



A newborn girl sleeps inside a tent in earthquake-affected Nalgad, Jajarkot District. ©UNICEF/Nepal/2023/RUpadhayay

Nepal Earthquake Situation Update # 5

Earthquake in
Jajarkot District in
western Nepal

unicef 
for every child

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Highlights:

- Jajarkot District in western Nepal was struck by a 6.4 magnitude earthquake on 3 November 2023, resulting in the loss of 154 lives¹ (84 females, 70 males) including 81 children (37 girls, 44 boys)², 366 individuals injured, and around 200,000 people in need of humanitarian assistance.
- To date, with UNICEF support, 39,900 people (including 13,560 children) from 7,992 households have been reached with critical supplies, including tarpaulins and blankets, hygiene kits, plastic buckets and water purifying solution.
- 222 temporary learning centres (TLCs) have been established, where multi-grade teaching has started, bringing 17,012 earthquake-affected children back to school.
- 15 child-friendly spaces (CFS) have been set up to provide safe places where children can engage in play and access essential services. Currently, 1,095 children (569 girls, 526 boys) regularly attend these spaces.
- About 35,000 people have been reached with critical WASH services, including through over 500 sanitation facilities installed in affected communities.
- Five medical tents have been set up in select locations to ensure continuity of essential health services amid the crisis. The tents have helped to restore maternal and newborn services in three municipalities, facilitating 18 deliveries and catering to approximately 2,040 patients thus far.
- Regular multi-sectoral humanitarian coordination meetings are taking place at federal, provincial and district levels under government leadership to ensure a cohesive and efficient humanitarian response and alignment with the efforts of UN agencies and partners.
- UNICEF is dispatching 3,000 blankets to assist affected families across eight municipalities in Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts.
- However, support provided so far accounts for only around 19 per cent of the needs of children and women, underscoring the need for additional assistance for urgent humanitarian needs.
- As the harsh winter season sets in, swift delivery of humanitarian support to the most vulnerable families remains an urgent priority. The Government is actively directing recovery efforts, with the first tranche of grants for constructing temporary shelters currently being disbursed to identified households.
- UNICEF has so far mobilized US \$1 million out of the total of US \$15.7 million required to address the urgent humanitarian situation in Nepal.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

250,000

People affected

200,000

People in need of
humanitarian assistance

68,000

Children in need of
humanitarian assistance

39,900

People reached by UNICEF
with critical supplies

150,000

People to be targeted with
WASH services

17,012

Earthquake-affected children
accessing education

¹ National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) (24 November 2023)

² District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs) Jajarkot and Rukum West.

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

The 6.4 magnitude earthquake that occurred on 3 November, with its epicentre in Jajarkot District, claimed the lives of 154 people (84 females, 70 males), including 81 children (37 girls, 44 boys), leaving 366 others injured. The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) estimates that around 250,000³ people (including 80,000 children) have been affected by this earthquake.

The earthquake caused extensive damage to private properties and disrupted essential services. According to NEOC/Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) reports⁴, more than 62,000 houses were damaged in the 13 affected districts (26,557 fully damaged, 35,455 partially damaged) in addition to 50 government and public buildings that were impacted (16 fully damaged, 34 partially damaged). Around 200,000 people (including 68,000 children) require assistance, with over 150,000 people (including 51,000 children) specifically in need of WASH services. The education sector suffered severe impact, with around 134,000 school-aged children⁵ needing education support to ensure learning continuity, partly due to the extensive damage inflicted on 898 school buildings (294 fully damaged, 604 partially damaged).

Over six weeks since the earthquake struck, the Government's focus is now on recovery efforts, recognizing the unmet needs of affected people and communities, especially with the onset of the winter season and dropping temperatures. Winter/cold-related ailments⁶ have already led to significant health issues among those in temporary shelters post-earthquake, resulting in over 25 deaths⁷ in Jajarkot, including 12 in the epicentre in Barekot Municipality alone, as reported by media sources. Recent snowfall and rain in the Karnali Province, including earthquake-affected areas,⁸ highlight the urgency of coordinated efforts in providing winterization support and swift disbursement of government grants to identified families for construction of temporary housing before winter conditions worsen in the upcoming days and weeks.

