



Case study

An earthquake in a developing country: Nepal earthquakes, 2015

An earthquake happened in Nepal on 25 April 2015, measuring a magnitude of 7.8. The epicentre was 80 km north-west of the capital, Kathmandu. A second earthquake in the same region occurred some days later on 12 May. The earthquakes happened because the Indo-Australian plate is colliding with the Eurasian plate – a destructive plate margin.

Primary effects

- Nine thousand people died and approximately 20 000 people were injured.
- Nearly three million people were left homeless.
- Following the earthquake, 1.4 million people needed food, even more needed water and shelter.
- Seven thousand schools were destroyed.
- Hospitals were overwhelmed and the international airport was congested, affecting the arrival of **aid**.
- The cost of damage totalled approximately US\$5 billion.

Secondary effects

- An avalanche was triggered on Mount Everest, which killed 19 people.
- A landslide blocked the Kali Gandaki River, which resulted in people being evacuated in case of flooding.
- An avalanche in the Langtang region resulted in 250 people missing.

Immediate responses

- The UK, India and China provided rescue teams, water and medical support.
- The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) had raised US\$126 million in **international aid** by September 2015.
- Half a million temporary shelters were set up.
- The United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) distributed medical supplies to the areas that were most affected.

Long-term responses

- A post-disaster needs assessment was carried out and buildings were built to stricter codes.
- Areas where there were landslides were cleared and roads were repaired.
- The homeless had to be rehoused and 7000 schools were rebuilt.
- Mount Everest base camp was repaired so that the mountain could be reopened to climbers.



DO IT!

Nepal earthquakes, 2015

- 1 Sort the primary and secondary effects of the earthquakes in Nepal into the categories: social, economic and environmental. If you have used a different case study, use that as the basis for your answer instead.
- 2 Rank the effects, starting with the one you think is the worst.



NAIL IT!

Earthquakes in countries of contrasting levels of wealth

Earthquakes can have very different effects depending on what type of country they happen in. Remember why you often get worse impacts in a developing country.