Highlights:

• Jajarkot District in western Nepal was struck by a 6.4 magnitude earthquake on 3 November 2023, resulting in the loss of 154 lives (84 females, 70 males), including 81 children (37 girls, 44 boys), and injuring another 366 individuals. As we enter the harsh winter season, assistance for the affected families becomes urgent.

• Out of approximately 250,000 people (including 80,000 children) who were affected by the earthquake, UNICEF estimates that around 200,000 (including 68,000 children) still require humanitarian assistance.

• Approximately 150,000 affected people (including 51,000 children) are in critical need of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services.

• The earthquake caused significant damage to educational infrastructure, impacting 898 school buildings (294 fully damaged, 604 partially damaged), along with 418 partially damaged school toilets. This is expected to disrupt the learning of around 134,000 school-aged children (49 per cent girls), posing serious risk to their access to education.

• Over 25,000 people (including 8,500 children) need psychosocial support, while approximately 10,000 require awareness and sensitization on prevention and response to gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE), including essential information on referral and response mechanisms.

• A comprehensive immunization effort aims to reach 120,731 children (aged 6 months to 15 years) in the two most-affected districts with Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccines.

• Relief efforts have so far reached 39,900 people (including 13,560 children) from 7,992 households with critical supplies including non-food items such as tarpaulins and blankets, hygiene kits, plastic buckets and water purifying solution. This represents only about 19 per cent of the needs for children and women highlighting the urgency to secure additional funds and resources to ensure a timely and adequate response.

• A total of 140 temporary learning centers (TLCs) have been established where multi-grade teaching has started, bringing around 9,800 children back to school post-earthquake.

1 National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) (23 November 2023)
2 District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs) Jajarkot and Rukum West.
3 UNRCO Nepal Western Nepal Earthquake 2023 Situation Report No. #3 (16 Nov 2023)
4 Ministry of Social Development, Karnali data dated 22 Nov 2023. (school data of 2 most affected district (Jajarkot, Rukum West and its highly affected municipalities).
• Twelve child-friendly spaces (CFS) have been established to provide safe places for children to recover from the trauma of the disaster. 571 children are currently enrolled in the 12 CFS.
• Five medical tents have been set up in select locations to ensure continuity of essential health services amidst the crisis. The tents have helped to restore maternal and newborn services in three municipalities.
• Regular multi-sectoral humanitarian coordination meetings are taking place at federal, provincial and district levels under government leadership to ensure a cohesive and efficient humanitarian response and alignment with the efforts of UN agencies and partners.
• UNICEF has launched an appeal for US$15.7 million to address the pressing humanitarian needs in Nepal.

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs
On 3 November, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake with its epicentre in Jajarkot District claimed the lives of 154 people (84 females, 70 males), including 81 children (37 girls, 44 boys), and left 366 others injured. The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) estimates that around 250,000 people (including 80,000 children) have been affected by this earthquake.

Apart from the tragic human casualties, the repercussions of the earthquake also encompassed extensive damage to private properties and disruption of essential services. Around 200,000 people (including 68,000 children) urgently require assistance, with over 150,000 people (including 51,000 children) specifically in need of WASH services. The education sector has also suffered severe impact, with around 134,000 school-aged children needing education support to ensure learning continuity, partly due to the extensive damage inflicted on 898 school buildings (294 fully damaged, 604 partially damaged). According to NEOC/Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) reports, more than 62,000 houses were damaged in the 13 affected districts (26,557 fully damaged, 35,455 partially damaged) in addition to 50 government and public buildings that were impacted (16 fully damaged, 34 partially damaged).

Over the three weeks since the earthquake, the government-led search and rescue operations have now concluded, shifting the focus of response efforts towards recovery and urgent needs. These include winterized shelter, education and WASH necessities, while affected households await government grants for construction of temporary housing, pending detailed verification.

Findings of the initial rapid assessment, involving the government, clusters and partners, underscore a pressing ongoing need for humanitarian support, specifically for the well-being of children and women. Adequate funding is essential for a swift response and the resumption of critical social services, including WASH, health, nutrition, education and child protection, in addition to ensuring accountability to affected populations (AAP). With search and rescue operations having ended, priority interventions now focus on provision of winterization support, resumption of learning in schools, ensuring continuous access to essential services including healthcare, prevention of disease outbreaks, provision of critical WASH services, and the protection of children.

