

JAJARKOT EARTHQUAKE

Quartely Situation Analysis Report

(16 Apr - 15 July, 2024)

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81,513

Identified Beneficiaries



1,859 M

Grant released from DDMC to LDMC



1739.10 M

Grant released from LDMC to beneficiaries

66,976

Temporary shelter constructed

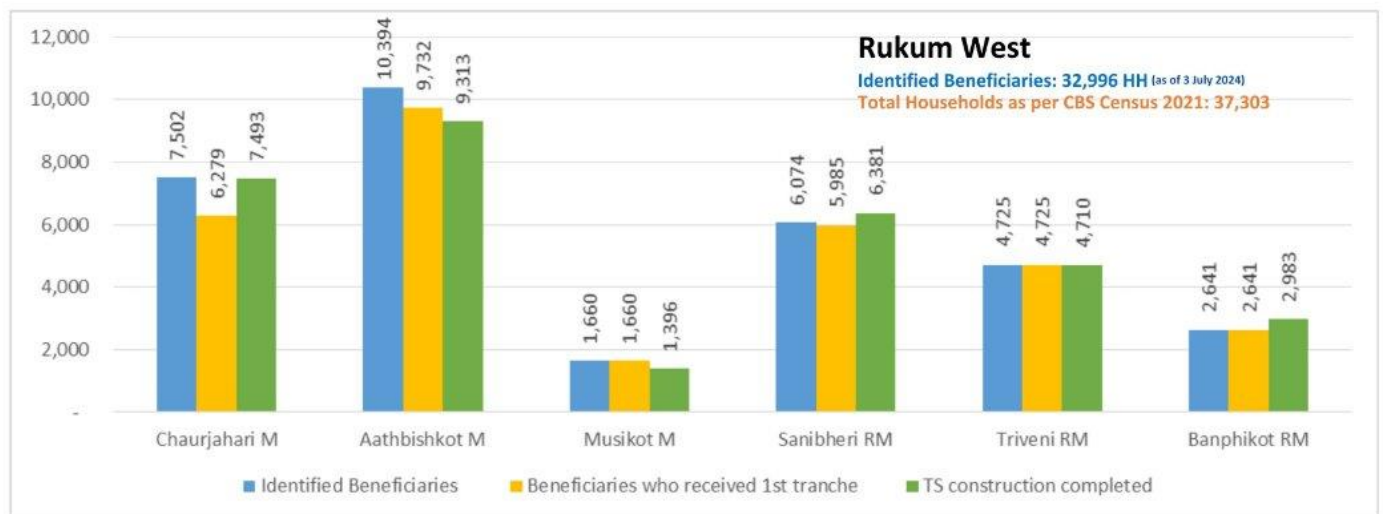
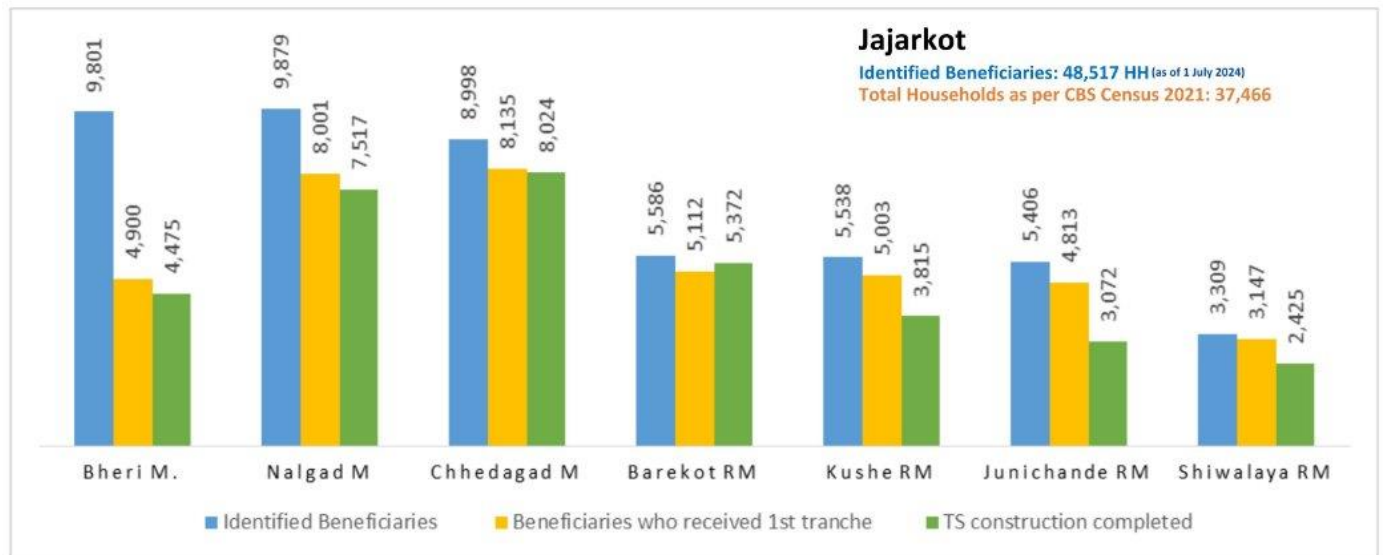
82.17%

