

# JAJARKOT EARTHQUAKE

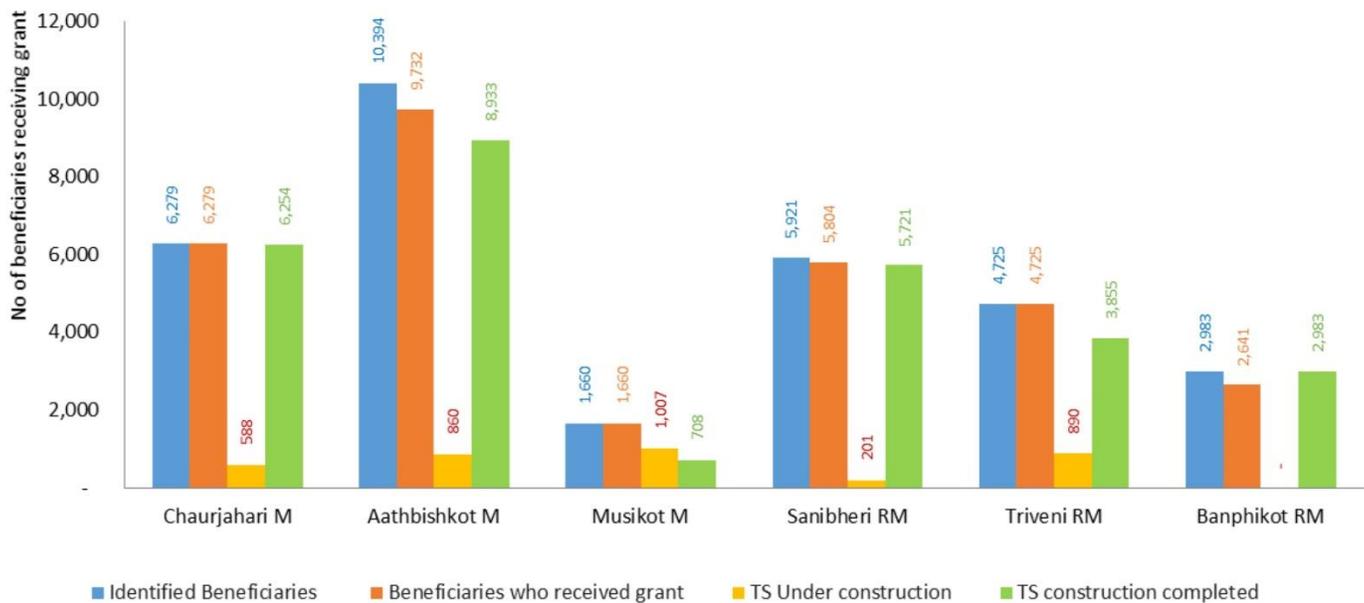
## Monthly Situation Analysis Report

(16 Feb - 15 Mar, 2024)

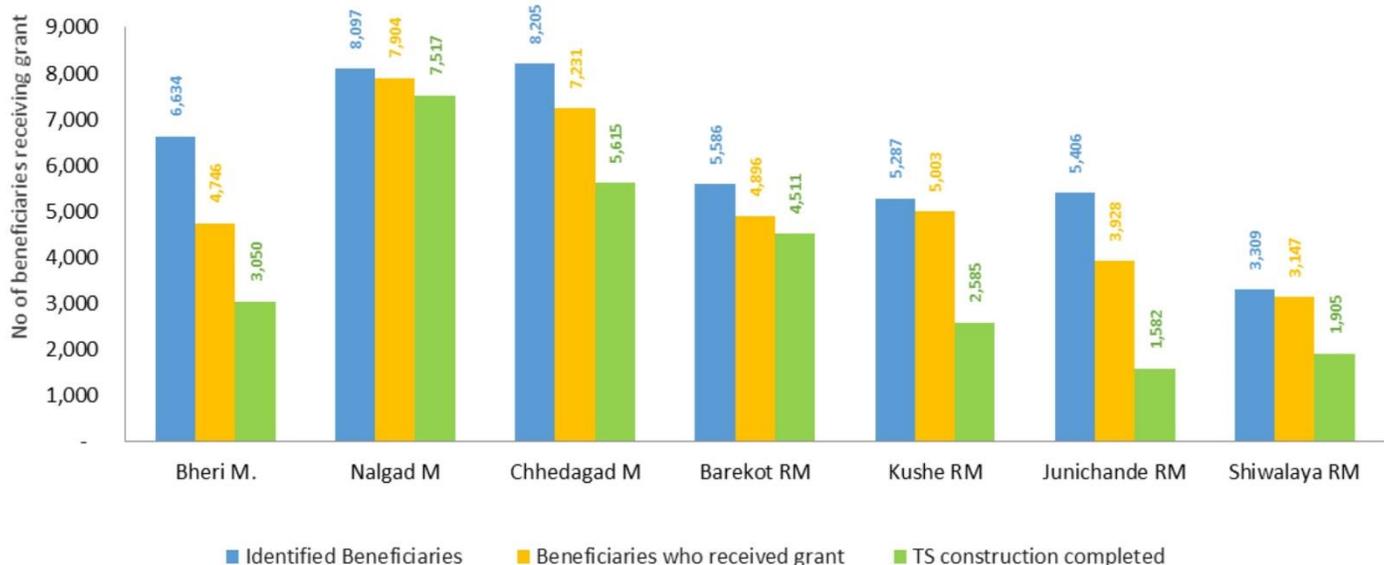
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### Rukum West



