

COVID-19

Preparedness and Response Operation 2021

Update # 2

Reporting Period: 1 - 31 May 2021

Issue date: 2 June 2021

CONTEXT

Highlights:

- President of Nepal promulgated the COVID-19 Crisis Management Ordinance amid an unprecedented surge in new COVID-19 infections and deaths across the country. Following promulgation of the new ordinance, the chiefs of the three districts in Kathmandu Valley announced new order which states that anyone obstructing the implementation of the ordinance or violating the restrictions will be liable to a fine of up to NPR 500,000- and one-year jail or both.
- Medical supplies from the United States of America, China, Spain and Switzerland arrived in Nepal to help fight the spread of the COVID-19.
- 71 out of the 77 districts of Nepal are currently under prohibitory orders, restricting human and vehicular movements, public gathering and other social activities as a precautionary measure against spread of COVID-19.
- The Government of Nepal has decided to allow passenger flights to and from China, Turkey and Qatar starting 1 June 2021. Likewise, regular scheduled flights to India too, will resume. While suspension of the domestic flights remains until further notice.
- Chart 1 demonstrates weekly cross-sectional data of COVID-19 new cases, persons recovered and deaths in May 2021. The chart shows that there is decrease in daily new cases in the last week of May. Whereas fortunately number of people recovered is increasing compared to the daily new cases. In case of deaths, the number is fluctuating.
- 21,13,080 people have been vaccinated across the country. Out of them, 6,48,068 have received both doses (update as of 27 May 2021).

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), as an auxiliary to the Government within its capacities and mandates, has been working on COVID-19 preparedness and response operation since early February 2020 in coordination with The Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Participating National Societies (PNS), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and non-Movement partners as well as other stakeholders.

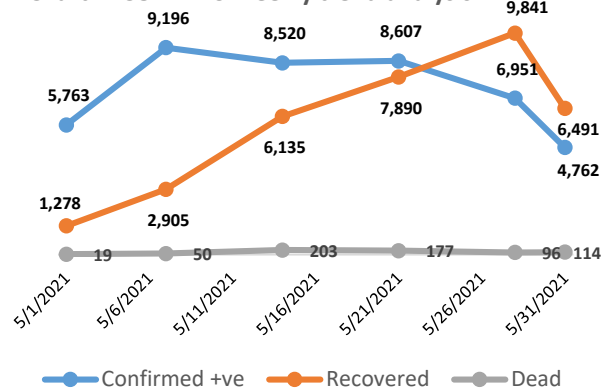
NRCS has continued its COVID-19 preparedness and response in 2021 with focus on actions like ambulance services to transport COVID-19 infected persons to hospital, support for establishment/management of isolation centres, distribution of hygiene/dignity kits, water bottle distribution and risk communication at point of entry and holding centres, and awareness raising activities such as public service announcement (PSA) through radio and FM stations and miking. Other actions include mobilization of volunteers in COVID-19 vaccination centres/camps and secondment of immunization advisor at MoHP for supporting in overall COVID-19 vaccination campaign in the country.

As of 31 May 2021, NRCS has reached more than 1,500,000 people directly and indirectly through COVID-19 response in Nepal since 1 May 2021.



NRCS distributed hygiene kit to the person infected with COVID-19 hospitalized at Bhaktapur Hospital (**Photo source: IFRC**)

Chart 1: COVID-19 weekly trend analysis



VOICE

Where is your Mask?

"Where is your mask?" This is the question often asked by Red Cross volunteers accompanied by the Nepal Police. However, my response to them was, "it is my choice whether to wear mask or not".

Hearing my answer, the team explained me about potential risk of COVID-19 infection and its effect along with protective measures against it such as proper use of mask, hand washing and social distancing.

Initially I was ignorant about the spread of corona virus, but one day. I got shocked to know that nine people tested COVID-19 positive in our community. After hearing to NRCS volunteers on COVID-19 information.