Total Temporary shelter constructed

11%

beneficiaries who received second installment

Out of total 81,513 established beneficiaries in both districts



Summary

Eight months after the earthquake, 89% of affected households in Jajarkot and Rukum West are still awaiting the second installment of the Temporary Housing Construction Grant. Out of 81,513 beneficiaries, only 9,078 have received the second installment. The delay, attributed to rigorous documentation requirements, has left many in precarious conditions. The urgency to streamline the grant distribution process is important to prevent further financial and humanitarian crises. On July 15, 2023, a devastating flood in Aathbiskot Municipality, Rukum West, impacted temporary shelters. The flood claimed the lives of three children and injured several others. Ongoing recovery efforts must focus on preventing such future tragedies. The delay in releasing the second installment of the earthquake grants has forced many families into hard labor. Men are reluctant to engage in low-paying jobs, leading women and children to work in stone quarries to repay debts incurred from building temporary shelters and household expenses. This situation highlights the need for swift grant distribution to alleviate economic hardships and prevent exploitation.

Temporary shelters constructed in earthquake-affected areas have proven inadequate, with poor ventilation and harsh living conditions. These shelters exacerbate health problems and stress among residents, emphasizing the need for better planning and construction standards in future recovery efforts. A powerful storm on April 2 caused severe damage to temporary shelters in Jajarkot and Rukum West. The storm highlighted the fragility of these shelters and the urgent need for resilient reconstruction. The loss of educational facilities and agricultural damage further complicates the recovery efforts in the earthquake affected area. Twenty-eight settlements in Jajarkot and Rukum West are at high risk of landslides and floods during the monsoon season. Urgent relocation and long-term risk mitigation strategies are necessary to protect these vulnerable communities. The government's deployment of specialized teams to aid in relocation and disaster preparedness is a crucial step in addressing these risks. The government has relocated 13 families from high-risk landslide areas in Jajarkot.

immediate measures have been taken, long-term solutions are essential for sustainable safety. Comprehensive land and water management strategies are needed to address the underlying issues caused by the earthquake. Junichade Rural Municipality in Jajarkot is facing a severe food crisis due to transportation difficulties. The lack of infrastructure has hindered the delivery of essential food supplies, exacerbating the economic downturn and pushing more families into poverty and hunger. Urgent construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure are necessary to ensure food security. Water shortages and inadequate WASH facilities in Jajarkot and Rukum West have increased health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations. The reconstruction efforts must prioritize resilient WASH facilities to ensure basic hygiene and access to clean water, crucial for disease prevention and long-term recovery.

Despite widespread migration trends, Jajarkot and Rukum West have shown positive population growth rates. The unique socio-economic factors in these regions provide valuable insights into sustainable rural living models. Future recovery programs must consider these aspects to support the growing population in both districts. The historic Jajarkot Durbar, damaged by the earthquake, has been covered to prevent further monsoon damage. The preservation of this cultural landmark is vital for maintaining Nepal's rich history and heritage. A field visit by DPNet team to various districts highlighted the lack of coordination among NGOs and government agencies, leading to uneven aid distribution. Enhanced disaster preparedness and response strategies are needed, including resilient infrastructure, livelihood programs, and improved WASH facilities. The visit highlighted the importance of swift grant disbursement and effective coordination to support recovering communities.

