

COVID-19

Preparedness and Response Operation

1 February-30 September 2020

Update # 9 Issue date: 5 October 2020

BACKGROUND

As of 30 September 2020, a total of 77,817 COVID-19 cases were confirmed in the country through polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR). All seven provinces and 77 districts in the country have reported one or more cases of COVID-19 since the beginning of COVID-19 epidemics in Nepal. However, Mustang, Manang, Mugu and Dolpa did not report any COVID-19 cases in last 15 days. A total of 50 designated COVID-19 laboratories are now functional in the country. The Kathmandu valley districts are experiencing high caseload with 25.15 percent of the national total infection. Likewise, Morang, Sunsari, Siraha, Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Rupandehi are listed as the district which report more than 500 cases. The total death reported is 498 with a case fatality rate of 0.6%. Overall, the gender distribution remains skewed towards males, who constitute 73 percent (56,449) of the confirmed cases and 27 percent (21,368) are female. Apart from major transmission in Kathmandu valley districts, active transmission clusters are observed in several local administrative units of the country and some of these transmission clusters cut across provincial boundaries – like Rupandehi, Nawalparasi West and East, and Chitwan districts. Resumption of domestic flights and inter-district travel from 21 September 2020. A Passenger Advisory Guidance has been issued to air travellers from the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN).

The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) endorsed two guidelines to support ongoing preparedness and response readiness to COVID-19: Interim Nutrition Guidelines for people with COVID-19, 2077 and Guidelines for monitoring the health of people with COVID-19 isolated at home and hotel, 2077 BS. The guideline for antigen testing has been drafted; endorsement from the MoHP is awaited. Moreover, MoHP has prioritized the health care workers, frontline workers, contact tracing teams for RT-PCR test if needed. Similarly, orientation to all isolation centres and COVID-19 hospitals for efficient daily recording and reporting in the Health Management Information System (HMIS) is carried out. Also, MoHP stated that the reimbursements of the expenditures to these centres would be made based on HMIS data.

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) has been involved in COVID-19 preparedness and response since early February 2020 in coordination with the Ministry of Health (MOHP), and Health Emergency Operation Centre (HEOC). NRCS provincial and district chapters are engaged in various activities: food distribution, quarantine management, ambulance services, awareness raising activities, tents/tarpaulins and non-food relief items (NFRI), restoring family links, psychosocial first aid, health/help desk, personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizers, hygiene kits, soaps and information educational and communication (IEC) materials. The NRCS frontline workers are also ensured with the safety and security along with insurance provision. Along with COVID-19, NRCS is also involved in monsoon preparedness and response activities.



Community people of Bhokara municipality receiving information on COVID-19 and hand washing session shared by NRCS volunteer (Photo:NRCS Sunsari)

Situation Overview (as of 15 September 2020)

	Nepal	Global
Confirmed Cases	77,817	33,852,048
# of patients recovered	56,428	25,157,660
# of people died	498	1,012,743
# of people in quarantine	5,428	
# of people in isolation	20,891	
#of Countries Affected		216

Source: MOHP situation report

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

VOICE

Digital volunteering during COVID-19

“Digital volunteering has been a brand new and learning opportunity for me to do humanitarian work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite of working from home, I am involved in sharing messages on COVID-19, providing psychosocial counselling and assistance, facilitating creative, skill-oriented and knowledge-oriented programs for Youth Red Cross volunteers. I get to learn the organization's official social media operation modality. Moreover, this has provided self-satisfaction enhancing my professional and social connections.”

-Nishan Karki
Moderator, NRCS social media volunteer

SECTORAL PROGRESS

77 districts reached



1,537,814

People reached including
700,129 people reached
through IEC materials



1,969

Volunteers
mobilized

Health and Care

Major progress

Services

- **247** ambulances mobilized across the county
- **113** blood transfusion service centre/emergency unit functional across the country
- **2,699** people received psychosocial first aid service

Materials distribution

- **343,403** personal protective (disposable examination gloves, full body apron, full body PPE set, goggles, face shield, head cover, mask, rubber boot, long tube rubber shoe) distributed

Training and orientations

- More than 1800 people reached through remote and physical psychosocial first aid (PFA) training and orientation
- **15** people including 2 female staff and volunteer from NRCS Bhaktapur were trained in CICT. The trained was facilitated by medical team of KU. CICT self-paced training. NRCS is planning to collaborate with them for the implementation of CT in other districts too
- IPC training to more than 40 volunteers including focal person of 21 district chapter

Guidelines developed

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

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



NRCS volunteer supporting in COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing (ICT) task in Ward No.12, Kathmandu Metropolitan City (Photo: NRCS Kathmandu)



NRCS Dhading supported with bed to Semjong Health Post (Photo:NRCS Dhading)

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Major progress

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

Materials distribution

- **968** hygiene kits distributed
- **37,120** bars of soap distributed
- **4,771** buckets distributed
- **1,966** mugs distributed

Training and orientations

- **45,733** people reached through hygiene promotion activities (hand washing demonstration sessions and practical session)
- More than 40 people of 21 districts were oriented on Environment cleaning and Disinfection

Other actions

- **45** emergency toilets constructed in different quarantine sites
- Supported in disinfection of public places including the cultural heritage sites, schools, quarantine and holding areas in different districts



