Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented in recent history and is spreading globally. Nepal currently witnessed its’ one of the major national festival (Dashain) in a different scenario than previous years. Most of the people celebrated the festival from their current residing places instead of visiting their native homes, following the government request. People are now more cautious as this pandemic reached the community level. Monsoon has just ended but the coming winter is predicted to be more vulnerable for COVID-19 patients in Nepal as per experts. RT-PCR test is being conducted rapidly from around 72 (43 government and 29 private) designated COVID-19 laboratories around the country.

NRCS with its 77 district chapters has been actively engaged in various WASH activities such as disinfecting, quarantine management, awareness raising activities, supporting personal protective equipment (PPE) to frontline workers, distribution of sanitizers, hygiene kits, soaps and information dissemination through IEC materials in coordination with local, provincial and national government of Nepal for COVID-19 preparedness and response. Along with COVID-19, NRCS has also involved in monsoon preparedness and response activities.

Monsoon Updates

Monsoon has recently stopped in Nepal resulting to minimal number of landslides but as a response program, NRCS is working regularly in affected districts since June 2020 to date. Altogether, 486 volunteers have been mobilized in 40 affected districts. In total, 63 Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) compiled reports have been received from affected districts.

Monsoon response activities has currently been more focused in 14 affected districts as per the gap areas identified by the detail assessment that was conducted in those districts. One of major response sector is WASH.

After the detail assessment, following needs came as most priority in WASH sector.

- Safe drinking water
- WASH kits
- Emergency Toilets and household latrine
- Hygiene and sanitation awareness
- Repair and reconstruction of water source and points

Recent Response on WASH:

WASH items have been dispatched to the affected districts, and response is ongoing. 30 squatting plates, 270 hygiene kits, 800 soap and 10,000 chlorine tabs were dispatched recently.

1,396 people have been reached through hygiene promotion activities like IEC material distribution, hand washing demonstration and orientation on the use of chlorine tablets on by district volunteers.

Statistical Situation:
Summary as of 12 November, 2020
WASH items distributed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hygiene kit</th>
<th>1,576</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency toilets set</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aqua tab</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap</td>
<td>4,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucket</td>
<td>1,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorine tab (Water purification)</td>
<td>21,050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Situation Overview (as of 13 November 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Nepal</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of confirmed cases</td>
<td>204,242</td>
<td>52,678,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of patients recovered</td>
<td>164,592</td>
<td>34,099,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of death</td>
<td>1,189</td>
<td>1,292,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people in isolation</td>
<td>38,461</td>
<td>14,579,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of countries affected</td>
<td>191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relentless work by NRCS**

**Business continuity plan**

Business continuity plan reflects the current status and possibility of business continuity of all projects running across different communities through Community Development Department. Besides, this is to analyze the potential critical risks and to identify relevant mitigation measures to be taken by Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) and respective Partner National Societies (PNS).

Taking into account of the COVID-19 situation, Nepal Government has imposed nationwide lockdown from 24th March 2020 which stopped almost all the implementation activities and field movement. Immediately after nationwide lockdown, series of consultation meeting within Red Cross management had begun on how to continue the project business and prepare for upcoming consequences along with identifying critical risks and possible mitigation measures that could be shared to respective stakeholders for joint effort. Two types of Business Continuity Plan (BCP), Project wise and Staff wise was initiated with clear explanation of current situation, possible mitigation measures and preparedness for future consequences as a joint effort from April to June 2020 and has currently been extended till December 2020.

BCP helped a lot to visualize the current COVID-19 risk, possible mitigation measures and preparedness for future consequences. It is not only helpful to realize for project continuation but also trigger for safer COVID-19 response as a humanitarian actor. BCP helped to think prior to all stakeholders if any changes encountered in Plan of Action (PoA) of any running projects.

**Marking Global Hand Washing Day**

15 October 2020

From the end of 2019 till date, the whole world is suffering from the pandemic and yet the entire world has put its effort to tackle with the pandemic as well as to find the vaccine to cure the disease. As the globe marked "Global Hand washing Day" on October 15th, Nepal had launched one-month long handwashing day celebration from 1st October to 31st October with an objective to highlight the importance of handwashing with soap. This year’s theme for Global Handwashing Day- hand Hygiene for All- is aligned with WHO and UNICEF’s Hand Hygiene for All Initiatives which is designed around three main topics:

**Responding to the immediate pandemic:**

In order to respond the immediate pandemic, NRCS has significantly increased the hygiene promotion activities. More than 154,479 people have been directly benefitted from WASH activities since the outbreak of the pandemic.

**Rebuilding infrastructure and services:**

The prevailing pandemic has made the people more concerned about their hand hygiene and has also made a positive impact in their lives by practicing frequent handwashing with soap. To promote handwashing with soap, NRCS has established hand washing stations in public as well as in institutional level so as to aware the community in adapting handwashing in all scenarios. The pandemic has also led NRCS in establishing contactless handwashing stations so as to avoid transmission of diseases through contact.

**Reimaging hand hygiene in society:**

Leaving no one behind and bringing communities to the forefront of any operations, NRCS is promoting hand hygiene through community engagement so as to meet the needs of the communities.