### Jajarkot



## Summary

*This situation analysis report highlights the recent developments and challenges faced by the earthquake-affected areas of Jajarkot, Nepal. Nearly four months after the devastating earthquake, the local government declared an emergency in the affected areas, a move prompted by the urgent need for housing reconstruction highlighted by Finance Minister Prakash Sharan Mahat. This declaration enables the Ministry of Finance to request funds from the World Bank, ensuring immediate financial assistance for disaster relief efforts. A significant portion of beneficiaries, approximately 87%, have received grants across municipalities, with shelter construction progress varying significantly across different areas. While some municipalities like Nalgad have shown remarkable efficiency in fund distribution and shelter construction, others lag behind, indicating disparities in administrative efficiency and resource availability.*

*Furthermore, the snowfall of February has compounded the difficulties faced by the affected families, many of whom had been living under tarpaulin shelters. The harsh weather conditions have led to a spike in cold-related illnesses, highlighting the urgent need for improved temporary housing solutions. In response, the government has released an additional NPR 900 million for the construction of temporary shelters, aiming to address the immediate needs of the affected population. Local authorities in Rukum West have expressed concerns over delays in constructing permanent structures, urging the federal government to expedite the provision of reconstruction procedures. The importance of transitioning from temporary to permanent housing solutions is emphasized, with local leaders warning of increased hardships if timely action is not taken. The Karnali provincial government has initiated a training program for skilled masons, focusing on constructing earthquake-resistant buildings, a step towards sustainable reconstruction and resilience against future disasters.*

*The complex interplay between immediate relief efforts like temporary shelter and long-term reconstruction challenges in disaster-affected areas is noteworthy. The variability in fund distribution and shelter construction progress across different municipalities reflects the need for tailored approaches that consider local level capacities and resource availability. As earthquake affected area continues to navigate the aftermath of the Jajarkot earthquake, the collaborative efforts of local, provincial, and federal authorities, along with international support, remain crucial in ensuring the timely and equitable reconstruction of all affected areas.*

## Jajarkot earthquake-affected local level declared emergency nearly four months later

Finance Minister Prakash Sharan Mahat proposed discussions in the Parliamentary meeting regarding the decision and priorities for the Fiscal Year 2081/82 Budget. He emphasized the urgent need for a substantial budget allocation for reconstructing housing for those



affected by earthquakes in areas like Jajarkot. Minister Mahat highlighted the challenge of insufficient resources hindering the progress of permanent housing construction in earthquake-affected regions. Shortly after, his remarks government has declared an emergency zone in the Jajarkot earthquake affected area. This decision was announced during the Cabinet meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February, aiming to provide relief to the severely affected municipalities from the earthquake. Government spokesperson and Minister for Communication and Information Technology, confirmed this decision, declaring emergency in the earthquake affected areas as those facing financial difficulties due to search, rescue, and relief operations, as well as housing needs.

In 2020, an agreement between the Government of Nepal and the World Bank was established to ensure immediate funding availability during disaster-induced liquidity crises. This agreement, renewable every five years unless terminated by either party, stipulates that upon the government's declaration of an emergency zone, the Ministry of Finance can request the World Bank to release funds per the agreement's provisions. The World Bank is obligated to disburse a minimum of 10 million US dollars to Nepal's treasury, with a maximum limit of 50 million US dollars. This funding, repayable over 50 years with a grace period of 10 years and a service charge of 0.75% over the subsequent 40 years, is intended for disaster relief efforts. It's noteworthy that one of the prerequisites for accessing this funding is the declaration of an emergency, hence the government decided to declare emergency after nearly four months of earthquake.

