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It has been six years since my last visit to Nepal. I left the country after three months as part of an international earthquake response.

I am back to follow up on the consequences of the work done and to find out what development has happened in the meantime.

As a humanitarian worker, I have been deployed to developing countries and disaster areas for the past nine years, working on development programs worldwide, including the Philippines, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Syria, Malawi, Sierra Leone, and Germany. Sometimes the transition between emergency and development is difficult due to the nature of the work, available resources, and partnerships.

In development programs, we try to address the root causes of disasters while dealing with the impact of a disaster in emergency preparedness and responses.

Before the flight to Nepal, I planned to look at access and management of water as a crucial factor in solving primary problems.

- 1) Related to urban migration and uneven population growth.
- 2) Insufficient income and livelihoods to live a dignified life.
- 3) Poor health due to sanitary and water-related problems.

In my approach, I provided general statements, reflections, and thoughts - based on my observations and experiences - to open the dialogue with different people. The most important thing was that I wanted to listen to the Nepalese! Hear their opinions and views.

An interesting factor is that the Danish and Nepalese views of life in one respect are so different that we can misunderstand each other's intentions, needs, and behavior. Lots of money can cause greed and acceptance of agendas with short-term benefits but problems in the long run. Addressing the root causes and, at the same time, creating emergency and development programs to achieve long-term gains should be more in focus. National ownership of programs and operational management with international mentoring from hand-picked specialists can benefit from continued development plans - design and implementation efficiency.

It is much easier to write this than to secure it in reality. Nepal is - and has been for years - transitioning politically and socially between tradition and modernity. If possible, Nepalese feel a more significant moral responsibility towards family and close relationships than Danes.

In Scandinavia, transparency and compliance are fundamental principles to ensure less corruption and nepotism. We strive to make all people equal through equity, fairness, and justice, which means we will not favor family over strangers for jobs or business deals.

In Nepal, I see people going to great lengths to support and keep a family together. In Denmark, individualism is considered the most important. Therefore, men and women separate once they feel

they should no longer be in a relationship or marriage. The economic conditions and social norms enable individuals to live and manage independently. In Nepalese society, spouses and their families are so interdependent that divorce can become messy. Divorce cases in Nepal are increasing in the urban areas, while the rural areas are more traditional in their family relationships. People are in general worried about their family reputation in society and their financial security that they are not even thinking of divorce as an option.

In Denmark, the traffic rules are mainly followed by cars, while bicycle riders move more according to the practice by motorbikes in Kathmandu. There seems to be a natural, pragmatic and logic to how soft road users merge and cross lanes. The more vulnerable people are, the better they can read situations and navigate in a seemingly chaotic scenario. Perhaps the same is reflected in our behavior in society. If you are used to living in chaos, you adapt to these conditions, which indicates that the longer you are in turmoil, the more it becomes the norm, and the alternative gradually disappears from your mind.

Nepalese feel that daily challenges more dominate their lives as normality than well-organized societies. They may not have a long-term plan but always find a way to survive the day. The idea of making a plan may feel useless because context and circumstances may change tomorrow.

Nepalese should not lose themselves and their identity due to influence from other countries. But Nepalese should strive to make sustainable strategic plans for the future with clear tactical and operational perspectives without relying on significant financial assistance and management of the country's development from foreign partners. International support and advice must help to achieve well-defined and specific plans.