

COVID-19

Preparedness and Response Operation

1 February-31 October 2020

Update # 11 Issue date: 11 November 2020

BACKGROUND

As of 31 October 2020, out of 1,443,343 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tested cases/samples, 170,743 have been confirmed positive and remaining 1,272,600¹ tested negative. Out of total positive cases, 131,222 have already recovered and the remaining 38,584 cases are under treatment as per COVID-19 treatment standard of the Ministry of Health and Population. A total of 937 people has lost their life due to COVID-19.

Kathmandu valley districts (Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur) continued to report highest number of positive cases per day since mid-September. The testing was slowed down due to Dashain festival which was observed in the second half of October this year. As of 31 October, 32 percent (55,477) of the total infected in Nepal are female and 68 percent (115,266) are male. In terms of province, the highest number of active cases are in Bagmati province with 24,110 followed by Province 1 with 6,152 cases and Lumbini Province with 3,423 cases. As of 31 October, Bagmati province reported that 65,060 people have recovered followed by Province 2 with 16,987 people.

The government has established PCR testing facilities in 66 laboratories (42 public and 24 private) throughout the country. As of 31 October, all the 74 districts had at least one active positive case of COVID-19 in Nepal, while three districts; Mustang, Manang and Bajura had Zero active case of COVID-19. All the COVID-19 cases were recovered in these three districts. On the other hand, 11 districts were at high risk zone with more than 500 active positive cases. In addition, the number of people staying in quarantine centres is decreasing while the number of people in home isolation is increasing particularly in Kathmandu valley districts. One of the key challenges for the home isolation will be the implementation of the guideline by the infected person where people are living in a rented single room with no separate toilet or kitchen facilities. This might increase the chances of spread of the infection drastically. The rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases might impact on the health care system as the focus might shift to COVID-19 with reduced focus on other vital health issues as neonatal care, immunizations as such.

The Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), within its capacities and mandates to respond as auxiliary to the Government in the prevention and alleviation of human suffering, has an important role to play in controlling this outbreak. The National Society has been disseminating information about safety behaviours, facilitating community on infection prevention and control measures, and help to prevent misinformation, rumours panic and stigmatisation. It is also imperative that the National Society takes steps to protect its own staff and volunteers from exposure in the line of duty. As a leading volunteer-based humanitarian actor in the country, the NRCS has been playing a unique role in reaching communities. NRCS is leading the localized COVID-19 preparedness and response operation in coordination with Government of Nepal, IFRC, Participating National Societies (PNS), ICRC and other stakeholders. In addition, NRCS is supporting the Government in coordination with other organizations such as UNICEF, Nepal Army, etc. to manage the holding centres (a temporary set up established by the Government for the people entering to Nepal before taking them to quarantine sites or home quarantine).



The "Hajurko mask khoi?" ("Where is your mask?") Campaign has stirred up considerable interest in the Gadhwara Rural Municipality in Dang

(Photo: NRCS Dang)

Situation Overview (as of 31 October 2020)

	Nepal	Global
Confirmed Cases	170,743	45,932,219
# of patients recovered	131,222	33,259,067
# of people died	937	1,194,089
# of people in quarantine	2,410	
# of people in isolation	38,584	
#of Countries Affected		216

Source: MOHP situation report

MOHP website; <https://covid19.mohp.gov.np/#/>

VOICE

A Ray of Hope from mask production
"Now, I am confident to prepare 3-layered masks commercially" says Nanu Shrestha Kumal. She further adds, "With the increased orders for 3-layered masks, I am able to earn more than usual and looking forward for expanding my tailor".

Nanu Shrestha, 30 is a single woman living with her 11-year son in Tripurasundari Rural Municipality Ward No. 2. Tailoring is her main source of income. Based on vulnerability criteria, NRCS Dhading District Chapter in coordination with ward office selected her to make 3-layer cloth masks for staff and volunteers. She was skillful to prepare 2-layered cloth masks, but 3-layered mask was new for her. However, she could not say no to the opportunity. According to her, at first, it was bit difficult for her to stitch 3-layered mask solely based on the guideline. But, after number of trials and errors, she was able to prepare the 3-layer cloth masks. Presently, she is getting more orders for masks from different people including members from her community.