A woman from Bheri Municipality practicing the hand washing steps during hygiene kit distribution program (Photo: Janak Singh, NRCS Jajarkot)



A small girl washing her hand in a 4 basin contactless hand washing station placed at Relwechowk-17, Dharan (Photo: Puspha Raj Rai, Sunsari District Chapter)

Risk Communication and CEA



NRCS Baitadi conducted awareness raising session to the community people on COVID-19 (Photo: NRCS Baitadi)

Major progress

- **700,129** IEC materials such as pamphlets, flex, stickers, flyers, brochures, banner with COVID-19 awareness messages produced and distributed
- **871** calls related to COVID-19 were received and responded through Red Cross Hotline 1130
- **148** episodes of Red Cross radio programme was aired through different FM stations across the country
- **580** COVID-19 related posts shared in NRCS Facebook site that was viewed 5,438,363 times
- **792** 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 are members in this page. NRCS volunteers' activities and awareness messages related to COVID-19 have been shared through this group

Protection Gender and Inclusion

Major progress

Services

- **44** district involved in different activities related to Restoring Family Link (RFL) services; NRCS volunteer contacted **508** people arrived from India/other countries
- **78** people supported in family contact
- **5** people support to reunification their family
- **77** people supported in family contact
- **18** street children supported with emergency shelter

Materials distribution

- **18,012** 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 SGBV referral pathway

Training and orientation

- **147** staff/volunteers oriented on PGI
- **180** staff/volunteers trained on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)

Guidelines developed

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



NRCS Kathmandu conducted Volunteer participating in the Protection Gender and Inclusion (PGI) orientation conducted by Kathmandu district chapter (Photo: Indira Poudel, NRCS Kathmandu)

Other support on PGI

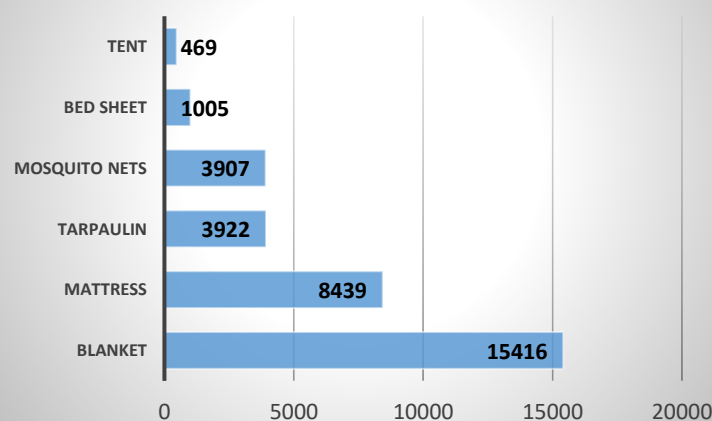
- People supported with transportation facility to return to their house in different districts
- Sexual and gender based violence referral message airing/broadcasting through radio and television

Shelter

Key Actions

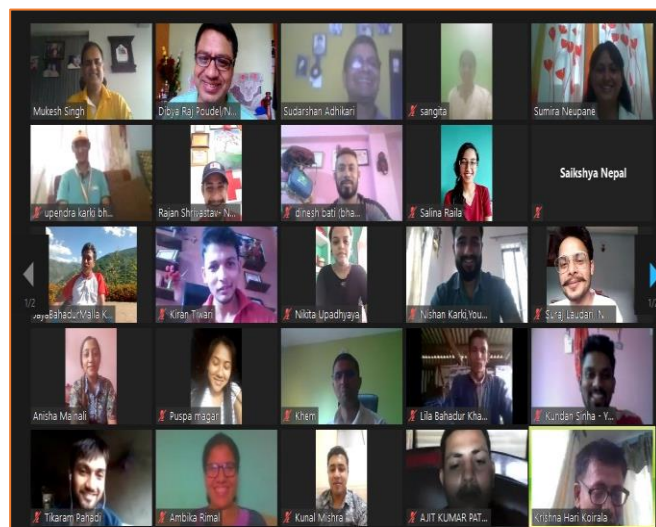
- Supported in quarantine site management including district jails as per necessity
- Supported shelter and non-food relief items to quarantine sites, isolation sites and households in COVID-19 affected area

Shelter and non-food relief item distribution



GOOD PRACTICES

- To reduce the potential chain of infection as well as support/recommend in testing mechanism for the NRCS staffs at HQs, a team has been formed and mobilized for case investigation and contact tracing.
- NRCS continues the blood collection for plasma therapy to support treatment of COVID-19 patients.
- NRCS utilize virtual means to form a national youth forum which is supposed to facilitate 800 thousand Junior/Youth network and work for participation, empowerment, education, entrepreneurship and advocacy, contributing to international arena as well.



Snapshot of Red Cross active youth meet to form a national youth forum (Photo: NRCS NHQ)

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 are 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

- The potential risk of COVID-19 transmission to the frontline volunteer and staffs has caused some setbacks on implementation of the COVID-19 response.
- Difficulty in use of defined monitoring tools to track district response on COVID-19.

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 daily situation updates from WHO and MOHP HEOC.

For further information

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