

For Immediate Release
April 20th, 2016

Press Contacts:

Narayan Adhikari- Accountability Lab narayan@accountabilitylab.org 980-114-2799
Pranav Budhathoki- Local Interventions Group pranav@localinterventions.org.uk 980-102-2422

One Year Later, Citizens Indicate that Earthquake Recovery Efforts have Improved but Reconstruction is Problematic

Key points:

- *The number of earthquake victims who now feel they have the information they need to access relief, feel that relief aid is distributed in a fair and equal way, and are satisfied with the government's immediate response to the disaster has doubled.*
- *Data indicates that while the government and donors have done a better job at addressing immediate post-earthquake recovery needs, they must improve efforts to engage citizens in dealing with longer-term reconstruction issues.*
- *The #quakehelpdesks are the only process through which representative data has been collected from citizens about their perceptions of the relief and reconstruction efforts in the 14 districts worst affected by the earthquakes.*

One year after the first of two devastating earthquakes struck Nepal- ultimately killing over 8,000 people and displacing almost 3 million more- the response to the disaster has significantly improved but there is still progress to be made. ***The number of victims who now feel they have the information they need to access relief, feel that relief aid is distributed in a fair and equal way, and are satisfied with the government's immediate response to the disaster has doubled.***

Since April 26th last year, #quakehelpdesk teams- led by [Accountability Lab](#) and [Local Interventions Group](#) have been systematically surveying communities on their needs and helping victims to access help. These [perception surveys](#)- and the [rumor tracking tools](#) we paired with them- have become a critical input for the over \$4 billion recovery program. With extensive networks in all 14 of the worst affected districts and a mandate to work closely with victims, the helpdesks have been uniquely placed to measure the effectiveness of the relief process.

The teams have now reached over **795 communities and more than 60,000 citizens across 14 districts**. Every month the reports our volunteers create- which are full of useful, validated data from the ground on issues such as compensation for victims, trust in government and corruption in rebuilding- are fed into the coordination meetings led by the UN. This has allowed more than 50 relief agencies to use this information to adapt their programming, making it more effective in the places it has been needed most. The data collected indicate that the relief process, while still not perfect, has made significant improvements in meeting the needs of earthquake victims. For example:

- **Information-** In July 2015 we asked 1,304 people if they had the information they needed to access relief and support, and just **25.9%** indicated they had all or most of the information they needed. In September 2015, 40.2% of respondents said they had all or most of the information they needed; and by December 2015, 53.5% of respondents said they had all or

most of the information they needed to access relief and support. By February 2016, **58%** of respondents said they had all or most of the information they needed to access relief and support. The ***top information needs for respondents continues to be news on government decisions and how to access shelter materials and register for relief support.***

- ***Fairness-*** In July 2015 we asked 1,400 people if they thought post-earthquake support was provided in a fair and equal way. In July 2015, **28.3%** of respondents said support was provided in a somewhat or completely fair way. In September 2015, 42.5% of respondents said support was provided in a somewhat or completely fair way. In December 2015, 54.7% of respondents indicated that support was provided in a somewhat or completely fair way. By February 2016, **60%** of respondents indicated that support was provided in a somewhat or completely fair way. ***Respondents who perceive aid as unfairly provided believe it was provided on first come first serve basis or was based on networks (political parties and caste system) or distance from the main road.***
- ***Satisfaction-*** In July 2015, we asked 1,304 people if they were satisfied with the government's response to the earthquake and only **23.2%** indicated they were completely or somewhat satisfied. By September 2015, 27.2% of respondents said they were completely satisfied or somewhat satisfied; and by December 2015, those responding completely satisfied or somewhat satisfied had increased to 43.79% of respondents. By February 2016, those responding completely satisfied or somewhat satisfied had increased to 46% of respondents. ***The top reasons respondents provided for being unsatisfied with government are promises of relief support not provided, government plans unclear and reconstruction processes taking too long.***

In March 2016, we shifted our methodology to focus more specifically on reconstruction-related issues (as opposed to recovery issues), and the data is not nearly as positive. Preliminary analysis of the most recent survey indicates that while the majority of victims expect to receive reconstruction support, less than half actually know how to access this support. Moreover, a large majority of citizens feel their main reconstruction issues are not being addressed very much or at all. The verified data from the survey will be available by the end of April 2016.

Narayan Adhikari, Country Representative for Accountability Lab Nepal said today: “This data indicates clearly that ***while the government and donors have done a better job at addressing immediate post-earthquake recovery needs, they must improve efforts to engage citizens in dealing with longer-term reconstruction issues.***” Pranav Budhathoki, Director of Local Interventions Group added: “Our work is citizen-focused but we are also working closely with the government to improve the reconstruction efforts. We look forward to collaborating with the National Reconstruction Authority and other agencies to make sure victims of the earthquakes receive the support they need”.

For further information, please visit the #quakehelpdesk website: www.quakehelpdesk.org