As the harsh winter season approaches and temperatures drop, addressing the unmet needs of impacted communities – especially among those in temporary shelter – becomes critical. Winter/cold-related ailments have already started to significantly affect the lives of those in temporary shelters post-earthquake, resulting in over 10 deaths, as per media reports. This necessitates urgent coordination for winterization support and swift disbursement of government grants to families to construct temporary housing.

Given that around half of casualties and injured in this earthquake have been children, and considering the huge disruption wrought by the disaster in family lives, particularly that of children in the affected districts, child protection is also a critical issue at this juncture. The most vulnerable children are at risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and psychological distress, emphasizing the need for immediate psychosocial support.

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5 UNRCO Nepal-Western Nepal Earthquake 2023 Situation Report No. #3 (16 Nov 2023)
6 Ministry of Social Development, Karnali data dated 22 Nov 2023. (Data of 2 most affected district (Jajarkot, Rukum West and its highly affected municipalities).
7 National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) Update (23 November 2023)
8 https://kathmandupost.com/karnali-province/2023/11/20/cold-related ailments have claimed several lives in jajarkot after the-november-3-earthquake#
Summary of Programme Response

The Government of Nepal (GoN), at all three tiers (federal, provincial and local), continues to lead response and coordination efforts together with relevant stakeholders including UN agencies, relevant ministries (cluster leads) and co-leads including UNICEF, local non-governmental organization (NGOs), and international humanitarian organizations, among others. Meanwhile, reconstruction efforts have begun, with the Government approving cash support for construction of transitional shelter and committing to provide NPR 50,000 (approx. US$375) each to families whose homes were completely damaged9. Accordingly, on 22 November, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) disbursed a grant worth NPR 1 billion (approx. US$7.5 million) to two severely affected districts. This fund is earmarked for distribution to families following a standard verification process, However, challenges persist, primarily in the verification of local-level data and identification of the most affected families, hence the funds have not yet reached the beneficiaries.

UNICEF has reached over 39,900 people (including 13,560 children) from 7,992 households with critical supplies including tarpaulins and blankets as immediate relief in the most affected districts. Yet, this number represents only a fraction of the overall needs – about 19 per cent of the needs for children and women highlighting the urgency to secure additional funds and resources to ensure a timely and adequate response.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Ensuring access to safe water and sanitation is a priority for preventing outbreaks of waterborne disease, especially considering the fragile and unreliable state of many pre-existing water supply systems in the earthquake-affected areas. The earthquake damaged many reservoirs and intake structures, resulting in leaks and cracks, and compromising the sufficiency of the water supply. This is anticipated to worsen in the coming months as water sources dry up, leading to significant WASH and health concerns. Although the superstructures of household toilets have collapsed, most of the pits remain usable for temporary toilets. UNICEF is targeting 150,000 people (including 51,000 children) in need with critical WASH interventions, and have achieved key milestones including:

- Have reached over 33,000 people (including 11,300 children) from 6,674 households with critical WASH supplies in the most affected communities of Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts. These supplies include 6,674 hygiene kits, 6,954 buckets with mugs including water purifying tablet/solution to affected families of Nalgad, Bheri and Barekot Municipalities of Jajarkot District, and Sani Bheri, Aathbiskot and Chaurjahari Municipalities of Rukum West District. Further assessments of water system damages are ongoing.
- Installed 266 temporary toilets and repaired/reinstated 172 household toilets in damaged houses in various locations of Jajarkot and Rukum West, benefiting over 2,000 households (around 10,000 people including 3,400 children). In addition, 28 temporary toilets have been installed in TLCs in schools.
- Repair of pipelines of four water supply systems benefitting around 2,000 people (estimated 600 children) in Nalgad Municipality of Jajarkot District.

Nutrition

Prior to the earthquake, there were already elevated levels of malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies such as anaemia in Karnali Province, with high rates of stunting and wasting. With the disruption to essential services such as health and WASH due to the earthquake, the nutrition situation is likely to deteriorate as a result, particularly for children and women, including pregnant women. UNICEF estimates that 1,280 children under the age of five will need treatment for SAM, with 32,426 children needing Vitamin A supplementation and multiple micronutrient powder (MNP). In addition, 6,000 pregnant women will require iron and folic acid (IFA) tablets. UNICEF and partners have initiated the following responses:

- 13 SAM cases identified and admitted in the Outpatient Therapeutic Center (OTC) among 2,500 children screened, Vitamin A provision to 2,100 children and MNP distribution to 2,500 children.

