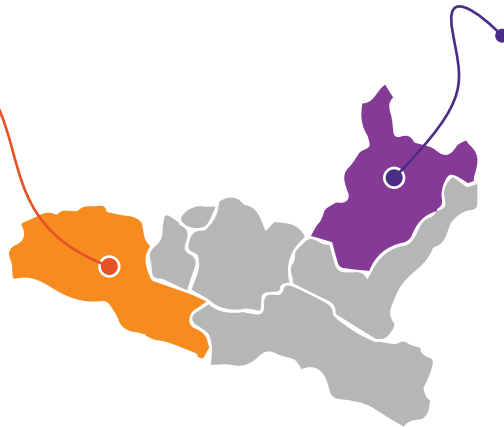


Welcome to the thirtieth issue of **OPEN MIC NEPAL** bulletin. The Open Mic project captures rumours and perceptions on the ground to eliminate information gaps between the media, humanitarian agencies and local people. By providing local media and outreach workers with facts, Open Mic aims to create a better understanding of the needs of the earthquake-affected communities and to debunk rumours before they can do any harm.

CONCERNS

AMBHANJYANG, MAKWANPUR

"The village secretary said that the VDC has not been able to receive Rs 10,000 in winter support because he received a letter saying that the grant is only for households living above 1500 metres."



YARSA MIRGE, DOLAKHA

"We haven't received Rs 10,000 meant for support in winter. Maybe the government will provide the money after people die from the cold."

ANSWERS

Households in some Village Development Committees (VDCs) of some earthquake-affected districts have not received the winter support cash grant of Rs 10,000.

According to the VDC secretary of Mirge, Dolakha, the office did not receive enough funds for all households in the VDC. Funds were enough for only 840 out of 1,237 households. Distribution began from ward no 1 and by the time it reached 7, the VDC ran out of money.

The Ambhanjyang VDC in Makwanpur has not yet received funds for distribution. Once the VDC receives the funds, the distribution will begin. Wards above 1500 metres in altitude will be prioritised for distribution.

Both the Dolakha and Makwanpur District Disaster Relief Committees said that they had already written to the Home Ministry demanding additional funds.

The Ministry could not be certain when it would be able to disburse the money. It said it had written to the Prime Minister's Office asking the Office to authorise the disbursement.

Once the Ministry releases the funds, the distribution will resume.

Devendra Lamichhane

Chief District Officer
Dolakha
9854017777

Yubraj Poudel

VDC Secretary
Ambhanjyang
Makwanpur
9855029585

Baburam Bhandari

Under Secretary
National Emergency Operation
Centre Ministry of Home Affairs
9851113424

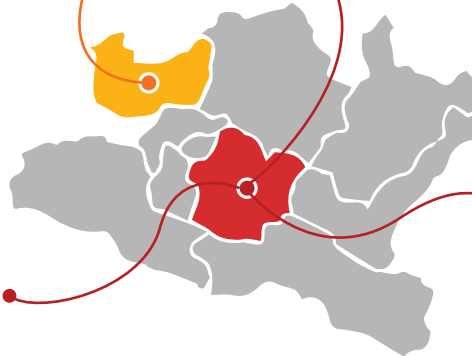
CONCERNS

SURYAMATI, NUWAKOT

"The government didn't even give us what we deserve." The Finance Minister has won an award while we are where we were.

MANGALTAR, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"We received the winter support cash grant very late. Looks like we will get the reconstruction grant only after people in other districts finish building their houses, as well."



MAHADEVSTHAN, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"Is it true tht the government will provide the grant to build houses only after the monsoon?"

DEUPUR, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"They say the government will make some excuse and not provide the promised grant."

ANSWERS

The National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) plans to distribute the reconstruction grant as the data from the reassessment comes in and is processed. It expects the funds to be distributed on a rolling basis, and will not wait for the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) to finish the reassessment of damage in all the affected districts.

The CBS has begun the reassessment of households in 11 most districts (excluding Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur). Assessment in Dolakha is almost at its end. Once the data comes in, the NRA will assess beneficiary eligibility and publish a list of beneficiaries for the reconstruction support.

