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Information bulletin Himalayan Earthquake

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. The Indian Red Cross Society and Nepal Red Cross Society will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>](#)



A house in Khandbari, Sankhuwasava district, Nepal, was destroyed by the 18 September earthquake. Sixteen such houses have been fully damaged in the locality. **Photo:** Dipendra Shakya, local journalist.

The situation

An earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale struck the Himalaya region bordering north India and Nepal on 18 September 2011 at 6:10 pm Indian time, with the epicentre located 64km north-west of Gangtok, capital of Sikkim, 120km from Shiliguri in the Indian state of West Bengal, 133km from Namche Bazar in Nepal, and 40km from Yadong county in Tibet, China. Aftershocks measuring 6.1 and 5.3 on the Richter scale were also felt around Sikkim 20 minutes after the earthquake. The earthquake caused major damages in the region. As of 20 September, a total of 99 deaths have been reported, with a breakdown as follows:

Country	Death toll
India	83
Nepal	8
China	7
Bhutan	1
Total	99

The remoteness of the affected regions, combined with the effects of heavy rainfall and landslides, has posed many challenges in carrying out field assessments to gauge the humanitarian needs. Detailed

information on the damage to infrastructure, number of people injured, displaced and affected will be made clearer as assessment are completed in these areas.

India

The death toll of the earthquake in India has reached 83, leaving 200 people injured. Army personnel have battled torrential rain, mist and landslides that have cut off affected areas and stalled relief and rescue work. Nine helicopters were mobilised and 10 medical units were airlifted to Chung-thang in North Sikkim. The biggest challenge now is to get improved access to supply food to needy people. The road beyond Mangan is seriously damaged and it will take some time to restore.

As the road links open up, the enormity of the damage will emerge. Besides the loss to human lives, over 15,000 houses were razed to the ground and more than 100,000 were partially damaged.

Nepal

Current reports from Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) district chapters reveal that there are eight dead and 89 injured and over 12,000 people affected across 17 districts. Structural damage to nearly 2,000 houses have left over 1,213 families displaced (more than 7,278 people), who are frightened to return to their damaged homes. It is expected that the true scale of damage and numbers of displaced will increase in the coming days as more isolated areas are reached. Exacerbating the situation has been monsoonal rains and some reports of landslides in the region which are affecting access.

The Government of Nepal's National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) has been activated and the District Disaster Relief Committees (DDRC) are convening meetings in affected district headquarters to ensure effective and coordinated response activities. The NRCS district chapters are represented in the DDRCs and will feed back information they have gathered as well as identify areas where there may be gaps in assistance needed.

China

The earthquake affected 13 counties in Shigatse city of Tibet, China. Seven people were killed and 37 were injured. A total of 1,000 houses are reported to have collapsed during the earthquake. The Chinese government has activated the level-four contingency plan to respond to this earthquake. Relief materials were distributed to disaster affected areas and a government working group was sent to assess the situation and carry out relief activities.

Bhutan

According to a report from the Bhutan Department of Disaster Management, the earthquake has caused one death, injured 16, and damaged about 4,000 houses. Further assessment is underway especially in remote and scattered villages. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) South Asia regional office is in close contact with the Department of Disaster Management and will continue to monitor outstanding needs of the affected population.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

India

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) has been finalizing plans for immediate assistance for up to 5,000 beneficiaries. Emergency items such as tarpaulins, woollen blankets, and shelter kits are planned to be distributed, together with the provision of first-aid services administered to the injured.

IRCS has deployed a team of national disaster response team (NDRT) and national disaster water and sanitation response team (NDWRT) to reinforce the capacities of the state branch in Sikkim to perform detailed needs assessment, which will facilitate the development of a more detailed Red Cross response plan.

IRCS is also planning to airlift the following relief supplies to the affected region:

Sr. No.	Items	Quantities
1	Kitchen Sets	500
2	Stoves	200
3	Tarpaulin	500
4	Woolen blanket	500
5	Water purification units (NOMAD)	2

Nepal

CHF 172,417 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in providing immediate assistance to some 1,500 families and continue assessments in remote areas. Relief materials including blankets, tarpaulins, cooking sets, water buckets, and clothing were immediately dispatched from the Red Cross warehouses across the country included in the regions affected.

NRCS has delivered from its eastern regional warehouse 200 sets of non-food relief items (NFRI) and 100 pieces of tarpaulin to Illam, 100 NFRI sets to Pancthar and 200 NFRI sets to Taplejung, which have already reached a total of 81 displaced families across several districts.

The NRCS district disaster response teams (DDRT) were immediately engaged in search and rescue efforts and addressing the first aid needs of those affected. The same district chapters are now carrying out rapid assessments and will be further supported by NRCS headquarters staff and NRCS NDRT members to complete these. This will result in figures and data to assist the DDRC in providing a coordinated response mechanism and will be used to inform their own planning and response needs.