Struggles Persist for Earthquake Affected People Awaiting Second Installment

Eight months have elapsed since the earthquake struck, yet the 89% affected household in Jajarkot and Rukum West are still awaiting the second installment of the Temporary Housing Construction Grant. According to data from the NDRRMA till 1st July 2024, 81,513 beneficiaries identified and 70,133 received the first installment of the housing grant. Only 9,078 beneficiaries (680 in Nalgad, 3,013 in Aathbiskot, 5,285 in Sani Bheri, and 100 in Chaurjhari) out of a total of 81,513 beneficiaries have received the second installment. The earthquake's aftermath was devastating, with 31 additional fatalities recorded due to the severe cold and inadequate shelter. The affected people included vulnerable populations such as pregnant and lactating women, newborns, children, the elderly with chronic conditions, and people with disabilities. In response, the government swiftly introduced (within 9 days) the Temporary Housing Construction Grant Procedure for Earthquake Affected Households, 2023. This initiative aimed to provide rapid relief by offering a grant of Rs. 50,000, divided into two installments. The first installment was promptly distributed with minimal documentation to facilitate the urgent need for shelter reconstruction. However, the process to release the second installment has been concerned with complications, largely due to the introduction of more rigorous documentation requirements, such as land ownership certificates, photographs of damaged or dismantled houses, and proof of family separation. As there was no detail damage assessment performed yet, many households inaccurately claimed to be separate beneficiaries to avail of the grant, inflating the number of supposed victims. For instance, while the 2021 census recorded 37,466 houses in Jajarkot, post-earthquake assessments identified 48,517 beneficiary households. This discrepancy suggests false claims and highlights the necessity for a detail damage assessment.

In anticipation of the second installment, many residents constructed temporary shelters, hoping that subsequent financial support would follow swiftly. Unfortunately, due to delays, these expectations were not met. Some residents, driven by the prospect of receiving the grant, even constructed temporary shelters despite their homes not being damaged. This has led to a significant problem, as local businessperson who supplied materials like zinc sheets and wood on credit are now pressuring for payments. With the delays in grant disbursement, many affected individuals find themselves unable to



repay their debts with high interest. In some instances, interest rates charged by these businessperson have soared to as high as 36%, plunging many into severe debt.

The situation is serious as many earthquake affected people are caught in a debt trap, pressured by creditors. In the ongoing monsoon season without adequate shelter, the living conditions of these individuals will deteriorate further. The need for the government to streamline the grant distribution process is urgent. Facilitating the swift release of the second installment is essential not only to complete the construction of temporary shelters but also to enable the beneficiaries to settle their debts with the suppliers. This would mitigate the financial burden on the beneficiaries and



prevent the crisis from escalating further. As the community struggles with these challenges, the government's role in expediting the grant process and ensuring transparent and effective aid distribution cannot be overstated. It is important that the authorities take immediate action to address the administrative bottlenecks and provide the necessary support to the earthquake affected real beneficiaries, ensuring they can rebuild their lives and emerge from the shadow of this disaster.

Temporary Shelters Destroyed and Three Children Lost in Flood

On July 15, 2023, a devastating flood swept through Aathbiskot Municipality, Ward No. 12 in Rukum West, impacted temporary shelters that housed families still recovering from the destruction caused by a previous earthquake. Among the hardest hit were the families living in the shelters, who had been waiting for the second installment of government aid promised for reconstruction. These structures, meant only



as a temporary solution couldn't protect from the Gija River, which carried heavy debris. The flood claimed the lives of three young lives—eight-year-old Hitmaya Pun, five-year-old Dhanisha Pun, and four-year-old Manisha Sarkee. These young girls were asleep when the floodwaters, laden with mud and stones, washed away their homes. Additionally, seven other individuals sustained injuries. Among them were ten-year-old Vijay Sarkee, 22-year-old Manisa Pun, 65-year-old Mansara Pun, and 29-year-old Janak Khatri, who were severely injured.

The flood also caused substantial material damage beyond the loss of life. It swept away three temporary shelters and two mobile shops. The local response was swift, with police and volunteers coordinating search and rescue operations. One individual, 35-year-old Dilli Bahadur Budhathoki, was reported missing and feared to be swept away by the floodwaters. Mayor Ravi KC of Aathbiskot Municipality called for immediate assistance from both the government and non-governmental organizations. He requested for the urgent need for shelter and medical care for the affected people and stressed the importance of quick action to prevent future tragedies. The recent flood in Rukum West highlights the urgent need for reconstruction efforts to incorporate necessary measures against earthquakes, floods, and landslides, ensuring the safety of lives and property. This tragic event also suggest that upcoming reconstruction activities must prioritize resilience, adapting structures to withstand the multiple risks like earthquake, flood, landslide prevalent in the earthquake affected area.