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9 DRRM Executive Committee meeting decision (12 Nov) https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/ddrm-executive-committee-to-provide-rs-50-000-to-each-quake-hit-family/
• Provision of IFA supplements to 1,250 pregnant women, and infant and young child feeding counselling for 1,000 caretakers (including mothers) with assistance from Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) and health workers.

• Continued facilitation of transportation of nutrition commodities from the Province Health Logistics Management Centre to District Health Service Office and thereon to the respective health facilities at local levels.

Protection

The recent earthquake has disrupted normal family routines, creating an environment that heightens the risk of various child protection issues, including gender-based violence (GBV) and psychological distress, particularly among the most vulnerable. In the affected areas, the pre-existing pervasive conditions of GBV further amplify these risks. Adding to the challenges, communities are grappling with heightened levels of anxiety and fear, often linked to the unpredictability of aftershocks. Witnessing the loss of loved ones and the destruction of homes has triggered significant emotional distress, leading to disrupted sleep patterns and the onset of nightmares and flashbacks.

The UNICEF, along with other cluster partners, is actively providing essential support to these children. Key milestones include:

• Establishment of 12 child-friendly spaces (CFS) in Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts, benefiting 571 children (305 girls, 266 boys), with plans for five more CFS to accommodate additional children. These CFS comprise a safe and stimulating environment for children, offering psychosocial support, play opportunities and enabling parents to focus on other aspects of rebuilding their lives. They also function as hubs for other multi-sectoral services, including health, WASH and education.

• Delivery of Psychological First Aid (PFA) to 2,249 affected people (858 females, 487 males, 457 girls, and 447 boys) in communities, schools and CFS. PFA has proven instrumental in offering immediate support, stabilizing emotions and connecting people to basic services. Additionally, one-on-one psychosocial counselling has been provided to 73 people through trained psychosocial counsellors, aiding them in understanding their feelings, navigating challenges and developing coping strategies tailored to their specific needs.

• Ongoing collection of data through the vulnerability assessment tool in Jajarkot District, with preliminary analyses already reveals that a high percentage of children face diverse vulnerabilities. Out of the total households assessed, 29 per cent require specialized protection services, with 61 per cent identifying the need for GBV services, 84 per cent for child protection services, 81 per cent for legal services, 72 per cent for mental health and psychosocial support services, and 87 per cent for safe houses. The protection cluster, including UNICEF, is actively providing necessary support or referring these vulnerable children/households to appropriate services.

Education

As per the latest data from provincial assessments, the earthquake significantly impacted 898 school buildings10 (294 fully damaged, 604 partially damaged) encompassing 2,25411 classrooms in affected municipalities, as well as causing damage to 418 school toilets. This has affected the learning of over 134,000 school-aged children (49 per cent girls), with immediate education assistance required for 65,867 children,12 including the need of 13,000 set of textbooks. UNICEF’s response includes:

• Establishment of 211 TLCs in 102 schools to support around 16,500 children, a process that requires essential materials like tarpaulins, P-film and plastic sheets. So far, 140 TLCs have been established in Aathbiskot Municipality of Rukum West District where multi-grade, multi-level teaching has started, bringing back around 9,800 children to school post-earthquake. 28 temporary toilets have also been set up at these TLCs in coordination with WASH teams.

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10 Ministry of Social Development (MoSD, Karnali data dated 22 Nov 2023.
11 MoSD Karnali data (22 Nov 2023). Latest data from detailed assessment shows increased damaged number of classrooms and toilets
12 MoSD data dated 22 Nov 2023 (Data of 2 most severely affected district (Jajarkot, Rukum West and its highly affected 13 municipalities only).
• Distribution of 50 early childhood development (ECD) kits, 59 school kits, 1,017 student kits (junior), 352 student kits (senior) and 290 sets of self-learning materials (ECD to grade 3) to facilitate immediate learning in Rukum West, benefiting over 2,600 children.
• Continued collaboration with the Government and partners, including extending technical support for post-earthquake learning, damage and need assessments of affected schools in other areas as well. Collaboration is also ongoing with development partners to address gaps in resource mobilization.
• Supporting the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) in mobilizing a technical team to conduct detailed damage assessments of school buildings.