Continued fundraising is therefore critical to ensure adequate resources for a comprehensive, multi-sectoral response to the humanitarian needs of the most-affected children and women in the earthquake's aftermath. In this regard, UNICEF remains committed to working with the Government, partners, and the donor community to continue fundraising efforts.

Summary of Programme Response

The Government of Nepal, at the federal, provincial, local and district levels, continues to lead response and recovery coordination efforts together with relevant stakeholders including UN agencies, relevant ministries (cluster leads) and co-leads including UNICEF, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international humanitarian organizations, among others.

The first tranche of the Government's planned cash support of NPR 50,000 (approx. US\$375) is now being disbursed by local governments to households with fully damaged homes to aid the construction of temporary shelters. So far, a total of NPR 548.1 million (US\$4.10 million) targeting 34,039 affected households has been released⁹ from districts to respective local governments. As of 13 December, around 10,734 households¹⁰ in Jajarkot, Rukum West and Salyan Districts have received the first installment of NPR 25,000 (approx. US\$188) in their bank accounts, with over 60,337 eligible households registered¹¹ by local authorities. Grant distribution is ongoing in these districts.

Earlier, on 22 November, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) had disbursed¹² a grant worth NPR 1.41 billion (approx. US\$10.57 million) to five districts affected by both the 3 November earthquake and the earlier earthquake that had hit western Nepal in October. This earmarked fund is undergoing distribution from districts to respective local governments following a standard verification process, although challenges have been encountered in verifying local-level data and identifying the most affected families, leading to delays in fund disbursement.

Notably, UNICEF has supported the Government to reach over 39,900 people (including 13,560 children) from 7,992 households with critical supplies, including tarpaulins and blankets, providing immediate relief in the most affected districts. With the onset of winter, UNICEF is dispatching 3,000 blankets to eight municipalities¹³ in Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts in response to the winterization needs of affected families, as requested by the Karnali provincial government. Further, 250 newborn incentive kits are also being dispatched to earthquake-hit districts to address winterization needs. However, this

³ UNRCO Nepal-Western Nepal Earthquake 2023 Situation Report No. #3 (16 Nov 2023)

⁴ National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) Update (23 November 2023)

⁵ Ministry of Social Development, Karnali data dated 22 Nov 2023. (Data of 2 most affected district (Jajarkot, Rukum West and its highly affected municipalities).

⁶ <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2023/12/05/earthquake-victims-ill-equipped-to-survive-the-cold>

⁷ The Kathmandu post (13 Dec. 2023) <https://kathmandupost.com/karnali-province/2023/12/13/cold-related-deaths-in-jajarkot-hit-29>

⁸ The Rising Nepal (5 Dec. 2023) <https://risingnepaldaily.com/news/35775>

⁹ NDRRMA, Nepal Earthquake Response: Jajarkot Situation Report (#7) (of 4 Dec 2023) page 1.

¹⁰ NDRRMA (published update on temporary grant) 12 Dec. 2023

¹¹ NDRRMA (published update on temporary grant) 12 Dec. 2023

¹² NDRRMA, Nepal Earthquake Response: Jajarkot Situation Report (#7) (of 4 Dec 2023) page 1.