# Analysis of beneficiary funds distribution and shelter construction to assess earthquake recovery progress

The trend analysis of beneficiaries receiving funds from the municipality and the status of shelter construction in Jajarkot reveals several key insights. Across all municipalities, a significant proportion of the total beneficiaries, approximately 87%, have received grants. However, this percentage varies among municipalities, with some, like Nalgad Municipality, achieving a



remarkably high rate of 97.62% while others, such as Bheri Municipality, lagging behind at 71.54%. This indicates varying levels of efficiency in the distribution process across different areas.

In terms of shelter construction, the data shows that approximately 62.94% of the total beneficiaries have had shelters constructed from the grants. Again, this figure varies across municipalities, with Nalgad Municipality leading in the number of shelters constructed (7,517) followed by Chhedagad Municipality (5,615). However, the percentage of shelters constructed from grants varies widely, with Nalgad Municipality achieving the highest percentage (92.84%) and Junichande Rural Municipality the lowest (29.26%).

These findings about Jajarkot suggest that while there is overall progress in fund distribution, the pace of shelter construction varies significantly among municipalities. Factors contributing to this variance may include differences in administrative efficiency, geographical challenges, and local resource availability. Addressing these discrepancies will be crucial to ensure equitable progress in shelter reconstruction efforts across all affected areas in Jajarkot.

In the same way, The beneficiary funds distribution and shelter construction status analysis of Rukum West provides valuable insights into the progress of earthquake recovery efforts in the

region. Across all municipalities, approximately 96% of the total beneficiaries have received grants, indicating a relatively high level of coverage. Chaurjahari Rural Municipality, Musikot RM and Triveni RM stand out with a 100% fund disbursement rate, closely followed by Sanibheri Rural Municipality at 98.02%. However, there are notable variations, with Banphikot Rural Municipality having a lower percentage of beneficiaries receiving funds at 88.54%.

In terms of shelter construction, about 89.02% of the total beneficiaries have been completed, indicating significant progress. Banphikot Rural Municipality leads in shelter completion, with an impressive 100.00% of shelters constructed from grants followed by Chaurjahari Municipality with 99.60%. However, Musikot Municipality has a comparatively lower percentage of shelters constructed at 42.65%, suggesting potential challenges in the construction process.

Overall, while there is commendable progress in fund distribution and shelter construction across Rukum West, there are disparities among municipalities. Addressing these variances and overcoming any obstacles will be crucial to ensuring equitable and efficient earthquake recovery efforts throughout the region. It is imperative for local authorities and stakeholders to continue working collaboratively to accelerate the pace of reconstruction and provide timely assistance to all affected communities.

## Earthquake affected people in trouble following the snowfall

Since the Jajarkot earthquake, the affected many families have been spending nights under tarpaulin. After the snowfall, most families were forced to return, even though their houses were destroyed. In Nalgad Municipality, which suffered significant earthquake damage, heavy snowfall was also



reported in most of the wards. Having moved into temporary accommodation only two weeks ago, residents expressed the challenges of protecting their families from the winter cold, resulting in

illnesses. Moreover, the cold after the snowfall caused damage to structures. Mayor Dambar Bahadur Rawat reported that out of 8,097 beneficiaries established in Nalgad, only 7,517 temporary shelters have been constructed so far. Additionally, some families from tarpaulin sought refuge in relatives' houses after the snowfall.

Amidst these challenges, healthcare professionals are witnessing a surge in cold-related illnesses. Dr. Priya Shahi from Chhedagad Basic Hospital mentioned treating 50 to 100 patients daily, with children comprising about 60% of cases. The hospital sees diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia, fever, and cold. Similarly, Dr. Vishal Upreti from Nalgad Basic Hospital reported up to 170 patients seeking treatment daily due to cold-related illnesses. Rajani Rawat, from Bheri Municipality, highlighted the difficulty of spending nights in temporary shelters due to extreme cold after the snowfall, worsening the suffering of earthquake victims.

## Additional Rs. 900 million disbursed for temporary shelter construction

As the construction of temporary housing for those affected by the Jajarkot earthquake has accelerated, the government has prioritized the distribution of grant funds. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority, an additional NPR 900 million has been released to provide the second installment of the subsidy on February 22.

Out of this, NPR 500 million has been sent to the District Disaster Management Fund of Jajarkot while NPR 400 million to District Disaster Management Fund of Rukum West, said Goma



Devi Chemjong, spokesperson of the authority. According to the authority, a total of NPR 3.16 billion has been distributed for the construction of temporary shelter. So far, the number of identified beneficiaries has reached 74,486. A significant increase in construction of temporary shelters has been observed in both of the districts.