Target group

- People infected by COVID-19, their families, and the communities they are living in.
- Frontline health responders
- Vulnerable groups such as elderly people, children, pregnant women, people with disability (PWD)
- Migrant returnees/labourers/workers
- School children,
- People in holding areas, quarantine centres
- People in prisons
- Public in general
- Red Cross volunteers and staff

Health and Care

Major progress

Services

- **More than 3,400** people received psychosocial first aid service
- **355,325** personal protective equipment (disposable examination gloves, full body apron, full body PPE set, goggles, face shield, head cover, mask, rubber boot, long tube rubber shoe) distributed
- **242** ambulances mobilized across the county
- **113** blood transfusion service centres/emergency units functional across the country

Training and orientations

- More than 1,800 people reached through remote and physical psychosocial first aid (PFA) training and orientation
- 262 events of Infection Prevention and Control measures orientation conducted

Guidelines developed

- COVID-19 response guideline
- Infection, prevention and control guideline



Distribution of the locally produced mask to the District Jail Office, Achham **(Photo: NRCS Achham)**



NRCS volunteer providing orientation session on Psychosocial First Aid to the community people of Jwalamukhi Rural Municipality, Dhading **(Photo: NRCS Dhading)**

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Major progress

- **801** hand washing stations established in public places and quarantine sites

Materials distribution

- More than **1,400** hygiene kits distributed
- **37,305** bars of soap distributed
- **5,551** buckets distributed
- **1,966** mugs distributed
- **304,391** people have been benefited with drinking water bottle distributed at point of entry, isolation site, quarantine and holding centre.

Training and orientations

- More than **40,000** people reached through hygiene promotion activities (hand washing demonstration sessions and practical session)
- More than 40 people from 21 districts were oriented on environment cleaning and disinfection

Other actions

- **56** emergency toilet/portable toilet constructed in different quarantine sites
- Supported in disinfection of public places including cultural heritage sites, schools, quarantine and holding areas in different districts



Women of Pokhariya Municipality, Ward no. 4, Parsa attending hygiene promotion and hand washing demonstration session
(Photo: NRCS Parsa)



NRCS handed over a hand spray machine and Hypochlorite solution to Dharan Sub Metropolitan City, Ward No.17 (Photo: NRCS Sunsari)

Risk Communication and CEA



A passer going through information on COVID-19 displayed at a wall of public place in Ward No. 1, Inaruwa Municipality
(Photo: NRCS Sunsari)

Major progress

- **710,955** IEC materials such as pamphlets, flex, stickers, flyers, brochures, banner with COVID-19 awareness messages produced and distributed
- **992** calls related to COVID-19 received and responded through Red Cross Hotline 1130
- **157** episodes of Red Cross radio programme aired through different FM stations across the country
- **602** COVID-19 related posts shared in NRCS Facebook site that was viewed 5,525,244 times
- **859** Unit Action Team formed to support and keep record of people entering the community, recognize the threats and keep the community informed with lifesaving message and appropriate referral service.
- NRCS social media volunteering page developed and more than **1,600** youths joined the page as members. NRCS volunteers' activities and awareness messages related to COVID-19 have been shared through this group
- **297** people has been reached through ten sessions on importance of feedback mechanism and its handling process.

Protection Gender and Inclusion

Major progress

Services

- **44** districts involved in different activities related to RFL services; NRCS volunteers contacted **508** people arrived from India/other countries
- **78** people supported in their family contact
- **5** people supported in reunification of their family
- **18** street children supported with emergency shelter

Materials distribution

- More than **18,000** people including daily wage workers, street children and passengers supported with food in coordination with local authority
- **356** families supported with Combo kit in in Bhulke village of Udayapur district
- **1,081** dignity kit distributed in the quarantine site
- **214** Kishori kit distributed in quarantine site
- **191** community people and **31** quarantined people oriented on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) referral pathway

Training and orientation

- **147** staff/volunteers oriented on PGI
- **180** staff/volunteers trained on SGBV