¹³ Bheri, Nalgad, Chhedegad, Kushe and Barekot of Jajarkot District and Aathisbiskot, Chaurjahari and Sani Bheri of Rukum West

assistance covers only about 19 per cent of the overall needs of children and women, highlighting the urgency of securing additional funds and resources to ensure a timely response.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Ensuring access to safe water and sanitation continues to be a priority for preventing outbreaks of waterborne disease in the earthquake-affected areas. The earthquake damaged many reservoirs and intake structures, resulting in leaks and cracks, and compromising the sufficiency of the water supply. This is anticipated to worsen in the coming months as water sources dry up, leading to significant WASH and health concerns. UNICEF is targeting 150,000 people (including 51,000 children) with critical WASH interventions, with the following results achieved to date:

- 35,000 people (including 11,900 children) from 6,994 households in earthquake-hit districts have been reached with critical WASH supplies. These supplies have included 6,994 hygiene kits, 7,194 buckets with mugs, and water purifying tablets/solution, provided to affected families in Nalgad, Bheri and Barekot Municipalities of Jajarkot District, and Sani Bheri, Aathbiskot and Chaurjahari Municipalities of Rukum West District. Damage assessments of water schemes are ongoing.
- 503 temporary toilets have been installed in communities in various locations of Jajarkot and Rukum West, benefiting over 3,500 households (around 17,000 people including over 5,700 children) whose homes were damaged in the earthquake. Additionally, 28 temporary toilets have been set up in temporary learning centres (TLCs) in schools.
- Pipelines of four water supply systems have been repaired, benefitting approximately 2,000 people (including around 600 children) in Nalgad Municipality of Jajarkot District.
- Water-quality monitoring of 26 water supply schemes has been conducted, out of which bacterial contamination was found in 17, following which chlorination was swiftly undertaken.

Nutrition

With the disruption caused by the earthquake to essential services such as health and WASH, the nutrition situation in affected areas is likely to deteriorate as a result, particularly for children and women, including pregnant women. UNICEF estimated that 1,280 children under the age of five would need treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and 32,426 children should receive Vitamin A supplementation and multiple micronutrient powder (MNP). In addition, 6,000 pregnant women would require iron and folic acid (IFA) tablets. UNICEF has provided the following responses to date:

- A total of 8,783 children have been screened for malnutrition, of which 21 SAM cases identified were referred for treatment in Outpatient Therapeutic Centers (OTC) and 203 moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) cases received counselling.
- Vitamin A supplements were distributed to 2,300 children who were missed during the bi-annual distribution, MNP was provided to 3,250 children.
- 2,023 pregnant women received IFA supplements and infant and young child feeding counselling was provided to 1,825 caregivers, including mothers, with assistance from Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) and health workers.

Protection

The earthquake has thoroughly disrupted normal family routines, creating an environment that increases the risk of various child protection issues, such as gender-based violence (GBV) and psychological distress, especially among the most vulnerable. In the affected areas, the pre-existing pervasive conditions of GBV further amplify these risks. Compounding the challenges, communities are dealing with heightened levels of anxiety and fear, often linked to the unpredictability of aftershocks. UNICEF continues to provide essential support to these children, and has achieved the following results to date:

- 15 child-friendly spaces (CFS) have been established in Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts, benefiting 1,095 children (569 girls, 526 boys). These CFS provide a safe and stimulating environment for children, offering psychosocial support, play opportunities and enabling parents to focus on other aspects of rebuilding their lives. They also serve as hubs for other multi-sectoral services, including health, WASH and education.
- Psychological First Aid (PFA) has been delivered to 5,364 affected people (2,282 women, 1,176 men, 1,033 girls, 873 boys) in communities, schools and CFS. PFA has proven instrumental in offering immediate support, stabilizing

emotions, and connecting people to basic services. Furthermore, psychoeducation and stress management sessions were provided to 1,816 people to help them understand and cope with the psychological impact of the crisis. One-to-one psychosocial counselling has also been provided to 428 people through trained counsellors, assisting them in assessing their feelings, navigating challenges, and developing coping strategies tailored to their specific needs.

