

COVID-19

Preparedness and Response Operation

1 February-15 June 2020

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Help desk with food and water support to returnees from India

Photo: NRCS Banke

BACKGROUND

Since last update on 29 May 2020, the number of people infected with COVID-19 has increased three folds in Nepal. It is due to the large influx of population entering Nepal from India and on the other hand, the government has increased polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing facilities. As a result, more positive cases are being identified.

In South Asian Region, India has the highest number of infections followed by Pakistan (source: as of 10 June 2020 <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>).

Nepal government took a step to ease lockdown and allowed operation of basic services such as groceries, hospital, government offices and banks. However, COVID-19 hotspots have been sealed off and inter district movements are still restricted. Likewise, public vehicles are not functional yet.

Because of high flow of migrant returnees especially in point of entry districts, it has been challenging to manage holding areas and quarantine sites properly. Major needs of the people include food, health and care, hygiene promotion, sanitation, risk communication, protection, gender and including (PGI) and shelter and bedding.

In such context, Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), being auxiliary to the government, has been involving in COVID-19 preparedness and response since early February 2020 in coordination with the Ministry of Health (MOHP), and Health Emergency Operation Centre (HEOC). Together with Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) partners, NRCS developed COVID-19 response approach paper and consolidated plan for working systematically in COVID-19 preparedness and response. The key priority sectors for interventions include health and care, water sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), risk communication and community engagement and accountability (RC-CEA), PGI and shelter.

Situation Overview (as of 15 June 2020)

	Nepal	Global
Confirmed Cases	6,591	7,823,289
# of patients recovered	1,041	2,000,000
# of people died	19	431541
# of people in quarantine	133,829	
# of people in isolation	5,151	
#of Countries Affected		216

Source: MOHP situation report

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

VOICE

"In the beginning, I was scared to carry person infected with COVID-19 from Bharadashi Gapa to Corona treatment hospital in Biratnagar. But when I realized that I had been protected with personal protective items and received knowledge on infection control and prevention, I was confident and has been continuing ambulance service for the needy people including the people infected with COVID-19 in the eastern area of Nepal. I am proud to be Red Cross worker and serve for humanity."

- Dan Bikram Thapa, Ambulance Driver,
NRCS Jhapa

SECTORAL PROGRESS

77 districts reached

345 quarantine site



1,239,449

People reached including
675,993 people reached
through IEC materials



1409

Volunteers
mobilized

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

- **247** ambulances mobilized across the county
- **1,072** people received psychosocial first aid
- **113** blood transfusion service centre/emergency unit functional across the country.

Materials distribution

- **278,453** personal protective items (masks, gloves, hazmat suit) distributed across the country
- **3,279** mosquito net distributed

Training and orientations

- **200,695** people reached through COVID-19 orientation sessions (community orientation, school orientation, door to door visit, help desk, miking) on COVID-19 preventions and control measures
- **148** ambulance drivers oriented on infection, prevention and control
- **703** volunteers and staff received psychosocial first aid online training

Guidelines developed

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



Lok Maya Thapa, NRCS Khotang, facilitated session on “COVID-19 stress and self-care” at Gorakhnath Mude barrack. The COVID-19 related stress and self-care session has been useful for the Nepali Army who have been working away from home and spending more stressful time due to COVID-19 pandemic. Key content of the session was identification of stress and skills to manage overflow of the stress. At the end of the session, participant expressed that they felt more relieved and stress less.

Photo: NRCS Khotang

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Major progress

Services

- **266** hand washing stations established in public places and quarantine sites
- **5,222** people returning from India were aided with drinking water at border sites.

Materials distribution

- **390** hygiene kits distributed
- **25,983** bars of soap distributed
- **4,206** buckets with jugs distributed
- **2,048** bottles of sanitizers (100-500 ml each) distributed

Training and orientations

- **6,749** people reached through hygiene promotion activities (hand washing demonstration sessions and practical session)

Other actions

- Supported in disinfection of road and vehicles in different districts
- **10** energy toilet constructed in different quarantine sites.
- Emergency toilet and bath room constructed at central ambulance washing centre in Kathmandu.



Hand washing station has been useful for the people visiting market area in Pokhara, Kashi.

Photo: NRCS Kaski

Risk Communication and CEA



NRCS volunteers sharing the importance of door to door campaign and distributing pamphlet with the information about importance of hand wash and use of mask to avoid COVID-19 at Thaiba, Lalitpur.

