

COVID-19

Preparedness and Response Operation 2021

Update # 7

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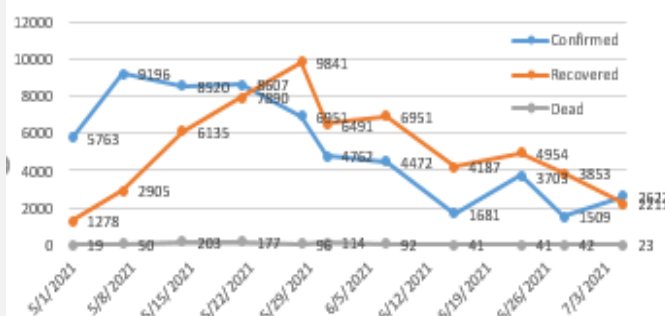
NRCS Jhapa established holding center where volunteers have been providing general health check-up/screening and sanitization services to the migrants passing through Kakarvitta point of entry (Photo: NRCS Jhapa)

CONTEXT

- As of 5 July 2021, 646,367 people have been tested positive out of which 611,429 people have recovered and 9,248 have lost their lives due to COVID-19 related complications. Chart 1 demonstrates weekly cross-sectional data of COVID-19 new cases, persons recovered and deaths from 1 May to 5 July 2021 where the curve for total confirmed case observed to be on the increasing trend. For the detail, refer to Ministry of Health COVID-19 dashboard at <https://covid19.mohp.gov.np/>
- The District Administration Office (DAO) of Kathmandu valley have further extended the prohibitory orders until 15 July 2021 with further relaxation by allowing public and private vehicles to ply in Kathmandu valley. DAO have imposed prohibitory orders in 68 district across the nation to control the spread of COVID-19. Also, the government has announced to resume domestic and international flights that remained suspend since the enforced prohibitory orders shortly after outbreak of second wave of COVID-19 in April following the safety protocol developed by government.
- The Ministry of Health and Population has announced that children will be at high risk if Nepal is to be hit by third and fourth waves of COVID-19. Ministry of health also urged hospitals to separate 20% of their beds for treatment of COVID-19 infected children as Nepal is likely to witness third and fourth waves of COVID-19 and many children will be at high risk when that happens.
- With the new cases, number of patient with Mucormycosis, a rare fungal infection commonly known as 'black fungus' and mostly found among diabetic COVID-19 patient reported in government run hospital has reached 14. But none of hospital have Liposomal Amphotericin B, the primary drug used for treating the black fungus infection, and in absence of this drug alternative drug Deoxycholate has been used.
- The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) has made it mandatory for those travelling to Nepal to quarantine themselves in hotel for seven days. The requirement however has been exempted for passengers with a complete COVID-19 vaccination certificate and for those coming for emergency purpose like funerals and mourning with a negative antigen test and recommendation by the local units will be considered. People exempted from the requirement of hotel quarantine are subjected to home/self-quarantine for 10 days upon their arrival in Nepal.
- 2,606,005 (9.1%) people have been vaccinated across the country. Out of them, 758,046 (2.6%) have received both doses (update as of 4 July 2021). Government of Nepal is all set to receive 2.4 million more dose of COVID-19 vaccine from China's Sinopharm by July 23.
- The Meteorological Forecasting Division (MFD) has predicted heavy rainfall in Nepal for next three days and heavy rainfall has been predicted for Province 1, 2, Bagmati, Lumbini and Gandaki Province.

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 MOHP, 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 live saving actions, 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 5 July 2021, NRCS has reached 11,732,084 people directly and indirectly through COVID-19 response in Nepal since 1 May 2021.

COVID-19 Weekly Trend Analysis



VOICE

"NRCS support has been a capsule for me to recover from COVID-19. The regular communication and follow up by NRCS volunteer and their coordination with the health post and ward office to ensure availability of medicine with advice on adapting home isolation rules had supported me to have improvement in my health condition, while passing through this hard time after confirming positive for COVID-19 until my recovery," says Santosh Rai.

Santosh Rai, resident of Rupakot Majhuwagadhi Ward No. 6, Diktal Municipality, Khotang District, confirms COVID-19 positive. NRCS volunteer identified Santosh Rai through contact tracing and later regularly followed Santosh to know about the daily health progress, ensure availability of medicine in coordination with health post and ward office. Moreover, Santosh and his family were informed about home isolation rules and were provided psychosocial counselling to minimize their stress and stigma during COVID-19 confirmation. Santosh express his happiness to get recovered from COVID-19 with support of NRCS volunteer. He further shared that he could understand the real meaning of humanitarian service after receiving on time support from NRCS volunteer.

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



6,102,178

People reached (direct + indirect)



3,954

Volunteer mobilized

Health and Care

Major progress

- **21,678** people including 22 single women, 17 people with disability and 7 pregnant mothers reached through contact tracing surveillance.
- **1,587** people with COVID-19 infection including 2 single women, 4 pregnant mothers and 11 people with disability were transported to hospital by NRCS ambulances.
- **63,907** people supported to access vaccination service provided by the government. NRCS has mobilized more than **600** volunteers and staff in vaccination centres
- **948,957** personnel protective items such as full body personal protective equipment (PPE), coveralls, masks and gloves distributed to front line responders
- **1,534** people received psychosocial first aid (PFA)/psychosocial support service (PSS) from NRCS. Out of them, 120 people were children and their family members affected with COVID-19 including 46 female
- **1,687** health/emergency kits provided to COVID-19 isolation centres, hospitals and persons infected with COVID-19
- **2,461** blood donation campaigns conducted where 5,693 donated blood
- **124** participants from 52 districts were oriented virtually on COVID-19 vaccination drive. Objectives of the orientation were:
 - To update the participants on latest vaccination practice in Nepal
 - To develop common understanding on role of NRCS in vaccination campaign.