- A rapid assessment was conducted in Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts to evaluate the mental health and psychosocial impacts of people affected by the earthquake. The assessment indicated that 75 per cent of the population, including children, adolescents, and women, are experiencing distress; 30 per cent are facing difficulty accessing food, and 40 per cent lack access to safe shelters. In addition, the assessment also highlighted the risk of GBV in the affected areas, prompting UNICEF and partners to implement GBV prevention and risk mitigation interventions. Community sensitization initiatives were conducted, reaching a total of 1,593 people (794 women, 352 men, 244 girls, 203 boys) with GBV messages.
- A vulnerability assessment was conducted in the two districts, the findings from which reveal that a high percentage of children face diverse vulnerabilities. Out of the total households assessed, 28 per cent require specialized protection services, with 70 per cent identifying the need for GBV services, 82 per cent for child protection services, 80 per cent for legal services, 75 per cent for mental health and psychosocial support services, and 80 per cent for safe houses. The protection cluster, which includes UNICEF, is actively providing necessary support, or referring these vulnerable children/households to appropriate services.

Education

The earthquake significantly impacted the education sector, damaging 898 school buildings¹⁴ (294 fully damaged, 604 partially damaged), encompassing 2,254¹⁵ classrooms as well as 418 school toilets. This has impacted the learning of over 134,000 school-aged children (49 per cent girls), with immediate education assistance required for 65,867 children,¹⁶ including the need of 13,000 sets of textbooks. UNICEF's response has achieved the following:

- A total of 222 temporary learning centres (TLCs) have been established in 105 schools – 211 in Aathbiskot Municipality and Sanibheri Rural Municipality of Rukum West District, and 11 in Nalgadh Municipality of Jajarkot District – where multi-grade, multi-level teaching has started, bringing back 17,012 children to school post-earthquake.
- 124 early childhood development (ECD) kits, 238 school kits, 2,108 student kits (junior), 1,285 student kits (senior) and 770 sets of self-learning materials (ECD to grade 3) have been distributed in Rukum West and Jajarkot, benefiting over 17,012 children with immediate learning support.
- Continuing collaboration with the Government and partners, including extending technical support for post-earthquake learning, and damage and need assessments of affected schools in other areas as well. Collaboration is also ongoing with development partners to address gaps in resource mobilization.
- Supporting the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in mobilizing a technical team to conduct detailed damage assessments of school buildings, with a detailed report currently being prepared.

Health

The earthquake damaged 47 health facilities, leading to significant disruption of critical health services such as maternal and newborn care. UNICEF estimates that close to 7,000 pregnant women will require access to antenatal care services and institutional delivery. Children under 18 years comprised more than half of total deaths by the earthquake, and it is estimated that a majority of the injured are also children. Around 120,000 children aged 6 months to 14 years also face an elevated risk of contracting measles, and many more are susceptible to waterborne diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

The vulnerability of children and adolescents to respiratory infections, waterborne diseases and potential outbreaks is further heightened in the winter season, emphasizing the urgent necessity of essential healthcare services, as well as mental health and psychosocial support. Media reports¹⁷ are already indicating a rise in cold-related ailments and incidents post-earthquake. UNICEF's response has achieved the following to date:

- 1,650 newborn incentive kits (including warm clothes for newborns and post-partum mothers) have been provided to seven municipalities in Jajarkot and Rukum West.

¹⁴ Ministry of Social Development (MoSD, Karnali data dated 22 Nov 2023).

¹⁵ MoSD Karnali (22 Nov 2023). Latest data from detailed assessment shows increased damaged number of classrooms and toilets. Figures currently being reviewed and updated.

¹⁶ MoSD Karnali data (22 Nov 2023) (Data of 2 most severely affected district (Jajarkot, Rukum West and its highly affected 13 municipalities only).

