

## Kathmandu Living Labs' Work on Social and Crowd Engagement

**Introduction to Kathmandu Living Labs.** Kathmandu Living Labs ([www.kathmandulivinglabs.org](http://www.kathmandulivinglabs.org)) is a non-profit tech company that engages citizens to create a free online map of Nepal. Like many other developing countries, Nepal does not have freely available detailed maps. While traditional mapping agencies target mapping needs of big organizations and expert users, everyday needs of map data for small organizations and citizens at large remain unmet.

Mapping entire Nepal or even Kathmandu Valley is a huge task—no single organization or individual can accomplish this alone. It requires incremental contribution from a large number of people, i.e. mapping community. Hence, we reach out to digital youth, community groups, university faculty and students, and engage them in mapping. As a result, we have been able to create a detailed map of Nepal. For example, see Kathmandu Valley here: <http://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=13/27.7043/85.3253>

In addition to mapping major points-of-interest (POIs) and critical infrastructure, we have also located, mapped and collected building exposure data for all schools and major health facilities within Kathmandu Valley. See this custom map, which we have created using this data: <http://www.kathmandulivinglabs.org/schools-and-hospitals/>. We have also collected exposure data for individual buildings in two wards of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, namely wards 4 and 5. See this link for the 3D visualization: <http://kathmandulivinglabs.org/3d/>. Building exposure data helps the assessment of buildings against earthquake risk.

Most importantly, all these data are open and freely available in OpenStreetMap. Some call it a goldmine of data. This open data is beginning to invoke public policy debates on disaster preparedness and response, citizen engagement and governance.

**Social Engagement.** Social engagement is a core part of our work at Kathmandu Living Labs. We reach out and engage people through **sensitization presentation, mapping party, mapathon, and weekly OSM clinic**. This work has resulted a knowledgeable, resilient, sustainable, and inspired network of international and local OSM enthusiasts, app producers, designers, urban planners, students and teachers.

Over the last one and half years, over 1600 people have attended our OSM sensitization presentation (Figure 1). In addition, we have also organized over 30 [Mapping Parties](#) and have trained nearly 1000 people (Figure 2). We run our popular OSM clinic every Friday in which people can walk-in and meet us face-to-face for OSM related queries and hands-on skills. The attendees of sensitization presentation, Mapping Party and Friday Clinic are largely college and university students, government officials, international and national development workers and youth organizations.

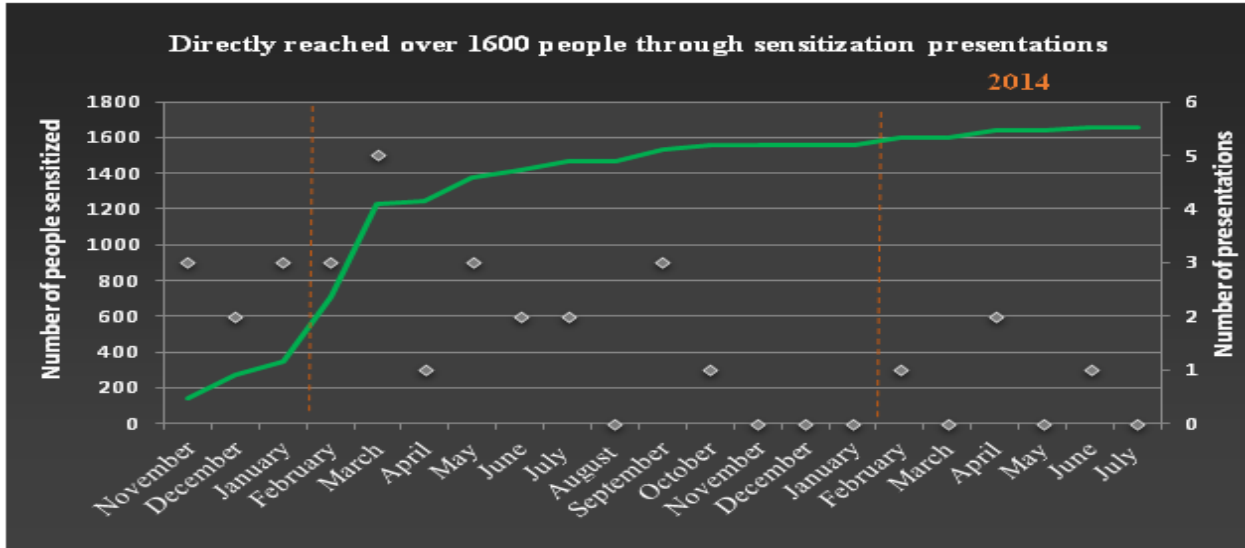


Figure 1: Number of sensitization presentations

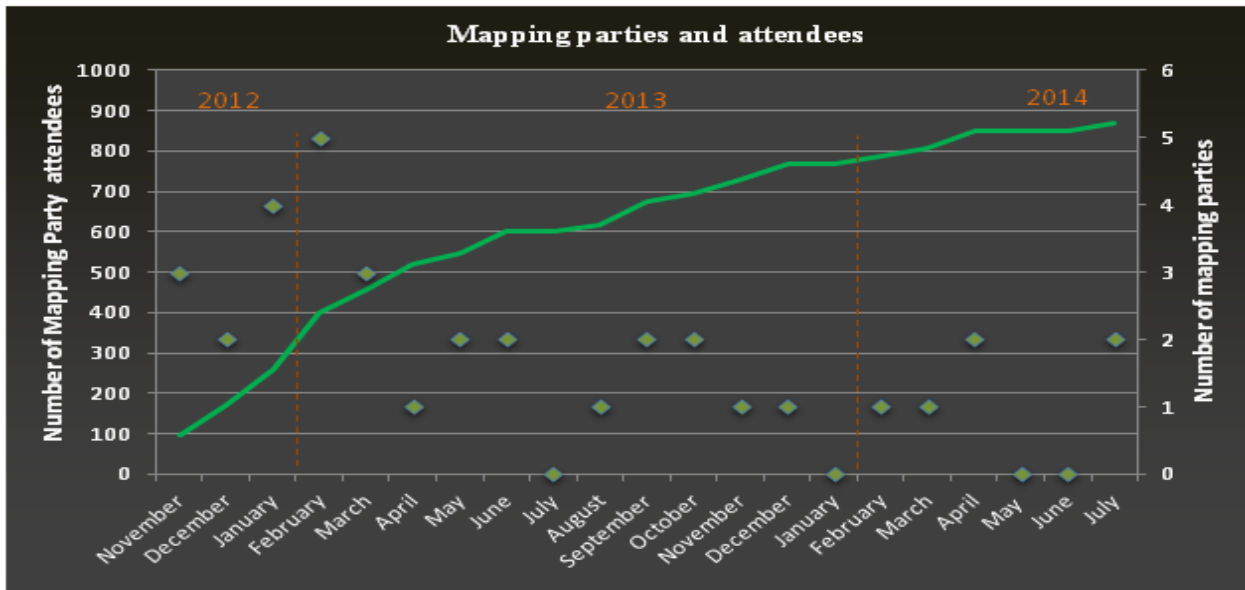


Figure 2: Mapping Parties and attendants

Our [Flickr pictures](#) and [blogs](#) give a good sense of these activities.

If you want to learn more about Kathmandu Living Labs and/or are interested in research collaboration, contact Dr. Nama Raj Budhathoki ([nama.budhathoki@gmail.com](mailto:nama.budhathoki@gmail.com)).