Delay in Earthquake Grants Forces Women, Children into Hard Labor

After the Jajarkot earthquake many families found themselves in a precarious situation, struggling not only with the loss of their homes but also with a significant disruption to their primary source of income. Traditionally, many male members of these communities would travel to India as seasonal migrant workers, a vital livelihood that sustained their families back home. However, the earthquake shifted their priorities drastically. As the government introduced the Temporary Housing Construction Grant Procedure, families were hopeful for a swift disbursement of funds



which would enable them to build temporary shelters and eventually permanent homes. The first installment was indeed distributed, prompting many to commence construction. However, the delay in releasing the second installment has left many in limbo, unable to complete their shelters or start on permanent structures. This uncertainty has deterred many from returning to India for work, fearing they might need to return abruptly should the grant finally be released or to manage any progress in reconstruction. The absence of sufficient local employment opportunities forces families to seek alternative means to sustain themselves. Men, traditionally the earner in family, find themselves jobless, as they are reluctant to engage in stone quarrying—a prevalent but low-paying job in the area. This work, though in demand due to the reconstruction efforts, is often ignored by men due to its strenuous nature and poor remuneration. As a result, women and even school-aged children have stepped into the breach,

assisting in the quarries to earn a living. Working from dawn to dusk in the quarries can yield about Rs. four thousands monthly and this hard labor takes a toll, often leading to swollen hands and physical exhaustion. Despite these hardships, families are compelled to continue, driven by the urgent need to repay debts incurred from building their temporary shelters. Many had taken loans at high interest rates from local businessperson who provided building materials on credit, expecting quick repayment once the second installment was disbursed. This dire economic situation reflect



the challenges faced by the earthquake affected people, who are caught between the slow grant distribution processes and the immediate needs of survival and shelter. The delay in aid distribution not only affects their ability to rebuild homes but also deepens the economic divide, forcing women and children into laborious, low-wage jobs, and pushing them further into cycles of debt and hardship.

Precarious Life of Earthquake-Affected People in Poorly Ventilated Temporary Shelters

Most of the temporary shelters made in earthquake affected area have discomforts that highlight the inadequacy of the response to their urgent needs. These shelters, primarily made of zinc sheets for walls and roofing, were constructed quickly and without proper consideration for the living conditions they would foster. In the sweltering heat, these metal shelters turn into ovens by day, making it nearly impossible for families to stay inside. The zinc sheets absorb and radiate intense heat, creating an environment that is not only uncomfortable but also hazardous to health. Such situation increased health problems among residents, including respiratory issues and exacerbated conditions for the elderly and young children.



Furthermore, the design of these shelters lacks adequate ventilation. The earthquake affected people, initially intended to prevent pests such as snakes and rats from entering, has instead created stifling conditions with poor air circulation. The lack of ventilation contributes to the discomfort during hot days and makes the shelters damp and chilly during colder nights. The one-size-fits-all approach in the distribution of the grant money, with each household receiving Rs. 50,000, disregards the size and needs of different families. As a result, many of the shelters are too small for larger families, forcing them to live

in cramped conditions that lack privacy and adequate space for daily activities. This situation strains family dynamics and contributes to mental and emotional stress among the inhabitants. The physical discomfort and health risks are compounded by the psychological toll on these families, who are forced to endure prolonged periods of uncertainty about their future housing. Pregnant and lactating women, children, senior citizens, people with chronic disease, people with disability are experiencing various types of problem living in such condition.

Storm Damage Exacerbates Challenges for Earthquake Affected Beneficiaries

After the Jajarkot earthquake, the affected areas have been facing numerous problems. This year, a powerful storm also struck both Jajarkot and West Rukum. The situation of the affected communities has been exacerbated by windstorm that swept through the region, causing severe damage to the temporary shelters that were hastily erected to house the displaced families. This natural disaster has added another



layer of distress to an already struggling population, showcasing the fragility of their temporary living conditions. The windstorm, occurring on 2nd April, was particularly destructive in Sani Bheri Municipality-2, Pariyar Tol, where it ripped the zinc sheet roofs off numerous temporary shelters. The zinc sheets, which were used due to their availability and ease of installation, proved inadequate against the powerful gusts, leaving many families exposed to the disaster once more. The loss of shelter was not just a physical blow but a severe emotional setback for residents who had hoped for stability after the initial earthquake. Roofs of some school were torn and learning centers, disrupting the education of children who were already dealing with the trauma of displacement and loss. This damage to educational facilities is a concern, as it interrupts the continuity of education for students, further complicating the community's long-term recovery efforts.

Moreover, the windstorm led to widespread damage across the agricultural sector, which is also an important source of sustenance and income for the region. Fields of wheat, lentils, and chickpeas



were devastated, which could lead to a long-term impact on food security and economic stability in the area. The destruction of crops adds another dimension of hardship, as many families rely on these fields for their livelihoods.