Photo: Thaiba Sub-Chapter, Lalitpur

Major progress

- **675,993** IEC materials such as pamphlets, flex, stickers, flyers, brochures, banner with COVID-19 awareness messages reproduced and distributed
- **473** calls related to COVID-19 were received and responded through Red Cross Hotline 1130
- **128** episodes of Red Cross radio programme was aired through different FM stations across the country
- **85** events of COVID-19 awareness message dissemination were conducted using loud speaker and rallies conducted
- **353** COVID-19 related posts were done in NRCS Facebook site, that was viewed by 2.4 million times and earned 4,132,123 reactions.
- **92** tweets posted related to COVID-19 and earned **178,600** impressions
- COVID-19 related rumour tracked through social media and media scanning in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF
- NRCS social media volunteering page developed and **1,200** youths are members in the page

Protection Gender and Inclusion

Major progress

Services

- **42** district involved in different activities related to Restoring Family Link (RFL) services; NRCS volunteer contacted **506** people arrived from India/other countries
- **75** people supported in family contact and **2** persons reunified.
- **18** street children supported with emergency shelter

Materials distribution

- **17,933** people including daily wage workers, street children and passengers supported with food in coordination with local authority.
- **350** families supported with Combo kit in in Bhulke village of Udayapur district
- **861** dignity Kit distributed in the quarantine site
- **209** Kishori Kit distributed in quarantine site
- **389** dead body bags supported to security forces, district disaster management committee, and hospitals

Training and orientation

- **70** staff/volunteers who are involved in COVID-19 oriented on PGI

Guidelines developed

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

Other support

- People supported with transportation facility to return to their house in different districts



Quarantine site set up by NRCS Dailekh in Dailekh district Jail

Photo: NRCS Dailekh



People staying in quarantine site which was set up by Nepal Red Cross Society in Belaka Municipality-2, Udayapur. The evacuation centre constructed by NRCS Flood Recovery Program was used as quarantine.

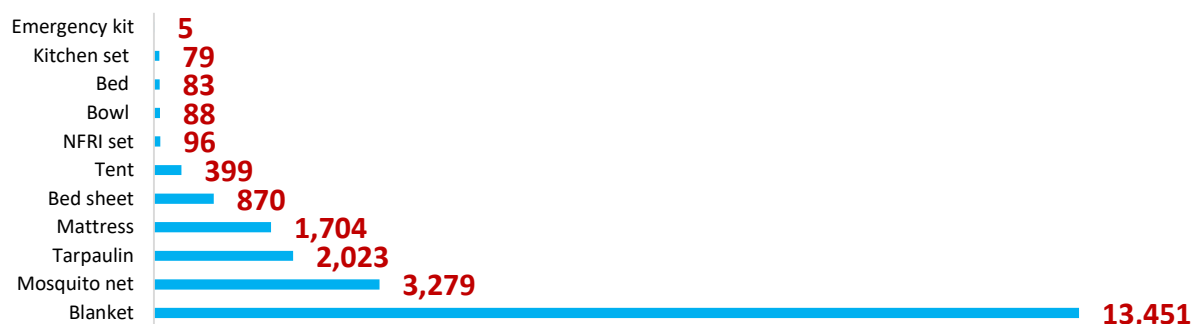
Photo: NRCS Udayapur

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.
- Prepared monsoon response plan

Shelter and non -food relief items distribution



GOOD PRACTICES AND INNOVATION

- NRCS learning platform has been useful to provide training/orientation to staff and volunteers online.
- Cyber bullying, being an emerging public health concern, NRCS has initiated online cyber bullying campaign through series of orientations to people at all level.
- Posting work of staff and volunteers on NRCS social media has motivated them for working more in the COVID-19 preparedness and response operation.
- Establishment of NRCS wide planning and reporting system in COVID-19 preparedness and response operation.
- 65 district chapters developed COVID-19 preparedness and response plan online.



Listening to people's concerns is key in COVID-19 response

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 supporting in their plan for quarantine and isolation sites assessment, establishment and management as well surveillance and contact tracing.
- Participation in district disaster management committee meeting in all districts.
- Participation in health, WASH, PGI and shelter cluster meetings and other meetings such as media interaction programme.
- NRCS is co-lead in cash coordination group in Nepal and provincial protection cluster in Gandaki province.



Construction of quarantine sites in close co-ordination with local government and security forces in Bhojpur
Photo: NRCS Bhojpur

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

CHALLENGES

- Limited availability of construction materials in market has delayed construction of hand washing station in some districts.
- Shortage of quality personal protective equipment in the market has made it difficult to purchase such materials for front line health staff and volunteers.

Note: Sources of this report are NRCS, WHO and MOHP HEOC daily situation updates and contains consolidated achievement of the NRCS at all levels based on the information provided by the district chapters and departments.

For Detail information

Contact

- Umesh Prasad Dhakal, Executive Director, mobile no. 9851056369, email umesh@nracs.org
- Bipul Neupane, Director, Health Service Department, mobile no. 9851012617, email. bipul.neupane@nracs.org
- Dibya Raj Poudel, Director, Humanitarian Value and Communication Department, mobile no.9841699068; dibya.poudel@nracs.org

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