

# Japanese assistance for renovation of local learning centre

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The government of Japan has decided to offer financial assistance of US \$ 254,083 (approximately Rs 27 million) to ICA Japan under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects scheme.

ICA Japan is an NGO based in Japan, which will provide technical and financial support to its partner agency ICA Nepal. The grant will be used to implement the project — renovation of local community learning centre for vulnerable victims of disaster in Changu Narayan village.

A press statement issued here today by the Embassy of Japan in Kathmandu said a grant contract relating to this project was scheduled to be signed and exchanged tomorrow at the Embassy of Japan in Nepal between Masashi Ogawa, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, and Shiroyo Sato, Executive Director of ICA Japan.

The grant assistance will be used to renovate the local community learning centre, which was also built with financial support from the Japanese government in 2002. The support is intended to improve and strengthen the lives of earthquake victims.

According to the statement,

the major elements of this programme include learning centre renovation, community meeting for restoration, psycho-social counselling for children, psycho-social counselling for senior citizens and skill training for lower income women.

It said the project will include retrofitting of the centre's walls to make it resistant against future earthquakes, under learning centre renovation. Similarly, the project will also invite leaders of Changu Narayan Village, VDC, senior citizens and women's groups to discuss the short, medium, and long-term plans for community restoration before submitting the plans to the district office, under community meeting for restoration.

Under psycho-social counselling for children and senior citizens, the project aims to provide a safe space for children and create a playground as well as provide counselling services in the learning centre. It will also provide counselling for senior citizens, create a senior citizen's club, hold gatherings and provide recreation activities, under psycho-social counselling for senior citizens. Likewise, the project will provide training in napkin production and training in marketing to low-income women.