I, then collected the mask being distributed by the volunteers and bought some more on my own for all of my family members. After returning home, the first thing I did was washing my hands and demonstration of properly proper use of mask.

I am happy I have started practicing safety measures to protect my pregnant wife and other members of the family from COVID-19.

Now, we are waiting for the vaccination against COVID-19 infection.

-Riyaz Ahamad Mukari (32), Narainapur Rural Municipality, Banke District

SECTORAL PROGRESS

Target group

- People infected with 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
- Migrant returnees/labourers/workers
- School children
- People in holding areas, quarantine/isolation centres
- People in prisons
- Public in general



1,552,599

People reached (direct + indirect)



3,374

Volunteer mobilized

Health and Care

Major progress

- **2,516** people reached through contact tracing surveillance. **88** NRCS staff and volunteers oriented on community based surveillance and contact tracing
- **1,327** persons with COVID-19 infection were transported to hospital through NRCS ambulance service. The National Society upgraded 11 ambulances through compartment division.
- **22,820** people supported to access vaccination service provided by the government
- **104,850** personnel protective items such as full body personal protective equipment (PPE), masks and gloves distributed to front line responders
- **703** people received psychosocial first aid (PFA) service from NRCS
- **89** people were oriented on proper use of PPE and infection prevention control (IPC) measures
- **267** emergency kits distributed

Guidelines:

- NRCS headquarters developed Pulse Oximeter Use Guideline and shared with chapters so that they can orient and mobilize volunteers/staff to teach people especially those who are at home isolation on proper use of Oximeter for checking oxygen saturation level and pulse rate of person.
- A guidance notes on the use of different kinds of masks (reference documents from WHO and MoHP) developed and disseminate at all levels.



NRCS volunteer mobilized in COVID-19 vaccination camp at Bajrabarahi Secondary School, Godawari Municipality, Lalitpur during the registration of people for COVID-19 vaccination (**Photo: NRCS Lalitpur**)



People participating in door to door blood collection campaign conducted by NRCS Bhaktapur district chapter to meet blood demand during this pandemic (**Photo: NRCS Bhaktapur**)

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Major progress

- **276** people reached through hand washing demonstration sessions
- **18,354** water bottles distributed to people entering Nepal from various border sites, points of entry and staying at holding centres
- **329** hygiene kits distributed in quarantine/isolation sites and hospitals
- **7,465** bars of soap, 28 bucket with tap, 3 water tank sand 55 water mugs were distributed in isolation centre, prisons and communities



A returnee from India at Birjung Point of Entry, using the hand sanitizer set up installed by NRCS. The National Society has been providing COVID-19 awareness message through help desks at various points of entry (Photo: NRCS Parsa)

Risk Communication and CEA



Unit action team member of Sunsari district sharing information on importance of proper use of mask and hand washing (Photo: NRCS Parsa)

Major progress

- **89,000** information, education and communication materials such as pamphlets, flex, stickers, flyers, brochures, banners with COVID-19 awareness messages produced and distributed
- **290 (58 female callers and 232 male callers)** calls received and responded through Red Cross Hotline 1130. Out of them, **154** calls were related to COVID-19.
- **9** episodes of Radio Programme aired through two national level FMs: Kantipur and Sagarmatha. The programme contained COVID-19 related information.
- Likewise, COVID-19, gender based violence, water sanitation and hygiene promotion, and blood service related PSA aired 873 times through different FM stations across the country
- **1,245** people reached through Unit Action team with COVID-19 awareness message during campaigns along with offline social listening and rumour tracking
- **675,833** people reached through COVID-19 awareness activities such as miking
- **134** people reached through training/orientation on COVID-19 risk communication
- Total 98 COVID-19 related posts in NRCS Facebook Page with 16159 reach
- More than 2,100 youths are associated with [NRCS Volunteers' Network in Action page](#) . They regularly share COVID-19 related message through posting and interaction programme.