The physical damage inflicted by the storm is compounded by the challenges in disaster response and recovery efforts. The compounded impact of the earthquake followed by the windstorm has not only disrupted lives but also highlighted the vulnerabilities in the earthquake affected area. It underlines the importance of incorporating resilience and sustainability into the recovery process, ensuring that the reconstruction efforts not only rebuild what was lost but also prepare the community for future challenges. As Rukum West, Jajarkot continue to recover, the lessons learned from these back-to-back disasters must inform a new approach to disaster readiness and community planning, one that prioritizes the safety and well-being of all residents.

28 Settlements in Jajarkot and Rukum West at High Risk of Monsoon Disasters

Jajarkot and West Rukum have been identified as highly susceptible to monsoon-related disasters. According to a study conducted by the NDRRMA, these areas, already devastated by seismic events, now face the compounded risk of landslides and flooding exacerbated by the annual monsoons. In addition to



seismic events, haphazard rural road construction is responsible for triggering severe landslides in the earthquake-affected areas. In a comprehensive geotechnical assessment conducted by GeoTech Solutions International in support of NDRRMA, revealed that 28 settlements in the earthquake-affected areas of Jajarkot and Rukum West are at high risk of landslides and floods and urgently need to be relocated. The study, which included extensive field observations by dozens of geologists and engineers, highlighted that these areas could face severe consequences if immediate actions are not taken. The affected settlements include 22 villages in Jajarkot and 6 in Rukum West, which geologists warn could suffer significant damage if not moved to safer locations promptly. Study stressed the precarious condition of these villages, particularly during the rainy season when the risk of landslides and floods increases dramatically due to the loosened soil structure from the earthquake.

Particular areas of concern mentioned in the report include Maidi, Chaupani, and Chaur in Barekot Municipality-6, along with Naulya Nimyari in Ward No. 9, Tolakhana in Ward No. 5, and Detkule in

Chhedagad Municipality-2. The villages of Dalit Basti and Liwal Basti in Ward No. 3, Sangachaur in Ward No. 12, Bagaha in Ward No. 13, and Dungara in Shivalaya Municipality-2 are also listed as high-risk areas. The NDRRMA has recommended that these villages be evacuated soon as an interim safety measure. The situation will be reassessed after three months to determine if it is safe for residents to return or if more permanent relocation solutions are necessary.

The Home Minister, Rabi Lamichhane, has announced the deployment of 10 specialized teams to these high-risk areas to aid in the relocation efforts and to strengthen local disaster response capabilities. These teams, each comprising five trained personnel, are tasked with not only facilitating relocations but also with conducting community awareness programs on disaster preparedness and emergency response. The urgency of these initiatives is supported by the monsoon's onset, which historically has led to severe landslides and flooding in the hilly terrains of Nepal, often with catastrophic consequences.

High Risk of Landslides in Jajarkot Leads to Relocation of 13 Families

Jajarkot earthquake has significantly destabilized much of Jajarkot and Rukum West landslide prone area, Government has taken action to mitigate the ongoing threat of landslides. The earthquake not only resulted in considerable damage to infrastructure but also created numerous land fissures. These fissures, if not promptly managed, could lead to catastrophic landslides, especially with the ongoing monsoon season. Experts emphasize the need to fill these fissures and divert water effectively to maintain the gullies to prevent further disaster.

As landslide risk is impending, authorities are closely observing the situation. In support of District Police Office Jajarkot, 13 families from two highly vulnerable villages in Jajarkot have been relocated to safer areas. The affected families from Bheri Municipality-1 in Chyaupani were moved to safer area. Eleven families from Chyaupani were shifted to a temporary settlement in Maide village's open field within Bheri-1, while the remaining families were accommodated with relatives. Additionally, two families from Chankhelidanda in Bheri Municipality-3, who were also at high risk, were relocated to an emergency shelter at the Tribhuvan Secondary School's grounds. District Police office detailed the coordinated efforts, noting that while immediate measures have been taken to protect the communities, long-term solutions are essential for sustainable safety. The community's cooperation for a smooth transition for those affected is necessary.

Due to the earthquake, 21 settlements in Nalgad Municipality are at high risk of landslides. Similarly, 18 settlements in Kushe Rural Municipality, 1 in Shivalaya Rural Municipality, 6 in Junichande Rural Municipality, 11 in Bheri Municipality, 10 in Barekot Rural Municipality, and 7 in Chhedagad Municipality are also at high risk of landslides, according to the District Disaster Management Committee Jajarkot.



This proactive approach extends beyond immediate relocations. The District Disaster Management Committee in Jajarkot has highlighted the importance of comprehensive land and water management strategies to address the underlying issues caused by the earthquake. These strategies include stabilizing landslide-prone areas by improving drainage, reinforcing soil bases, and educating residents about risk mitigation techniques. Moreover, the district's commitment to disaster preparedness is reflected in the establishment of emergency response plans and the strengthening of community resilience initiatives. The combined efforts of local government, police, and community organizations in Jajarkot and Rukum West illustrate a active and integrated approach to disaster risk reduction.