Health
The earthquake damaged 47 health facilities, with 13 facilities rendered non-functional. This has led to a significant disruption of critical health services such as maternal and newborn care. Children under 18 years comprised more than half of total deaths by the earthquake, and it is estimated that a majority of the injured are also children. UNICEF estimates that close to 7,000 pregnant women will require access to antenatal care services and institutional delivery. Support will also be provided to the Government of Nepal to implement a Measles Rubella vaccination campaign targeting over 120,000 children (aged 6 months to 15 years) in the most affected districts to prevent outbreaks of measles.

As the harsh winter season approaches, the vulnerability of children and adolescents to respiratory infections, waterborne diseases and outbreaks increases, necessitating essential healthcare services, as well as mental health and psychosocial support. Media reports are already indicating a rise in cold-related ailments and incidents post-earthquake.

UNICEF is addressing these challenges through:

• Provision of 400 newborn incentive kits (including warm clothes for newborns and post-partum mothers): 300 to the Nalgad Municipality health centre in Jajarkot District; and 50 each to Sani Bheri Rural Municipality and Aathbiskot Municipality in Rukum West.
• Provision of 600 health kits (comprising masks, hand sanitizers and thermometers) to health centres in Nalgad, Kushe and Barekot Municipalities.
• Setting up of five medical tents in Nalgad and Barekot Municipalities of Jajarkot District, and Aathbiskot Municipality of Rukum West. The medical tents have facilitated the restoration of maternal and newborn services, with four deliveries to date, and around 30 patients in Barekot and over 50 patients in Nalgad being attended to on a daily basis.
• Provision of 10,000 pieces of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on prevention of waterborne diseases and pneumonia during earthquakes, handed over to the Provincial Health Directorate (PHD) Surkhet for further dissemination in Jajarkot and Rukum West Districts for public awareness. An additional 40,000 IEC materials focused on preventive measures for diarrhoea and influenza, as well as handwashing and mental health, are being prepared. These will be utilized as part of a public health awareness campaign in coordination with the PHD and the Karnali Academy of Health Sciences.
• Preparing to dispatch two sets of birthing centre equipment and three radiant warmers to fully damaged birthing centres for continued maternal and newborn healthcare services, in coordination with the PHD.
• Supporting the Department of Health Services, Family Welfare Division, in planning an immunization campaign aimed at reaching an estimated 120,731 children (aged 6 months to 15 years) with the Measles Rubella (MR) vaccines; and an estimated 282,000 people (above one year of age) with the oral cholera vaccine (OCV) in the coming months. Additionally, around 750,000 people (aged 17 to 45 years) in selected earthquake-affected districts – including Jajarkot and Rukum West – will be targeted under the Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) immunization campaign.
• Provision of mental health and psychosocial support, in coordination with partners and through health facilities, to reach an estimated 80,000 children, adolescents and caregivers in affected areas.

13 https://kathmandupost.com/karnali-province/2023/11/22/cold-related-ailments-have-claimed-several-lives-in-jajarkot-after-the-november-3-earthquake -
14 Planned target of around 8 districts with high potential for outbreaks (Jajarkot, Rukum West, Rukum East, Salyan, Darcha, Jumla, Kalkot), as well as Surkhet, the provincial HOs).
Social Protection

The Government has prioritized social protection services, including multi-purpose cash (MPC), for early recovery. The Cash Coordination Group (CCG) conducted rapid market assessment, with the report indicating the market’s full functionality and affirming the applicability of MPC through the Government’s existing social protection system. UNICEF is also conducting a household survey to gain deeper insights into needs and assess to the market.

