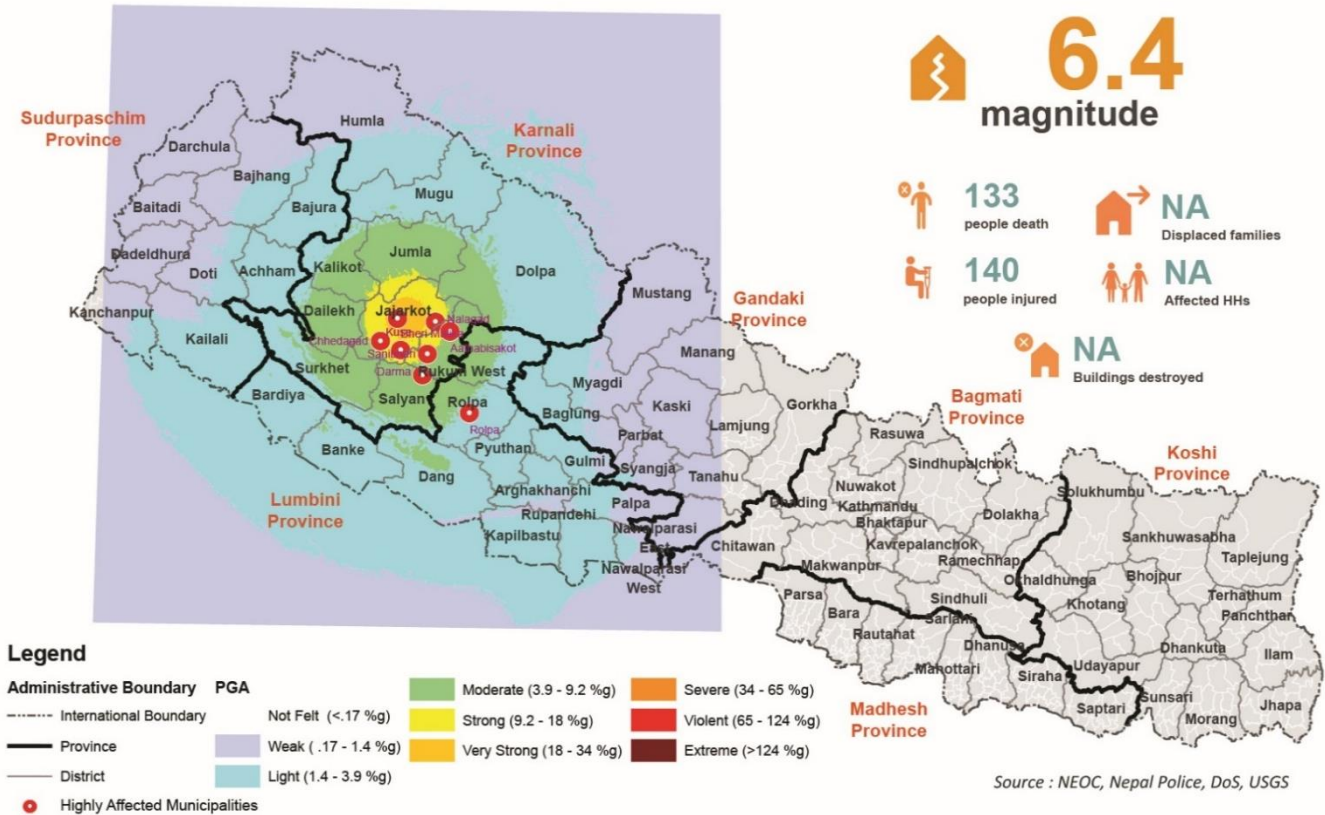




# NEPAL: Western Nepal Earthquake 2023

## Flash Update No. 01

As of 04 November 2023, 2:30 PM



## SITUATION OVERVIEW

A magnitude 6.4M earthquake struck Karnali Province in western Nepal at around 11.47 p.m. local time (UTC 6.02 p.m.) on 3 November 2023<sup>1</sup>, with several aftershocks occurring thereafter. The epicentre was in Ramidanda in Jajarkot District, some 65 kilometres northeast of Surkhet, the capital city of Karnali Province. Tremors have been felt in the adjacent Sudurpashchim and Lumbini provinces as well as other parts of Nepal, and reportedly as far away as Delhi, India.

Initial information indicates that some 133 people were killed across Karnali Province, including reportedly 95 people in Jajarkot and 38 people in Western Rukum. Several hundred more people have reportedly been injured. These figures are preliminary, and concerns remain that actual figures may be higher, especially as the earthquake struck at a time when most people were likely to have been at home or otherwise indoors. Local authorities anticipate an increase in the number of recorded casualties as search and rescue efforts continue amid reports that some people may still be trapped under collapsed buildings. Health facilities are reportedly overwhelmed, with hospitals in Rukum overcrowded and Bheri Hospital in Banke now only treating patients in serious condition.

Access to Jajarkot and Dolpa in Rirauta Rimna (in the border area of Jajarkot-Dolpa) is reportedly inhibited by landslides triggered by the earthquake; work to reopen the road is already ongoing and access is expected to be restored during the course of 4 November. Current reports from the provincial traffic police indicate that all other roads in Karnali province are operational. Most of the destroyed house are reportedly in Jajarkot and Rukum, with the geographic remoteness of the two districts and the lack of communication challenging rescue and relief efforts.

<sup>1</sup> National Earthquake Monitoring and Research Center (NEMRC), <https://www.seismonepal.gov.np>

This is the largest earthquake to impact Nepal since the 7.3M earthquake in 2015, and it is the latest in a series of earthquakes to hit western Nepal in the past year; Jajarkot, Doti, Bajura, Bajhang, Darchula, Achham and Dolpa are among the districts in western Nepal affected by various earthquakes since November 2022. The impact of this latest earthquake is thus compounding the difficulties and vulnerabilities of communities still recovering from previous shocks, in areas where low socio-economic indicators and stretched coping mechanisms were already prevalent. Many of the earthquake-affected areas – including Jajarkot, Rukum, Dailekh, Salyan and Achham – experience significant seasonal labour migration of men, with mostly women and children remaining in local communities.

## **HUMANITARIAN NEEDS & RESPONSE**

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Reported immediate needs include search-and-rescue capacity, particularly in Jajarkot, Rukum, Dailekh and northern parts of Surkhet, including medical support, trauma response, extraction of people trapped beneath rubble, and the evacuation of affected people to safe locations. The imminent winter further introduces critical need for warm clothes, winterised shelter, healthcare and food.

The Government of Nepal and humanitarian partners have initiated relief efforts, engaging in search-and-rescue as well as deploying medical capacity including medical teams and field hospitals to affected areas and medical and trauma support to regional hospitals. Humanitarian supplies are also being mobilised, including emergency shelter and non-food items (NFI) such as tents and tarps, food assistance, emergency health and hygiene kits, and other aid. The UN Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) has also activated to conduct remote damage assessment via satellite image analysis.

## **GENERAL COORDINATION**

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The humanitarian community in Nepal is coordinating with the Government and authorities at the federal, provincial and local levels, and has initiated inter-cluster meetings to assess sectoral impacts as well as response activities and capacity. On the morning of 4 November, the Karnali Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRPMC) convened a meeting chaired by the Chief Minister to discuss the emergency response, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister jointly convened various ministries and departments to review and scale-up the ongoing relief efforts. An emergency Cabinet meeting is also planned for when the Prime Minister returns to Kathmandu on 4 November following a visit to the earthquake-affected Jajarkot and Rukum Paschim districts together with a medical team.