Food Crisis in Junichade, Jajarkot

Junichande Rural Municipality in Jajarkot is facing severe food crisis. This remote area, along with Kushe, is one of the most inaccessible parts of the district, where transportation difficulties have severely hindered the delivery of essential food supplies. Despite a good production of maize this year, the lack of transportation infrastructure has made it impossible to distribute the harvested crops effectively. The villages of Junichande, such as Biuri, Menyaluma, Khudaule, and Syaule, are facing acute shortages. These areas are so remote that vehicles rarely reach them, and most of the villages are entirely inaccessible by road. The absence of transportation means and livelihood opportunities has left the residents in a precarious situation. Local representatives and residents have voiced their concerns about the lack of timely intervention and support. The food supply center of Nepal Food Corporation in Junichande has been struggling to meet the demand, leaving many unable to purchase the necessary food items. The center has only managed to provide 150 quintals of rice, which is far below the required amount to sustain the population. One of the most urgent issues is that the food becomes exceedingly expensive when it needs to be transported by people. Households in remote areas that lack members capable of carrying food from transport-accessible locations are at a high risk of food insecurity. The logistical challenges are heightened by the harsh terrain and weather conditions, which often make the roads impassable.



Adding to the crisis, monsoon disasters have disrupted local food production and distribution. The scarcity of food has led to a sharp increase in prices, making it even more difficult for residents to afford basic necessities. The economic downturn has further exacerbated the situation, pushing more families into poverty and hunger. Local Government requested the federal government to prioritize the construction

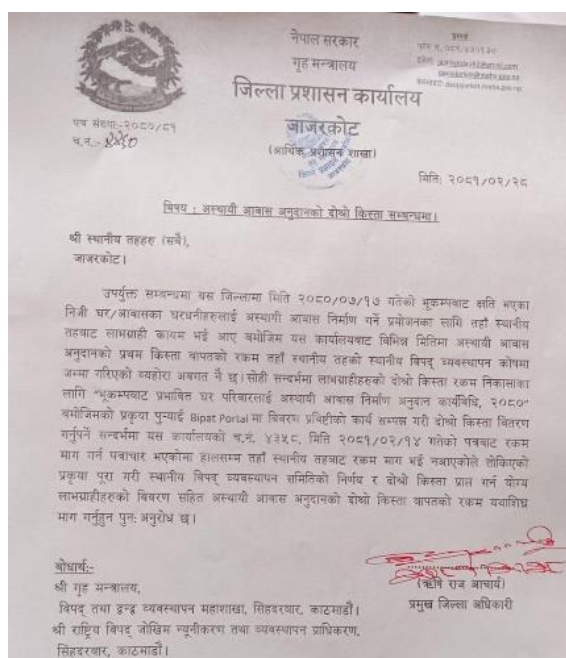
and maintenance of transportation infrastructure to ensure that food supplies can reach the most remote areas. Additionally, they stress the need for emergency food relief to prevent further suffering.

Urgent Call for Timely Distribution of Temporary Shelter Second Installment

The temporary shelter grant was intended to protect people from the harsh cold winter in the earthquake-affected area of Jajarkot. Nine days after the earthquake, the temporary shelter grant procedure was introduced. However, eight months later, people are still struggling to receive the first installment. Only 9,078 beneficiaries (680 in Nalgad, 3,013 in Aathbiskot, 5,285 in Sani Bheri, and 100 in Chaurjhari) out of a total of 81,513 beneficiaries have received the second installment.

In Jajarkot, the District Administration Office has issued an urgent notification dated June 10, 2024, to all local governments emphasizing the need for a swift action concerning the documentation and distribution of the second installment of the temporary shelter grant. The notification intends local governments to update and submit the necessary documentation for the second installment through the BIPAD portal. The first installment to most of the beneficiaries has already been distributed, but delays in processing the second have prompted concerns about the efficiency of local governments.

The NDRRMA allocates funds to the DDMC, which in turn is responsible for providing these grants to the LDMC. LDMCs are then tasked with disbursing the amounts directly to the beneficiaries. The letter specifically requests all local governments to expedite the process by making necessary entries of beneficiary details into the BIPAD portal and to request the needed funds for immediate distribution. The Jajarkot District Administration's call to action.



