

COVID-19

Preparedness and Response Operation 2021

Update # 4

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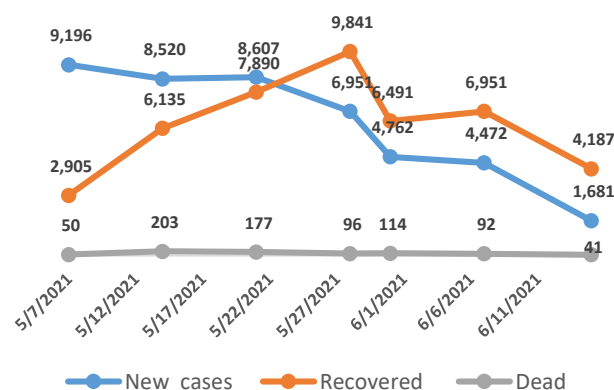
NRCS has been disseminating COVID-19 awareness message through established help desk along with distribution of mask to needy one
(Photo: NRCS Kalikot)

CONTEXT

Highlights:

- Prohibitory orders imposed since 29 April 2021 in Kathmandu valley has further extended until 21 June 2021 to curb the coronavirus pandemic with certain flexibility of opening time of shop and emergency services
- Medical supplies from Germany arrived in Nepal which include 112 units of ventilators, 2068500 K95 masks, 29,000 pulse oximeters, 34,030,000 surgical mask, five isolation centre tents, 400 gumboots, 25,000 litres of hand disinfectants. The first part of shipment contains 62 ventilators, 27,500 FFP@ masks, 30,000 surgical masks, 100 gumboots, and 200 body bags.
- Chart 1 demonstrates weekly cross-sectional data of COVID-19 new cases, persons recovered and deaths from 1 May to 14 June 2021. Daily new cases are in decreasing trend while daily number of persons recovering is greater than the new cases. In case of deaths, the number is also decreasing.
- 24,22,376 people have been vaccinated across the country. Out of them, 691,494 have received both doses (update as of 14 June 2021).

Chart 1: COVID 19 weekly trend analysis



VOICE

"Me and my wife have received support from Red Cross when we were in the most need of it", says Ramesh Deukar, a returnee from India.

He further added, "As we lost our job in India due to pandemic, we were returning to Nepal. But unfortunately, we were robbed on the way. We had left nothing, even to buy food, water and bus tickets to our way back home."

Knowing this story, Nepal Red Cross Society managed transportation cost of them from Gauriphanta point of entry in Kailali to Paael, their village in Achham district'

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all walks of life including job of Nepalese migrant workers in India. Many migrant workers returned home when COVID-19 cases and death started to increase in India. Ramesh Deukar is one of them.

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 persons infected with COVID-19 to hospital, support for establishment/management of isolation centres, distribution of water bottles and hygiene/dignity kits, 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 14 June 2021, NRCS has reached 3,138,206 people directly and indirectly through COVID-19 response in Nepal since 1 May 2021.

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, people with chronic disease
- Migrant returnees/labourers/workers
- School children
- People at points of entry, in holding areas, quarantine/isolation centres
- People in prisons
- Public in general



3,138,206

People reached (direct + indirect)



3,954

Volunteer mobilized

Health and Care

Major progress

- **19,041** people including 20 single women, 15 people with disability and 5 pregnant mother reached through contact tracing surveillance.
- **1,509** persons including 3 pregnant mother and 2 single women with COVID-19 infection were transported to hospital by NRCS ambulances. The National Society upgraded its 11 ambulances with compartment division.
- **52,900** people supported to access vaccination service provided by the government. NRCS has mobilized more than **600** volunteers and staff in vaccination centres.
- **782,637** personnel protective items such as full body personal protective equipment (PPE), coveralls, masks and gloves distributed to front line responders
- **1,501** people received psychosocial first aid (PFA)/psychosocial support service (PSS) from NRCS
- **110** people oriented on proper use of PPE and infection prevention control (IPC) measures
- **758** health/emergency kits provided to COVID-19 isolation centres, hospitals and persons infected with COVID-19
- **76** oxygen cylinders, **12** oximeters and **39** provided to COVID-19 isolation centres, hospitals and Palika offices benefiting more than 25,000 people.



NRCS volunteer supporting for registration people for vaccination at vaccination centre in Malangwa, Sarlahi (Photo: NRCS Sarlahi)



NRCS Kailali district chapter has established COVID-19 PCR test booth at Gauraphanta point of entry for testing the people returning from India (Photo: Bhoj Raj Ojha)

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Major progress

- **282** people reached through hand washing demonstration sessions
- **29,574** water bottles distributed to people entering Nepal from various border sites, points of entry and staying at holding centres
- **647** hygiene kits distributed in quarantine/isolation sites and hospitals
- **9,272** bars of soap, 157 buckets with tap, 5 water tanks and, 55 water mugs distributed in isolation centre, prisons and communities
- **12** hand washing stations constructed/repared at isolation centres, hospitals, schools and community. Proper hand washing with soap and water is one of the ways to contain COVID-19 .



NRCS has established hand washing station at Birjung point of entry
(Photo: NRCS Birjung)

Risk Communication and CEA



NRCS volunteers have been disseminating COVID-19 awareness message to the walkers at Gulariya Municipality, Bardiya, areas nearby the boarder site (Photo: NRCS Bardiya)

Major progress

- **19,271** information, education and communication materials such as pamphlets, flex, stickers, flyers, brochures, banners with COVID-19 awareness messages produced and distributed
- **389 (79 female callers and 310 male callers)** calls received and responded through Red Cross Hotline 1130. Out of them, **171** calls were related to COVID-19.
- **13** 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 1302 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
- **1,152,472** people reached through COVID-19 awareness activities such as miking
- **134** people reached through training/orientation on COVID-19 risk communication
- **143** COVID-19 related posts shared in NRCS Facebook Page with 49,021 reach
- Developed COVID-19 risk communication-community engagement and accountability guideline and shared with all province and district chapters

CHALLENGES

- Prohibitory orders in the country have posed challenges on timely transportation of support materials to districts and communities.
- Limitation on volunteer mobilization due to unavailability of clear volunteer insurance mechanism
- Potential risk of COVID-19 infection has made it difficult to reach vulnerable people with support.

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

- NRCS has mobilised case investigation and contact tracing volunteers to support contact tracing at local level.
- Government has appreciated positioning of NRCS volunteers at COVID-19 vaccination clinics/centres
- NRCS has been able to conduct blood collection campaign and other humanitarian actions under COVID-19 response through strong coordination and partnership with local government and other stakeholders.

OUR PARTNERS FOR COVID-19

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Partners

UN agencies: UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO,

NGOs/INGOs having bilateral partnership with district chapters: Plan International, Mercy Corps, GIZ

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

Philanthropists: Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association, NepalMedUK, individual donors

Government agencies at federal, provincial and local levels

For further information

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