Guidelines developed

- Rapid guidance for providing RFL service during COVID-19
- Family support combo kit management guideline



NRCS reaching the most vulnerable people with its support during COVID-19 response (**Photo: NRCS Rupandehi**)

Other support on PGI

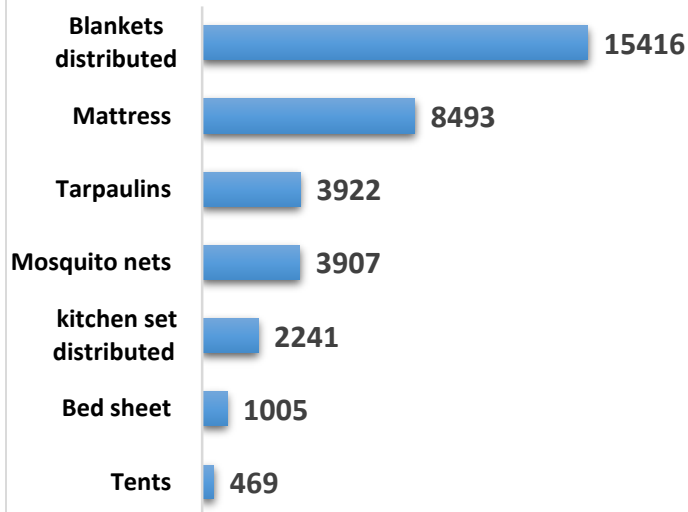
- People supported with transportation facility to return to their house in different districts
- Sexual and gender based violence referral message airing/broadcasting through radio and television

Shelter

Key Actions

- Supported in quarantine site management including district jails as per necessity
- Supported shelter and non-food relief items to quarantine sites, isolation sites and households in COVID-19 affected area

Shelter and non-food relief item distribution



GOOD PRACTICES

- NRCS has been collecting blood for plasma therapy from its 12 blood centers. They are Central Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) center in Kathmandu, six Province BTS centers in Biratnagar, Birjung, Chitwan, Pokhara, Nepalgunj and Dhangadhi and five District BTS centers in Rupandehi, Bhaktapur, Jhapa, Sunsari and Dhanusha. As of 31 October 2020, a total of 529 pints plasma were collected, of which 483 pints of plasma were already supplied for the treatment of COVID-19 patients.
- Dissemination of COVID-19 awareness messages along with “Where is your Mask?” Campaign at various strategic locations such as point of entry in different districts



A beneficiary of COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Operation, donating blood for plasma therapy (Photo: NRCS Bhaktapur)

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

- All Red Cross actions related to COVID-19 are in line with Government of Nepal MOHP, HEOC guideline and initiatives.
- NRCS province offices, district chapters and sub-chapters have remained in close contact with the local authorities and have been supporting quarantine and isolation sites management including assessment.
- Participation in District Disaster Management Committee meeting in all districts for COVID-19 preparedness and response.
- Participation in health, WASH, PGI and shelter cluster meetings and other meetings such as media interaction programme.
- NRCS has maintained bilateral collaboration with Coca Cola and UNICEF for COVID-19 Preparedness and Response.

CHALLENGES

Incidence of COVID-19 is increasing among staff and volunteers at headquarters and chapters. This has posed challenges in safety and security of the staff and volunteers in NRCS which ultimately hampers on timely accomplishment of the COVID-19 preparedness and response actions for the people in need.

OUR PARTNERS FOR COVID-19

RCRC Movement: ICRC and IFRC including Participating National Societies

UN agencies: UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO

Private Sectors: Coca-Cola Company, local industries and traders

Philanthropists: Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association, individual donors

Government agencies at federal, provincial and local levels

Note: This report has been prepared by PMER-IM –CEA team in consultation with concerned sectors at NRCS headquarters and main sources of information include: 5W report received from NRCS district chapters, and Situation updates from WHO and MOHP HEOC.

For further information

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- <https://www.facebook.com/nepalredcross/>; <https://twitter.com/NepalRedCross>
- For further details of the information and 5W data please find the link for COVID-19 Dashboard: [Link](#)