Protection Gender and Inclusion

Major progress

- **198** people reached with dignity kits. The dignity kit consists of hygiene promotion items and menstruation hygiene items for female.
- **772** dead body management bags handed over to hospital and district administration office
- Involved in dignified management of dead body of COVID-19 patients
- **85** women, children and other vulnerable people supported with management of vehicle to reach their destination
- **13** people including two females provided with food packages in Dolakha district



NRCS Makwanpur district chapter distributed hygiene kit to the persons infected with COVID-19 in Hetauda -6, Gauritar, Makwanpur **(Photo: NRCS Makwanpur)**

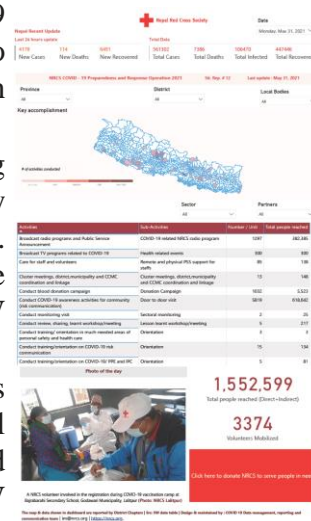
Shelter and logistics

Key Actions

- **20** kitchen sets, **92** tarpaulins and **3** tents were provided to security forces and isolation centres.
- Supported establishment/upgrading of **46** isolation centers in various district
- Logistic team comprising members from NRCS, ICRC, IFRC and PNS has been tracking all requests and pipelines for medical supplies offered by humanitarian agencies and partners, receiving them and dispatching to NRCS province offices and district chapters for distribution
- NRCS online donation platform is functional ([Link](#))

PMER-IM

- NRCS submitted COVID-19 Response Plan 2021 to Social Welfare Council on their format
- NRCS has been issuing COVID-19 response daily report since 18 May 2021. Source of the data for update is NRCS web based 5W database and reporting
- NRCS PMER-IM team has been providing technical support to province and district chapters for 5W reporting in regular basis



Source of sectoral data: 5W report received from NRCS district chapters, province offices and headquarters. For detail, please find the [link](#) for COVID-19 interactive dashboard .

CHALLENGES

- Potential risk of COVID-19 infection within family and community has limited the blood donation practice.
- Despite of district being proactive, it has been difficult to ensure quality data management and reporting of COVID-19 response due to poor internet service in some district chapters.
- Endorsement of prohibitory order has limited movement of Red Cross staff and volunteers posing challenge to reach the people in needs of support.
- It is challenging to manage high expectations from stakeholders and meet diverse types needs of communities.

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

- All Red Cross actions related to COVID-19 are in line with Government of Nepal guideline and initiatives.
- NRCS province offices, district chapters and sub-chapters have remained in close contact with the local authorities and have been supporting in isolation centres management.
- NRCS has been participating in meetings called by government and other organizations, and sharing Red Cross actions and extending hands of partnership and collaboration in COVID-19 response.

GOOD PRACTICES

- Despite of the prohibitory order at various part of country, NRCS has been able to conduct blood collection campaign (following the Blood Collection during COVID-19 Protocol) and other humanitarian actions under COVID-19 response through strong coordination and partnership with local government and other stakeholders.
- Establishment of contactless hand washing station along with COVID-19 awareness message has enhanced the hygiene practice of people at point of entry.
- A team of members from NRCS headquarters, provinces and district chapters, ICRC, IFRC and PNS have been managing quality 5W database, reporting online (<https://mis.nrscs.org/>), preparing daily situation report ([link](#)) and preparing weekly consolidated report of the COVID-19 response and communicating to stakeholders through email and NRCS website (<https://nrscs.org/>)
- Government has appreciated positioning of NRCS volunteers at COVID-19 vaccine roll out clinics/centers.
- NRCS staff and volunteers have been playing strong role in dignified dead body management together with security force ensuring COVID-19 safety and security measures

OUR PARTNERS FOR COVID-19

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Partners

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

For further information

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