During the orientation, more than 50 queries regarding vaccine were addressed.



NRCS volunteers supporting in the vaccination campaign
(Photo: NRCS Rupandehi)



NRCS continued to provide essential ambulance service to the people infected with COVID-19 despite of road blocked due to landslide at various part of the country (Photo: NRCS Sindhuli)

Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Major progress

- **3,665** people reached through hand washing demonstration sessions at points of entry and strategic locations at different communities
- **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 (10 in community, 156 at health service centre, 408 in isolation centre, 30 in quarantine site and rest at other office /organization.)
- **10,327** bars of soap, 5 water tanks and, 3,390 sanitizers, 55 water mugs and 115 toilet cleaning materials (like toilet brush, toilet cleaner, plunger etc.) distributed in isolation centre, prisons and communities
- **23** hand washing stations constructed/repaired (7 stations constructed, 1 tube well platform improved, 6 handwashing basins repaired and remaining includes connection of water supply) at isolation centres, hospitals, schools and communities



NRCS Rautahat conducted orientation on Repair and maintenance of Contactless Handwashing Station at Juddha Secondary School, Gaur Muniipality (**Photo: NRCS Rautahat**)

Risk Communication and CEA

Major progress

- In order to strengthen social listening part, Facebook messenger group has been formed where community volunteers can share COVID-19 related concerns of community. During the reporting period, 37 concerns were received and responded. Depending on nature of concerns, they are also shared with government for adapting and changing message as per needs.
- **19** 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 1,302 times through different FM stations across the country
- **15,738** people reached through Unit Action team with COVID-19 awareness message during campaigns along with offline social listening and rumour tracking
- **2,468,231** people reached through COVID-19 awareness activities such as miking
- **134** people reached through training/orientation on COVID-19 risk communication
- Developed COVID-19 risk communication-community engagement and accountability guideline and shared with all province and district chapters
- **251** COVID-19 related posts shared in NRCS Facebook Page with 69,213 reaches
- **189** total news coverage about Red Cross response against COVID-19

Protection Gender and Inclusion

Major progress

- **308** people reached with dignity kits among which 36 kits were distributed at community, 5 at different health service centres, 126 in isolation centres, 9 distributed in prison of Rolpa, 13 kits distributed in Beni district hospital quarantine site and other remaining in local office/organizations. The dignity kit consists of hygiene promotion items and menstruation hygiene items for female.
- **5,213** people reached with ready to eat food support (5,200 people were reached at the Gauriphanta point of entry, Kailali and 13 in Dolakha)
- **795** dead body management bags handed over to hospital and district administration office
- Involved in dignified management of dead body of COVID-19 patients
- **101** women, children and other vulnerable people supported with management of vehicle to reach their destination
- **1** person with disability provided with assistive device in Kathmandu district



Narmaya Bhujel, age 40, from Nijgadh Municipality Ward No. 9, Bara is a single woman with mobility impairment received a cash support of NRP 5,000 under COVID-19 preparedness and response operation (Photo: Udaya Kumar Nepal, NRCS Bara)

Shelter and logistics

Key Actions

- Provided 51 bed sheets, 285 tarpaulins, 33 mattresses, 218 blanket, 251 mosquito nets, 8 tent and 20 kitchen sets to different holding center, jail/prison, isolation center including security forces
- Supported establishment/upgrading of **54** isolation centers in various district including Terhathum, Palpa, Sindhupalchowk, Bajhang and Khotang district
- Logistic team comprising members from NRCS, ICRC, IFRC and PNS have 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 has been issuing COVID-19 response daily situation report, and weekly consolidated report and info graph. Source of the data for the reports is NRCS web based 5W database and reporting system and are now working on replicating the reporting system for monsoon operation.

The consolidated reports and info-graphs are available in NRCS website. www.nrcs.org



Joint monitoring of COVID-19 response intervention by NRCS HQs and UNICEF team at point of entry and holding centre at Belahiya, Rupandehi (Photo: NRCS Rupandehi)

CHALLENGES

- The seasonal monsoon continued from mid-June with massive destruction and causality has urged the emergency need for monsoon response, which has slowed down the COVID-19 response in some of the floods and landslides affected districts.
- There is potential risk of COVID-19 spread in communities in the recent floods and landslides affected areas as people displaced by the disaster have been taking shelter with their relatives or living together with their neighbours.

COORDINATION & 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 continued its response activities in monsoon floods and landslides affected area with precautionary measures considering the high risk of COVID-19 spread via emergency response team formed in each district.
- NRCS conducted orientations/interactive sessions to enhance capacity and knowledge of volunteers on COVID-19 vaccination drive and role of NRCS in vaccination campaign. The session was also crucial to address queries of volunteers on vaccination.
- NRCS has strong coordination and partnership with local government and other stakeholders, which supported to conduct blood collection campaigns and other humanitarian actions under COVID-19 response.

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, Nepal Med UK, individual donors

Government agencies at federal, provincial and local levels

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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