



Red Cross calls for support to fully vaccinate the most vulnerable

About 1.4 million vulnerable people in Nepal are in limbo when it comes to their second vaccination due to uncertainty on vaccine deliveries. Nepal Red Cross calls on partners and the international community to take action to ensure there are enough doses available to protect Nepal's people from COVID-19.

Around 4 per cent of people in Nepal have been fully vaccinated since the beginning of the national rollout, however, official figures show that 1.4 million people most at risk from the virus, in particular people aged over 65, are yet to have their second and all-important dose to complete their protection.

The virus has now killed more than 9,500 people in Nepal, more than the devastating earthquakes of 2015. Since the first case was identified in January 2020, the country has experienced two devastating waves of infections that stretched the health system to its limits. The highly virulent Delta variant, which was responsible for the second record-breaking wave, continues to drive new infections.

Pitambar Aryal, Secretary General of Nepal Red Cross Society said:

“Vaccination is one of our most effective tools to combat and contain the virus, and it is critical that everyone has access to both doses to build effective immunity and slow transmission. This is only possible by increasing access and coverage of vaccines with support from our partners and vaccine-producing countries.”

Nepal Red Cross Society is playing a pivotal role in alleviating the suffering of people affected by COVID-19 and is working closely with the relevant authorities to bolster efforts to contain the virus and prevent further waves. More than 3,900 Red Cross volunteers are spreading safety messages to help ensure more people are taking action to prevent the spread of the virus and promoting trust and confidence in the vaccines. The Nepal Red Cross has reached out to 2.5 million people through COVID-19 awareness activities in the communities, more than 2,251 life-saving medical equipment such as oxygen concentrators, oximeter, etc. have been distributed. More than, 1,700 people with COVID-19 infection have been transported to the hospitals or isolation sites through Nepal Red Cross's network of more than 240 ambulances to transport people to quarantine and health centres.

Azmat Ulla, Head of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Nepal Delegation, said:

“This pandemic is far from over and IFRC is supporting the crucial work of Nepal Red Cross throughout the country. It is critical that we do everything possible to ensure communities, workers and the health facilities are as prepared as possible for any future waves of infections.”