¹⁷ The Kathmandu post (13 Dec 2023) <https://kathmandupost.com/karnali-province/2023/12/13/cold-related-deaths-in-jajarkot-hit-29>

- 600 health kits (comprising masks, hand sanitizer and thermometers) have been provided to health centres in Nalgad, Kushe and Barekot Municipalities.
- 93 children and adolescents received mental health services from UNICEF-deployed child psychologists and psychiatrists during mental health camps in four municipalities in Jajarkot District and three municipalities in Rukum West, jointly organized with the Provincial Health Directorate. Among them, 63 children were diagnosed with mental health conditions, all of whom received necessary treatment. Furthermore, two clinical psychologists dedicated to child and adolescent mental health services have been stationed at Jajarkot District Hospital and Rukum West District Hospital since December.
- Five medical tents have been set up in Nalgad and Barekot Municipalities of Jajarkot District, and Aathbiskot Municipality of Rukum West. The medical tents have facilitated the restoration of maternal and newborn services, with 18 deliveries and around 2,040 patients being attended to in these three municipalities to date.
- A complete set of birthing centre equipment/instruments has been installed at the Limsa Birthing Centre in Barekot Rural Municipality of Jajarkot; sets comprising a newborn resuscitation table with a radiant warmer each at the Chinabagar Birthing Centre in Sani Bheri Rural Municipality and Ghetma Birthing Centre in Aathbiskot Municipality in Rukum West; and a delivery bed at the Bhalchour Health Post of Darma Rural Municipality in Salyan.
- Ongoing micro-planning for an immunization campaign in the province, aimed at reaching an estimated 120,731 children (aged 6 months to 14 years) with Measles Rubella (MR) vaccines; and an estimated 282,000 people (above one year of age) with the oral cholera vaccine (OCV) in the coming months. Additionally, around 688,230 people (aged 16 to 44 years) in selected earthquake-affected districts¹⁸ – including Jajarkot, Rukum West, Salyan and neighbouring districts – will be targeted under the Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) immunization campaign.



Social Protection

UNICEF supported a market assessment to help plan the cash component. The assessment has shown the market's full functionality, with availability of core goods, supplies and services at normal prices compared to the pre-earthquake situation. UNICEF is advocating with National Planning Commission (NPC) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) for cash support through vertical expansion of the child grants and other social security schemes.

Social and Behaviour Change (SBC), Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

UNICEF aims to reach around 150,000 people across affected areas with RCCE cross-sectoral programmes, engaging affected communities to collect feedback on the ongoing response both in-person and remotely. Life-saving and SBC information have been disseminated to 1,417 earthquake-affected people, to help raise awareness about recovery and enhance resilience against future crises. UNICEF has supported the Government to achieve the following to date:

- Conducting the second phase of the social listening analysis using UNICEF's regional social listening platform 'I-Hear-U', analyzing over 30,000 digital and social media content focusing on children and humanitarian needs, with the objective of informing programme planning and service improvement.
- Mobilizing 90 volunteers in earthquake-affected areas to disseminate key life-saving messages on SBC+ and RCCE, focused on sanitation, hygiene, and water purification to prevent potential secondary impacts like disease outbreaks. These volunteers have till date, reached over 1,417 people (including 400 females, 219 girls).
- Engaging with communities through the above cohort of volunteers to gather feedback on earthquake recovery and response efforts, and provide information and guidance on WASH practices, immunization, nutrition, protective measures for child well-being through door-to-door visits in Jajarkot and Rukum West.
- Rapid Information Communication Accountability Assessment (RICAA) tool has been localized, digitized and translated into the Nepali language, and volunteers tasked with using online and offline mobile applications to collect real-time information on community perceptions about trusted sources of information, complementing feedback mechanisms.
- Strengthening feedback mechanisms within the ongoing earthquake response by utilizing platforms such as the Child and Family Tracker (CFT) and end-user monitoring (EUM). This includes actively assessing information accessibility for vulnerable groups, especially persons with disabilities and special needs.

