



THE **SANDBOX** BLOG

Co-Build Kathmandu: Pilot Projects recruits volunteer engineering teams to help in Nepal

April Greene — May 15, 2015

***Update: See Scott's story on the [World Monuments Fund website](#) and learn more about Co-Build Kathmandu. ***

While visiting Nepal last month, Pilot Projects founder and director Scott Francisco and his colleague Sarah Wilson witnessed the most devastating earthquake to strike the country in over 80 years.

They spent much of the following week surveying buildings and talking to local people and leaders from a variety of organizations. Building on these conversations and relationships, Scott is now offering Pilot Projects' help to organize and dispatch teams of experienced structural engineers and architects willing to volunteer their skills in Nepal. The initiative is called Co-Build Kathmandu.

The need for these teams is great. It has been estimated that 100,000 Nepalese people are currently living without housing—and this number is like to have risen substantially following this week's 7.2 magnitude quake, which struck just over two weeks after the first. Thousands more residents are taking shelter in damaged buildings that are structurally unsound and at risk of collapse. The sudden and enormous need for building assessments far surpasses the capacity of local Nepali engineers.

Co-Build Kathmandu teams will work with local engineers and officials, the [Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust](#), and [Tribhuvan University](#) to deliver structural assessments and recommendations for individual buildings of a variety of construction types. They will produce long- and short-term recommendations for homeowners, author an official report for government filing and aid distribution, and create an open database that will support the Nepalese government in its international aid efforts and engineering research. Teams may also work on the structural design of seismic retrofits for housing and historic monuments.

This is a unique opportunity for international and local experts and engineers to share knowledge, tools, and skills for long-term capacity building, through both hands-on assessments and knowledge-sharing workshops, lectures, and discussions hosted by engineer Ram Bhandari Chhetri at Tribhuvan University.

Each team will spend 10 days in the historic Kathmandu Valley between May and December 2015. This incredible experience will help a beautiful country and its people, while providing an immersive experience in culture and landscape for volunteers. Local Nepalis and resident Americans will help navigate the context to make the trips as safe, impactful, and rewarding as possible, including providing special access to cultural experiences far beyond conventional tourism.

Scott is in touch with contacts in Nepal daily, and volunteer spots are being filled. For more details about the purposes, goals, and logistics of Co-Build Kathmandu, please see [Scott's full write-up on LinkedIn](#).

Tags: [nepal](#), [sustainability](#), [world monuments fund](#), [participatory design](#), [cityspace design](#)