So far, 55,219 shelters have been built, while the number of temporary houses under construction is 3,546, according to the authority. An earthquake of 6.4 Richter scale took place on 17th November last with its epicenter at Ramidanda in Jajarkot. The houses damaged in the earthquake are currently being constructed as temporary shelters. The Ministry of Home Affairs has informed that necessary preparations are being made for reconstruction.

## Addressing reconstruction delay, voices from LDMC meeting

The local authorities have raised concerns over the delay in constructing permanent structures due to the absence of procedures related to reconstruction. During a meeting of the disaster management committee at the Rukum West District Administration Office on 28th



February, mayors and chairpersons of local levels urged the federal government to promptly send reconstruction procedures for the earthquake-affected areas.

Mayor Ravi KC of Aathbiskot Municipality shared that while the construction of temporary shelters in the district is nearing completion, the lack of reconstruction procedures has hindered progress on permanent structures. He emphasized the need for attention to be paid to temporary residences that may not meet established standards. With the dry season approaching, Mayor KC warned of increased hardships for affected citizens if reconstruction measures are not promptly implemented.

Mayor Pushpa Badi of Chaurjahari Municipality echoed these sentiments, stressing the urgency of focusing on permanent structure construction now that temporary shelter work is nearly finished. Likewise, Chairperson Birkh Bahadur Bista of Saniveri Rural Municipality highlighted the transition from temporary shelter issues to the critical need for reconstruction efforts.

During the meeting, Chairperson Ganesh Kumar KC of Triveni Rural Municipality, Chairperson Janak Batha of Banfikot Rural Municipality, and other stakeholders emphasized the importance of local, provincial, and federal authorities addressing the needs of earthquake victims before the onset of the rainy season. Political parties and organizations present also emphasized the necessity of initiating reconstruction immediately after the formulation of reconstruction-related procedures.

While talking about the Criteria to be followed to get second installment, Chief District Officer Hari Prasad Pant of Rukum West stated that disbursing the second installment for the construction of temporary shelters won't be as straightforward as the first installment. He explained that to qualify for the second installment, the temporary shelters must adhere to specific standards, land revenue dues must be cleared, and beneficiaries will only receive approval from the ward and municipality after their details have been verified against the temporary shelter standards database.

CDO Pant clarified that if a family member has received the first installment for more than one temporary shelter, stringent criteria must be met for the second installment. This includes procedures to withhold service facilities such as social security allowances and other recommendations from the ward. The eligibility criteria for the second installment must be strictly adhered to.

## The Karnali government is preparing skilled masons to rebuild the earthquake-affected areas

The Karnali province government is gearing up to train skilled masons for rebuilding areas affected by the Jajarkot earthquake. The provincial administration aims to conduct training sessions on constructing earthquake-resistant buildings and structures, emphasizing environmentally friendly construction practices. The objective is to



minimize disaster-related damage by adhering to necessary policies and procedures while equipping community members with the requisite knowledge, skills, and technology.

A tripartite agreement has been forged to facilitate this initiative, involving the Karnali Province Training Institute, the Earthquake Technology National Society Nepal, and local levels. During the agreement signing ceremony, Karnali Chief Minister Rajkumar Sharma emphasized the need to leverage the lessons from the Jajarkot earthquake for future progress. He emphasized that implementing these lessons in daily life is imperative, highlighting the repercussions of failing to learn from past seismic events like the Gorkha earthquake.

Chief Minister Sharma acknowledged the government's significant efforts in search, rescue, and relief operations following the earthquake but noted delays in reconstruction work. As part of the agreement, training will be provided to elected representatives, government employees, and carpenters across five local levels in the earthquake-affected districts of Jajarkot, Rukum West, and Salyan. Functional training sessions for carpenters will focus on constructing earthquake-resistant buildings, with twelve participants each from designated municipalities and rural municipalities.

According to Bishnu Prasad Koirala, Director of the Karnali Province Training Institute, the practical training for carpenters will span 20 days and encompass skills related to earthquake-resistant building construction. Additionally, local representatives from the affected districts will receive instruction on building reconstruction methods, earthquake-resistant design principles, and capacity development for resilience practices. The training program is budgeted at 10.46 million NPR and aims to prepare 60 skilled carpenters, aligning with earthquake-resistant building codes outlined by the Earthquake Technology National Society of Nepal.