¹⁸Planned target of around 8 districts with high potential for outbreaks (Jajarkot, Rukum West, Rukum East, Salyan, Dailekh, Jumla, Kalikot), as well as Surkhet, the provincial HQs).

Humanitarian Coordination

UNICEF teams continue to collaborate closely with local and provincial government and district authorities, including the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMCs) and District Administration Offices (DAOs) and partners. UNICEF is also collaborating with the Karnali Provincial Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law (MoIAL), Provincial Emergency Operation Centres (PEOC), Provincial Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOC), provincial clusters and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS). Coordination is also ongoing at the federal level with leadership from MoHA and coordination from NDRRMA.

At the UN level, within the established humanitarian coordination framework, UNICEF continues to provide cluster coordination and leadership in its designated Areas of Responsibility (AoRs): WASH, nutrition, education (with Save the Children) and protection (with UNFPA). Additionally, UNICEF supports the RCCE working group and the health cluster. Regular inter-agency coordination meetings are conducted under the guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) to ensure a cohesive and principled humanitarian response, with the aim of delivering life-saving interventions and restoring essential services for affected populations, particularly women and children. Internally, weekly coordination meetings are being conducted at the UNICEF Country Office and field office levels to facilitate effective planning and response, including communications, deployment of human resources and logistical arrangements.

UNICEF's response strategy is underpinned by the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in Humanitarian Action and is aligned with and complimentary to the Government's efforts. Given the multi-sectoral nature of the crisis and its impact, UNICEF will continue to provide coordination and leadership across its AoR and support the Government and partner organizations in delivering timely humanitarian and life-saving interventions to the most affected and vulnerable groups, including women and children. This includes reaching out to the donor community for fundraising and resource mobilization as the urgent needs of children and women span across sectors.

Media, communication and visibility:

- A funding appeal of US\$3 million to support winterization efforts was finalized and disseminated
- Social media posts on UNICEF Nepal's [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)
- Multimedia assets: <https://weshare.unicef.org/Folder/2AM408L4GH95>
- [Humanitarian situation reports](#) landing site created and regularly updated
- [Media statement](#) released
- [Press release](#) issued
- UNICEF-mentioned coverage in [UN News](#) | [BBC News](#) | [NHK](#) | [ANI News](#) | [ABP Live](#) | [Saudi Gazette](#) | [TRT World](#) | [Manila Times](#) | [Yahoo News](#) | [Paradise News](#) | [Dev Discourse](#) | [EFE](#) | [Mirage News](#) | [ReliefWeb](#) | [La Nacion](#) | [Anadolu Agency](#) | [UN News #2](#) | [EFE #2](#) | [NPR](#) | [New Nation](#) | [NHK #2](#) | [Xinhua](#) | [Spotlight](#) | [Foreign Affairs](#) | [El Pais](#)
- Stories published:
 - 'Lost homes and loved ones'. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/nepal/stories/lost-homes-and-loved-ones>
 - 'Birthing hope'. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/nepal/stories/birthing-hope>
 - 'Safe havens'. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/nepal/stories/safe-havens>
 - 'Aftermath: Dhan Maya Oli'. Available at: https://youtu.be/oWQ1TI2t9_8
 - 'Birthing hope in medical tents'. Available at: <https://youtu.be/3hN90SFe45Y>
 - 'Sanctuaries for children in crisis'. Available at: <https://youtu.be/goxrkSj4ujs>
 - 'Aftermath: Child-friendly spaces'. Available at: <https://youtu.be/iDAbU3r8-mQ>
 - 'Aftermath: Baby Bindu'. Available at: <https://youtu.be/schr9kayhgY>
 - 'UNICEF Representative in earthquake-affected Jajarkot'. Available at: <https://youtu.be/dPosLe2UfMo>
 - 'Amidst disaster, education perseveres'. Available at: <https://youtu.be/hrOtaREuHkg>
 - 'Aftermath: In winter's grip'. Available at: https://youtu.be/8Ho16w_QJb0

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