The NRA has, however, not announced when the distribution will begin. The NRA first intends to amend and finalise the procedure for the disbursement of the reconstruction grant, establishing the eligibilty criteria. It will then publish a list of beneficiaries in each district and allow for a grievance reporting period. Eligible households will then be required to open bank accounts and submit an application for the grant.

Madhu Sudan Adhikari

Spokesperson
National Reconstruction
Authority
9751060556

RUMOURS

BADALGAUN, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"They say that engineers are going to reassess the houses again and we will get the money based on this assessment. Those who provided false information and received Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000 based on the cards will not get the reconstruction grant."

MANGALTAR, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"Is it true that the government is sending engineers to every village to help rebuild houses?"

SHAHARE, DOLAKHA

"We hear that after this team of engineer evaluates our house, another team will come over. Only then will we get money to build houses."

PAANCHKHAL, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"They say a team of engineers are coming to figure out the kind of house we need to build. They say the government will take back the relief money given to those with concrete houses."

FACTS

The government began the reassessment of the damage to houses in January. The CBS has begun sending teams of engineers and social mobilisers to 11 most affected districts.

By the end of the reassessment, expected to be in April, households will have been asked in detail about the houses damaged in the earthquake, about the members in the families, and about deaths and injuries caused by the earthquake, among others.

Based on this reassessment, the NRA will publish a list of beneficiaries for the reconstruction support. The earthquake victim ID cards distributed immediately after the earthquake will not be the sole basis for the distribution of the grant.

It has not been decided whether the families who received the ID cards but are not in the list of the beneficiaries will have to return the relief money they received before.

Rudra Suwal

Deputy Director General
Central Bureau of Statistics
9841232773

RUMOURS

GORKHA BAZAAR, GORKHA

"They say the families of those who died in the earthquake will receive special reservations in civil service jobs and other government provided opportunities."



CHANDENI, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"Is it true that the families of those who died because of the cold will get the same amount of compensation as did the families of those who died in the earthquake?"

FACTS

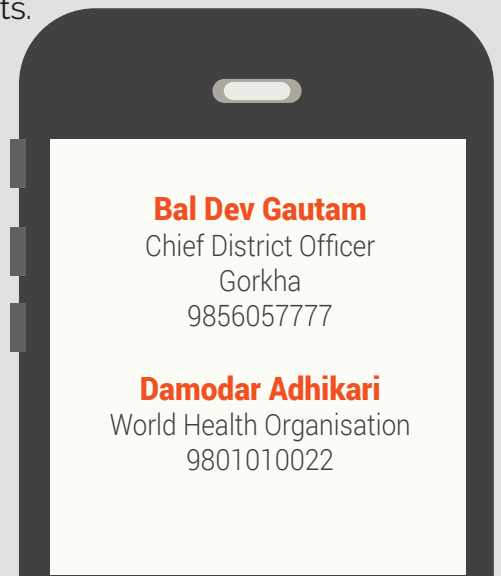
The government will not provide special reservations in civil service jobs and other opportunities to the families of those who died in the earthquake.

Under its reconstruction and recovery programmes, however, the government, in coordination with partner organisations, plans to provide skill development training to people in earthquake-affected districts.

Non-governmental entities such as private schools are providing scholarships to children in affected districts but on their own discretion.

The government is not providing compensation to the families of those who died because of the cold. Unlike what media reports said, people did not die just because of the cold.

An investigation into the deaths carried out by the government and the World Health Organisation found out that nearly all the deaths reportedly caused by the cold had other underlying reasons, such as kidney failure, heart problems and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.



Bal Dev Gautam

Chief District Officer
Gorkha
9856057777

Damodar Adhikari

World Health Organisation
9801010022

The rumours and issues presented here were collected by frontline workers from partner organisations and #quakehelpdesk volunteers based on their face-to-face conversation and community hearings with around 560 people in 7 districts between 27 January – 3 February. The selection was done on the basis of prevalence and relevance. The information presented here is correct at the time of issue.

Open Mic Nepal presented by:

