nepal project. ROTA is grateful to Vodafone Qatar for their generosity in helping us to continue our mission of assisting people affected by crisis across Asia and around the world so they can have continuous access to relevant and high-quality primary and secondary education. Our partnership has contributed directly to the mission of community service alliance and helped us meet the needs of those we serve.”* Al Mannai added, *“With Vodafone Qatar’s help, ROTA has been able to support innovative and exciting education projects in countries that need it the most.”*

For more information about Reach Out To Asia’s projects in Nepal and 10 other Asian countries, visit www.reachouttoasia.org or the ROTA Facebook page, www.facebook.com/reachouttoasia

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About ROTA

Reach Out To Asia is a non-profit organization launched in December 2005 in Doha, Qatar, by Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. Operating under the auspices of the Qatar Foundation, ROTA is committed to providing high quality and relevant primary and secondary education, encouraging relationships among communities, creating safe learning environments and restoring education in crisis affected areas across Asia and around the world. ROTA envisions a world, where all young people have access to the education they need in order for them to realize their full potential and shape the development of their communities.



About Qatar Foundation

Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, and chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser, Qatar Foundation is a private, non-profit organization committed to the principle that a nation's greatest natural resource is its people. The headquarters of Qatar Foundation are located within its flagship project, Education City. A fourteen million square-metre campus, Education City is home to numerous progressive learning institutions and centers of research, including branch campuses of six of the world's leading universities, plus a cutting-edge science and technology park. Qatar Foundation also works to enhance the quality of life in Qatar by investing in 'Education, Science and Technology and Community Health and Development'