Others: Social and Behaviour Change (SBC), Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

UNICEF is targeting around 150,000 people across affected areas with RCCE cross-sectoral programmes to engage the affected communities and collecting face-to-face and remote community feedback on the ongoing response. Lifesaving and SBC messages have been disseminated to raise awareness on recovery and contribute to building resilience to future crises. The response includes:

- Leveraging UNICEF-ROSA’s ‘I-Hear-U’ platform to conduct the first social listening analysis (supported by artificial and human intelligence) of over 30,000 digital and social media comments with a focus on children, humanitarian needs and perceptions of international organizations.
- Launch of the first one-stop earthquake response site to facilitate the update and sharing of life-saving sectoral communication packages and accountability tools with partners, while tracking the demand for resources such as documents, tools and multimedia.
- Mobilization of 18 volunteers from a partner civil society organization to collect community feedback on ongoing response to amplify the implementation of SBC+ interventions in Nalgad Municipality of Jajarkot and Aathamiskot Municipality of Rukum West.
- Using existing platforms such as the Child and Family Tracker (CFT) and end-user monitoring (EUM) to complement assessment and feedback mechanisms on ongoing response, such as evaluating access to services by vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and special needs.
- Reaching over 4,200 people among the affected populations with face-to-face RCCE messages, primarily focused on sanitation and hygiene, including water purification, to prevent possible disease outbreaks.

Humanitarian Coordination

UNICEF teams remain on the ground, collaborating closely with local and provincial government and district authorities, including the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMCs) and District Administration Offices (DAOs) and partners. UNICEF is also collaborating with the Karnali Provincial Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law (MoIAL), Provincial Emergency Operation Centres (PEOC), Provincial Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOC), provincial clusters and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS). Coordination is also ongoing at the federal level with leadership from MoHA and coordination from NDRRMA.

At the UN level, within the established humanitarian coordination framework, UNICEF continues to provide cluster coordination and leadership in its designated Areas of Responsibility (AoRs), WASH, nutrition, education (with Save the Children) and protection (with UNFPA). Additionally, UNICEF supports the RCCE working group and the health cluster. Regular inter-agency coordination meetings are conducted under the guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) to ensure a cohesive and principled humanitarian response, with the aim of delivering life-saving interventions and restoring essential services to affected populations, particularly women and children. Internally, weekly coordination meetings are being conducted at the UNICEF Country Office and field office levels to facilitate effective planning and response, including communications, deployment of human resources and logistical arrangements.

UNICEF’s response strategy is underpinned by the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in Humanitarian Action and is aligned with and complimentary to the Government’s efforts. Given the multi-sectoral nature of the crisis and its impact, UNICEF will continue to provide coordination and leadership across its AoR and support the Government and partner organizations in delivering timely humanitarian and life-saving interventions to the most affected and vulnerable groups, including women and children. This includes
reaching out to the donor community for fundraising and resource mobilization as the urgent needs of children and women span across sectors.

**Media, communication and visibility:**
- Social media posts on UNICEF Nepal's [Facebook](https://facebook.com) | [Instagram](https://instagram.com) | [Twitter](https://twitter.com)
- Multimedia assets: [https://weshare.unicef.org/Folder/2AM408L4GH95](https://weshare.unicef.org/Folder/2AM408L4GH95)
- [Humanitarian situation reports](https://www.unicef.org) landing site created and regularly updated
- **Media statement** released
- **Press release** issued
- UNICEF-mentioned coverage in [UN News](https://unnews.un.org) | [BBC News](https://www.bbc.com) | [NHK](https://nhk.or.jp) | [ANI News](https://www.ani.in) | [ABP Live](https://abplive.com) | [Saudi Gazette](https://www.saudigazette.com) | [TRT World](https://www.trtworld.com) | [Manila Times](https://www.maniatimes.com) | [Yahoo News](https://news.yahoo.com) | [Paradise News](https://www.paradisenews.com) | [Dev Discourse](https://devdiscourse.in) | [EFE](https://efe.europa.eu) | [Mirage News](https://www.miragenews.com) | [ReliefWeb](https://reliefweb.int) | [La Nacion](https://nacion.com) | [Anadolu Agency](https://www.anadoluagency.com) | [UN News #2](https://unnews.org) | [EFE #2](https://efe.europa.eu) | [NPR](https://www.npr.org) | [New Nation](https://www.newnation.in) | [NHK #2](https://nhk.or.jp) | [Xinhua](https://www.xinhuanet.com) | [Spotlight](https://www.niu.edu) | [Foreign Affairs](https://www.foreignaffairs.com) | [El Pais](https://elpais.com)
- Media interviews with NHK Delhi and LBC News, London.

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