**Success Story**

**Surprised gift for Sandhya**

Sandhya from Shree Uchhangal Ramdev Kalwar Secondary School, Pokhariya Municipality ward no. 4 Parsa, was surprised while entering the school for admission in class 9 after lockdown. She recalled her grade 8 days when toilet was filthy and in poor condition without basic toilet amenities. This unhygienic toilet was the sole reason of absenteeism in school during her periods and other girls also have similar stories. She happily said that toilet was well maintained than before and there were child-friendly well managed water taps and hand washing station near school gate. She further said excitedly "I see an information board written on the wall, Nepal Red Cross Society in collaboration with UNICEF, and I understand the contributor of those changes.”

Previously, she was little hesitant about the usage of hand washing station but as soon as her teacher taught how to use contactless hand washing station she was clear about its benefit. Its extra feature of operating the tap by legs instead of hands minimizes the risk of contamination of COVID-19. She said surprisingly ‘I am aware of the NRCS’s support for community sanitation and awareness in our community, but I have seen the improvements in my school today. For me and my friends, this is a surprise gift’. She also said that the changes are very interesting, but she is worried about the continuity of those positive changes. We students and the school have to plan and prepare for them to be sustainable.
Hygiene kit distributed to community people (PC: NRCS, Bara)

Proper hand washing technique demonstration in front of community children (PC: NRCS, Parsa)

IEC Materials developed by NRCS for the use of public vehicle in COVID times

Distribution of face mask to the children of tallo goste community, Pokhara (PC: NRCS Kaski)

Water filter installation in Juddha Ma. VI. premises in support with UNICEF (PC: NRCS Rautahat)

Dissemination of IEC materials in the community centers (PC: Hari Maharjan, Lalitpur)

Mask distribution to COVID-19 infected family (PC: NRCS Kathmandu)
Water Project Innovation: Hybrid Connection System (PV and Power Grid)

Devastating 2015 Nepal earthquake had badly damaged numbers of lives, livestock and physical assets across many districts. The NRCS took over the responsibility for integrated recovery response (Shelter, WASH, Livelihood and Health) at Sitalpati VDC in Sindhuli.

During the earthquake recovery, water schemes were completed out of lifting systems during the close -WASH-CC through which water setting was made. As the remaining need of access to drinking water, operation started after close team focusing to complete remaining water lifting systems in the community areas.

Rest four gravity fed project has community people has showed expect sole power grid, as power is cult to bear for longer run. And, money for each unit. In a team, we focus for water lift and it was under course of designing, EWB, a German support technically and financially. As a new option; solar and power grid, which looks very much relevant not only for sustainable run rather for regular service.

As we have experienced, power grid water lift projects either became in functional or community themselves stopped to use sufficient water for their daily uses due to high cost water tariff, hence hybrid connection has been adopting considering the sustainable run by paying minimum water tariff from community users.

WASH Competency Framework (based on IFRC competency framework)

NRCS, Community Development Department- WASH division redeveloped emergency WASH training curriculum on Basic emergency WASH, WRT and WASH NDRT which has been in-line with IFRC WASH competency framework. Each training participants require WASH technical competencies to be fulfill from basic to high level and are evaluated based on agreed criteria of required technical competencies. According to evaluation of participants, they will be recommended and deployed on particular sub-competency or competencies on particular tier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier A</th>
<th>Tier B</th>
<th>Tier C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate Knowledge of particular sub-competency (Technician roles)</td>
<td>Able to carry out of sub-competency (Manager roles)</td>
<td>Able to design and evaluate of sub-competency (Coordinator / Leader roles)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In RCRC WASH emergency trainings, particularly eight sub-competencies areas will be prioritized for conceptual and practical sessions. However, all these sub-competencies might not be applied equivalently to all levels of emergency WASH trainings. The level of the sub-competencies areas will be defined by the level of training i.e. higher the training level- the more detail will be the sub-competencies area. To achieve tier A for the competency, the participant must achieve at least 70% of tier A in the sub-competencies and similarly for tiers B and C. We have to keep in mind that if someone is in tier B, it means the participant has also tier A competence and when participant is in tier C, it means he/she is in A and B competency too.

After the evaluation, data will be documented and updated in roster with recommended profile so that right person can be deployed in right profile. The deployment of emergency WASH trained person will be deployed by Disaster Management Department based on the roster and the profile required. WASH competency framework is a part of ‘Volunteer Promotional Guideline for Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion’.

Upcoming/participated event

- WASH in cash meeting on 5th November
- APRO Health and WASH webinar on 10th November
- WASH literature club meeting on 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th November
- WASH cluster meeting every two weeks

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Update as on 13th November, 2020

**WASH**
COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE OPERATION

- **Water Bottle**: 302,425 Distributed
- **Emergency Latrine**: 56 Constructed
- **Hygiene Kit**: 1,498 Distributed
- **Soap Bar**: 37,305 Distributed
- **Hand Washing Station**: 801 Constructed
- **Bucket**: 5,551 Distributed
- **Total people reached**: 154,479 direct
- **Disinfection campaigns**: 51

**Total people reached through WASH activities**: 154,479