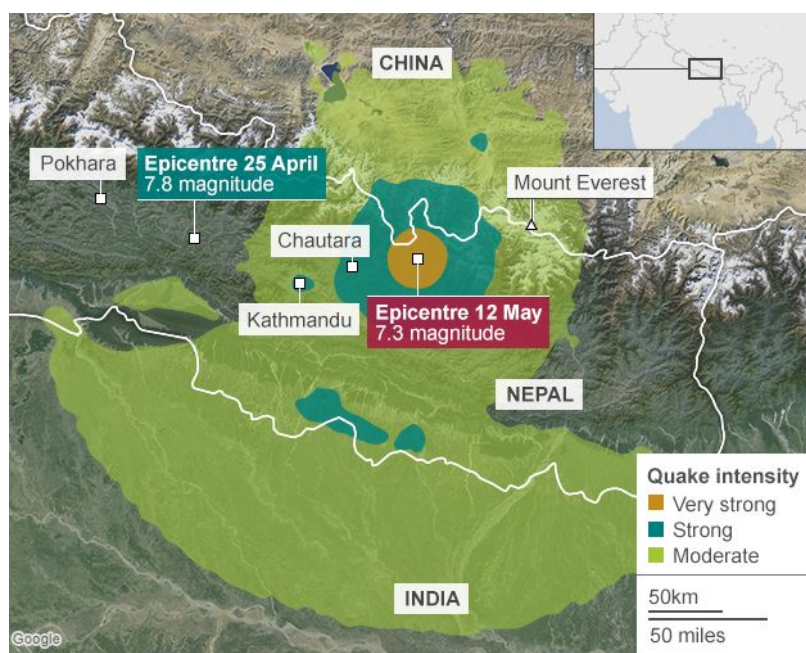


## Church agencies rush to respond as second earthquake hits devastated Nepal



Church agencies have warned that the 7.3 magnitude earthquake that hit Nepal on Tuesday could have a devastating impact on the crippled country.

At least 37 people were killed in the earthquake – the second major quake a fortnight – this morning (13:00 local time) and at least 1,000 people were injured.

It struck almost 50 miles east of Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, close to Everest basecamp, as the country fights to recover from the devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake that killed more than 8,000 people two weeks ago.

Catherine Cowley, Protection Coordinator for the Catholic aid agency Cafod, said that the second disaster could have immense impact despite being weaker, because the country's buildings and infrastructure were already badly damaged.

Ms Cowley, who was in Bakrang in Gorkha District when the second quake struck, described watching a house that had barely survived the first disaster collapse completely.

“The biggest impact is fear. Everyone is desperately trying to contact their families to make sure they're safe. Everyone is scared that more buildings will collapse. When we started the car to leave the village, a woman screamed because she thought the engine noise was another aftershock. People are traumatised and panicking. Driving through the countryside you can see people gathered outside, scared to go indoors,” she said.

Christian Aid said its emergency workers were racing to reach victims of the new earthquake. Nick Guttman, head of Christian Aid's of humanitarian response work, said the ground appeared to be “rippling”.

“People were walking round the streets, not knowing what to do. I heard one woman ask ‘What is

happening to Nepal?’,” he added.

Cafod’s appeal had raised more than £1.12 million pounds by this morning. The joint appeal launched by the Disasters Emergencies Committee – a coalition of 13 aid agencies, of which Cafod is a part – had raised £50 million.

---

Liz Dodd- The Tablet