China

The headquarters of the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) immediately allocated RMB 200,000 (CHF 28,037) to the Tibet Red Cross Branch for the purchase of food, clothing, quilts and other essential materials urgently needed by earthquake survivors.

The Tibet Red Cross branch of RCSC had distributed quilts, clothing and tents worth RMB 100,000 (CHF 14,017) to Yadong county, the area in Tibet worst hit by this earthquake. A Red Cross working group has also arrived there to assess the disaster situation and carry out relief activities.

IFRC offices in the affected countries, with support from the regional offices of South Asia and East Asia, as well as the Asia Pacific Zone office in Kuala Lumpur, will continue to monitor the disaster situation and scale up the IFRC response where required.

Unearmarked funds to repay DREF utilized in Nepal for emergency assistance are encouraged.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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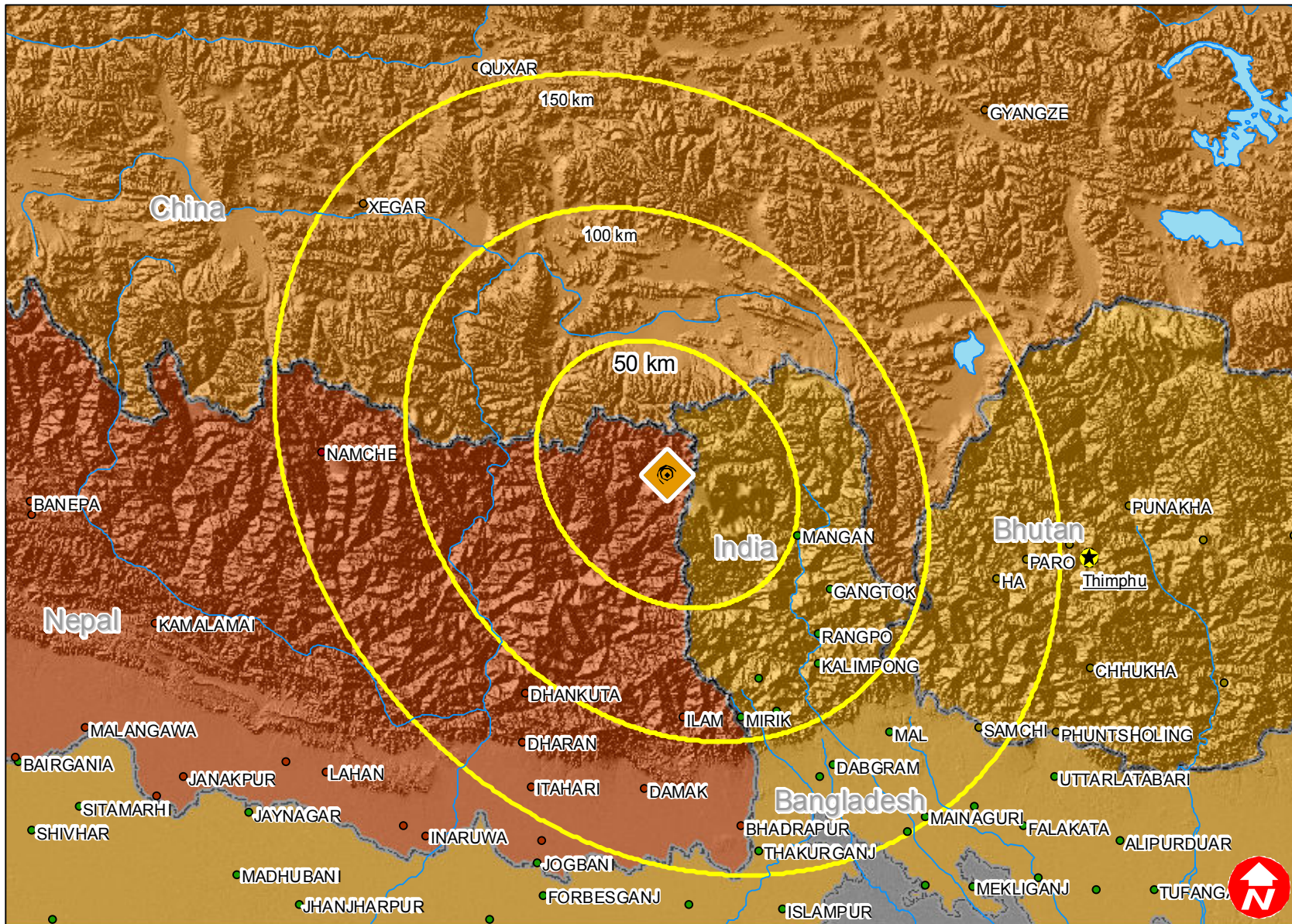








The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
 2. Enable healthy and safe living.
 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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Bhutan, China, India, Nepal: Earthquake



-  6.9 Earthquake
-  Distances
- Affected countries**
-  Bhutan
-  India
-  China
-  Nepal

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, DEVINFO, GRUMP, International Federation, USGS - IB210911.mxd