

Alert

Nepal

Earthquake of 7.9 Shakes Kathmandu, Pokhara

Geneva, 25 April 2015

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

An earthquake measuring 7.9 on the Richter Scale struck west of the ancient Nepali capital of Kathmandu, Pokhara, on Saturday 25 April 2015, at 11:41am Nepal local time. It is the most powerful earthquake to hit the region in 81 years. The death toll from the quake has risen to more than 970 and is rising further, most of them in the Kathmandu Valley¹. The tremors were felt as far afield as Delhi and Dhaka. The tremors flattened houses, caused huge craters and cracks in roads in Kathmandu, and sent people running out of their offices and homes. Massive damage to property and infrastructure has been reported. Casualties have also been reported in neighbouring countries.

There is little information coming from the outlying areas of this mountainous country and helicopters are circling overhead to visually assess the damage. The government of Nepal has appealed to the international community for emergency assistance as the scale of the disaster is beyond the capacities of the national authorities. The devastation is not only confined to some areas of Nepal, almost the entire country has been affected.²

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

This is an earthquake of massive proportions affecting a city and region that is vulnerable and in need of external assistance to cope with the huge emergency response to address immediate needs. Taking into account the severity of the quake, the damage, the level of capacity of the communities and the Nepalese government, assistance from the ACT Alliance is needed to help in saving lives and avert a deterioration of the conditions for the affected communities.

3. National and international response

Medical treatment is mainly being provided by the state hospital in Kathmandu. However, the hospital is overwhelmed by the number of patients seeking treatment, and many are being treated at dispensaries. The government has requested that only the most severely injured seek treatment at the hospital as capacity is limited.

1 <http://www.trust.org/item/20150425103812-2gavk/?source=fiHeadLinkStory>

2 <http://www.trust.org/item/20150425074036-7ov3h/?source=fiHeadlineStory>

The Nepal government is deploying helicopters to rescue affected people in Kathmandu valley. It is also collecting information on impact and damage including the number of people affected and in need of emergency assistance. The government called for meetings among the relevant institutions, with UN agencies, I/NGOs to conduct rapid needs assessments. The government has also deployed a large number of search and rescue teams to rescue the victims trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal has contacted all ACT Forum members in Nepal and the Forum will meet tomorrow (Sunday 26 April) at 10am local time to initiate a joint rapid assessment and emergency response plan.

4. ACT Alliance response

The ACT Alliance - LWF Regional Emergency Response Hub is based in Kathmandu Nepal and has been activated and will provide a location for further consultation and immediate response in line with the established contingency plans. LWF and ACT Alliance members on the ground will continue to coordinate with relevant government institutions, UN agencies, I/NGOs.

It is expected that more concrete information on the scale of the disaster, number of people affected and the immediate needs will be available tomorrow (Sunday 26 April).

5. Planned activities

A more detailed situation report will be developed and shared with all relevant actors and ACT Secretariat on Sunday 26 April. Nepal ACT Forum will develop a Preliminary Appeal shortly, detailing the sectors and geographical areas of the ACT response.

According to a number of information sources, the current major needs are search and rescue teams, sniffer dogs, food, water, blankets, clothes, medical supplies, shelter and psycho-social support.

6. Constraints

Access to information is limited, due to the destruction of communications channels. Humanitarian staff and officials are also affected.

Further information can be obtained from:

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Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel (Line.Hempel@actalliance.org).

For further information please contact:

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