Earthquake Induced Water Shortage Affects Vulnerable Populations Including Women and Children

Jajarkot and West Rukum, have experienced disruptions to their water and sanitation infrastructure. This damage has precipitated health risks and has complicated the recovery processes, leaving vulnerable populations at risk. Immediately following the earthquake, some communities faced water shortages due to seismic activities that likely disrupted local water sources and damaged pipelines, drastically reducing the availability of clean water. The situation deteriorated further as subsequent floods contaminated these sources with debris and biological materials, elevating the risk of waterborne diseases.

The rapid construction of temporary shelters, intended to provide immediate relief to displaced families, unfortunately often didn't consider to integrate essential WASH facilities. Constructed primarily from zinc sheets for quick assembly, these shelters do not provide hygienic living conditions with WASH facility. The

absence of proper toilets and waste disposal systems compels residents to rely on temporary solutions that do not meet basic sanitary standards. Additionally, these cramped shelters hinder personal hygiene practices, important for disease prevention, particularly among vulnerable groups like pregnant women, lactating mothers, the senior citizen with chronic conditions, and individuals with disabilities.

Moreover, the reconstruction and recovery efforts have been slow, leading to prolonged periods without adequate WASH facilities. This delay exacerbates chronic health issues and hampers long-term recovery. The scarcity of natural spring water in areas like Nalgad Municipality further complicates the situation. Residents report that spring water turned muddy immediately after the earthquake, and the flow has since diminished.



With drinking water sources drying up, exacerbated by seasonal dryness and plastic pipe damage from forest fires, there is an urgent need for new water pipes to transport water from viable sources.

In Jogineta, located at Chaurjahari Ward Number 11 in Rukum West, the daily struggle for water is severe, a direct consequence of a devastating earthquake that damaged solar lift water project established seven years prior, which was vital for providing water to 150 households. Residents now face a strenuous three-hour walk every day to fetch just one vessel of water, a journey that not only consumes significant portions of their mornings but also impacts their overall well-being and daily routines.



The process involves waiting for long periods at a narrow spring, followed by a steep climb back home with the water, with each trip taking approximately three hours. This water scarcity has made basic hygiene and cooking a challenge and has disrupted the daily activities of local families, affecting both work and education. In desperate attempts to secure water, some residents start their journey as early as 3 AM or as late as 8-9 PM. The burden of fetching water disproportionately falls on women, children, and the elderly, particularly because many young adults have moved to urban centers or abroad in search of employment. This shift has intensified the difficulties faced by these vulnerable

groups, who dedicate much of their day to this essential task. The education of local schoolchildren is also severely compromised. Many students are often late or miss school entirely because they need to assist their families in collecting water. This frequent interruption of their school day underlines the broader impacts of the water crisis on their educational progress. Women and children, often responsible for water collection, now have to travel significant distances to fetch water, which consumes substantial time and energy that could be otherwise used for livelihood, education, recovery efforts. Due to the severe shortage of water and inadequate WASH facilities, including helpless people, people with disabilities, are forced to compromise on their basic hygiene needs. This diversion highlights the dire need for a systematic approach to restoring water infrastructure in the earthquake-impacted areas. Learning from the temporary shelter, upcoming reconstruction programs must prioritize the establishment of resilient WASH facilities to ensure that communities can maintain essential hygiene practices and have reliable access to clean water. Planning for future disasters must incorporate strategies that strengthen infrastructure against such disasters.



Jajarkot and West Rukum's Population Growth Needs to be Factored into Earthquake Recovery



In the contrasting landscape of Nepal's demographic trends, Jajarkot and West Rukum emerge as noteworthy exceptions in the Karnali region, demonstrating positive population growth rates among widespread migration from rural to urban areas. These districts, often overshadowed by their more accessible counterparts, have shown resilience and a slow but steady increase in population, with Jajarkot witnessing a growth rate of 0.96 percent and West Rukum 0.68 percent. Similar district Salyan which also affected by 2023 Jajarkot earthquake has negative population growth rate.

Unlike other regions where depopulation is driven by the pursuit of better economic opportunities elsewhere, Jajarkot and West Rukum have managed to sustain and even grow their populations. This phenomenon can be attributed to several factors that differentiate these areas from others experiencing a decline. Firstly, the relative isolation of these districts has somewhat insulated them from the mass migration trends. This isolation, while often a barrier to economic development, has preserved a way of

life that continues to support a stable population base. Moreover, the local economies in Jajarkot and West Rukum have adapted to their geographical and social contexts. These adaptations include reliance on subsistence agriculture, local trade, and in some cases, the influx of remittances from family members who migrate seasonally or long-term but maintain strong ties to their home districts. Such economic activities provide a livelihood that, while modest, is sufficient to sustain families and communities, discouraging mass migration.

In addition, both districts have seen improvements in infrastructure and access to services over the years, albeit slowly. These improvements, ranging from better road connectivity to enhanced healthcare and educational facilities, contribute to making life in these regions more viable and attractive to their residents. While not on par with urban centers, these enhancements play a crucial role in stabilizing the population by improving living conditions. The social fabric of Jajarkot and Rukum West also plays a significant role in their demographic patterns. In these communities, strong familial ties and a deep connection to the land encourage younger generations to continue living in or return to their ancestral homes. Cultural and traditional values supporting communal living and mutual aid further reinforce the desirability of maintaining one's roots in these districts.

Despite these positive indicators, Jajarkot and Rukum West face challenges, including limited access to advanced healthcare, education, and economic opportunities compared to more developed regions. However, the slow but positive growth in population highlights a potential for these districts to develop uniquely sustainable models of rural living that counteract the broader trends of urban migration. As Nepal continues to develop, the example of Jajarkot and Rukum West could provide valuable insights into how remote areas can leverage their unique characteristics to sustain and energize their communities. This could inform policies and initiatives aimed at balancing development across the country, ensuring that rural areas are not left behind in the national narrative of progress and growth. Given the positive population growth rate in earthquake-affected districts Jajarkot and Rukum West, upcoming recovery programs must focus on various aspects of population growth and urbanization in these areas.

Historic Jajarkot Durbar Covered to Prevent Further Monsoon Damage

The historic Jajarkot Durbar, a cultural landmark, has been covered with tarpaulins to protect it from further damage caused by the ongoing monsoon season. The palace, which sustained serious damage during the



devastating Jajarkot earthquake has been a symbol of resilience, surviving multiple earthquakes throughout its history. Constructed in 229 year ago, the Jajarkot Durbar has witnessed substantial damage from two previous earthquakes before the most recent earthquake. Each time, restoration efforts were made to return the palace to its former glory. The latest earthquake has left the structure cracked, though

it remains standing, providing to its historical toughness. The covering carried out with the support of the District Forest Office of Jajarkot, was deemed necessary despite the risks involved, given the palace's deteriorated condition and the onset of monsoon rains that could potentially exacerbate the structural vulnerabilities. The Jajarkot Durbar is not only a tourist attraction but also part of the government's listed top hundred tourist destinations in Nepal. This listing highlights the cultural and historical importance of the palace, attracting visitors from around the nation and the globe. As per the Paschim Patra online media, the monsoon season progresses, the local authorities and conservationists continue to monitor the condition of the Durbar closely, ready to take further steps if necessary to safeguard this iconic structure against the harsh weather conditions typical of this region. The efforts to maintain and protect the Jajarkot Durbar are important for preserving a significant part of Nepal's rich history for future generations.

DPNet Team's Insights from Field Visit to Impacted Districts Post-Jajarkot Earthquake

Dr. Meen B. Poudyal Chhetri, Past President, and Mr. Surya B. Thapa, Immediate Past President of DPNet, undertook a field visit from May 27 to June 2, 2024, to observe the aftermath and recovery efforts in various districts impacted by the Jajarkot earthquake. Field visit tried get insights from Dolpa, Salyan, Jumla, Dailekh, and Kalikot. In Dolpa, despite its remote from epicenter, the earthquake impact was minimal, a situation confirmed during discussions with the CDO Mr. Tulsi Dahal. The primary concerns here revolved around natural hazards like landslides and forest fires, rather than direct earthquake damage. In contrast, the Salyan district faced substantial structural damage, with 1,296 houses fully damaged and 2,101 partially damaged. Remarkably, all affected families in Salyan, numbering 1,296, have received the first installment of relief funds intended to support their recovery. Jumla, although less severely hit, still reported damage with 7 houses fully damaged and 134 partially damaged; however, only 7 families received first installment of the temporary shelter grant. Dailekh with 26 houses completely destroyed and 2,566 partially damaged, yet no relief aid had reached any affected families there. Kalikot also suffered notable destruction, with 20 houses fully damaged and 58 partially damaged. All 20 affected families in Kalikot received the first installment.



Dr. Chhetri and Mr. Thapa interacted extensively with local government, NGOs, and community members, identifying a pervasive lack of coordination among NGOs and government agencies. This disorganization has led to uneven aid distribution, exacerbating the challenges faced by the earthquake affected people. The field visit highlighted the need for enhanced disaster preparedness and response strategies. This includes building resilient infrastructure and ensuring effective coordination among all stakeholders involved in disaster management and pointed the need of advocacy for the swift disbursement of the grant, the enhancement of livelihood programs, and improvements in WASH infrastructure to effectively support the recovering communities.

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