

Welcome to the twenty-ninth 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

PAANCHKHAL, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"In some cases, four members of the same household received Rs 15,000 each. In others, families who lived separately but hadn't officially divided property, didn't receive the money."



CHAUTARA, SINDHUPALCHOK

"They say if we don't have landownership certificates, the government won't give us the grant and loan."

SANGACHOK, SINDHUPALCHOK

"Here, father and sons, and brothers live separately, but they haven't divided up the land among themselves. They say we need landownership documents to get the grant of Rs 200,000."

ANSWERS

The housing reconstruction grant is aimed at rebuilding houses that were damaged in the earthquake. So, multiple households living in the same house will not receive reconstruction grant; only the house owner will.

During the application for the grant to build a house, house owners will need to present landownership documents to prove that the land they intend to build on belongs to them.

New landownership documents acquired through deeds transfer after the earthquake will not be accepted for the reconstruction grant.

There has been some confusion around the definition of a household since the relief phase. The District Disaster Relief Committees (DDRCs) did not apply a uniform definition of household while distributing the ID cards and immediate relief. In some cases, families with different kitchens in the same house were considered different households. In others, only those legally separated with landownership documents were considered different households.

Families that were living separately on ancestral land but not legally separated with landownership documents can seek redress through an appeal committee that will be located in every district if they are not included in the beneficiary list.

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CONCERNS

PAANCHKHAL, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"They said we would get Rs 10,000 for winter. Looks like we might get it after the winter is over. It seems that the government tried to make do with Rs 15,000."

PAANCHKHAL, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"They said we would get Rs 10,000 to buy warm clothes. Now, it looks like we will get it after winter."



RAYALE, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"The government only talks about helping the earthquake affected. We don't know when we will get Rs 10,000 in winter support. They say people in other places have already received the amount. Why is there a delay here?"

RAYALE, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"So, Rs 10,000 that was meant to be distributed in winter might not be here even when summer arrives?"

ANSWERS

Earthquake-affected households in five Village Development Committees (VDCs) and three municipalities in Kavrepalanchowk have not yet received Rs 10,000 for winter support.

The Kavre DDRC said that it ran out of money and has asked the Home Ministry for additional funds. According to the Home Ministry, the first tranche of money released turned out to be inadequate because it received two rounds of data on beneficiaries. The second list provided the names of the beneficiaries that were left out in the first.

After verifying the second list of beneficiaries, the Home Ministry wrote to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), asking it to authorise the release of additional funds. The PMO says that it has written to the Finance Ministry. As soon as the Finance Ministry releases the funds, the DDRC in Kavrepalanchowk will disburse them.

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CONCERNS

GORKHA BAZAAR, GORKHA

"They say that the reconstruction authority will distribute white cards to genuine victims."

PHULASI, RAMECHHAP

"We've heard that the government is reassessing the damage because there were some fake earthquake victims. Looks like the talk of distributing Rs 200,000 and rebuilding houses is dead."

PHULASI, RAMECHHAP

"They say the government is sending 500 technicians to every village."

BHIMESHWOR, DOLAKHA

"The government has mobilised the Central Bureau of Statistics to survey the damage. I am now hopeful that a nice house will be built soon."

BIGUTAR, OKHALDHUNGA

"They say technicians are coming over to our houses. Do we need to pay them?"

ANSWERS

The government mobilised the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) to conduct a detailed survey of the damage sustained in the earthquake. The reassessment is done to ensure that the genuine victims of the earthquake receive reconstruction support.

The CBS started the survey in January and expects to finish it by the end of April. Currently, technical teams of engineers and social mobilisers are assessing the damage in Dolakha.

The data agency is preparing to send around 550 technicians in the coming days to 10 other most affected districts, excluding Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur.

Households will not have to pay the technical team that assesses their house.

The National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) will use the data provided by the CBS after the reassessment and publish a list of beneficiaries for the reconstruction grant. It will not use existing earthquake victim ID cards as the sole basis for distribution. The NRA has not yet determined whether a new card will be issued.

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RUMOUR

CHAUTARA, SINDHUPALCHOK

"They say that if the government does not distribute the money received from the foreigners to the earthquake affected within a month, the money will be returned to the donors. When will the government distribute this money?"



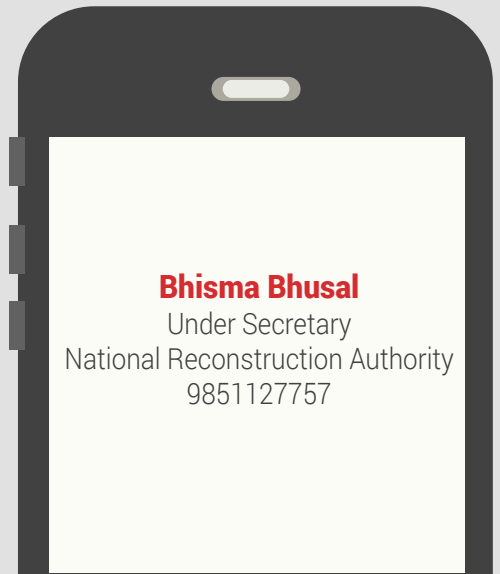
FACTS

According to the NRA, the government has signed agreements for over USD 855 million in loans and grants with various countries and multilateral donors for reconstruction.

The total amount pledged by donors for post-earthquake reconstruction is around USD 4.1 billion.

Agreements have been signed with China, Japan, Germany, International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

The NRA said that none of the donors have threatened to revoke the agreement or withdraw their support if the Nepal government does not distribute the money to the earthquake affected within a month.



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 238 people in 8 districts between 20 - 28 January. 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:

