



Orientation to women group during national sanitation week  
(PC: Narayan Pokharel, Dailekh)

## Water, Sanitation And Hygiene (WASH) For All

### ✖ Background

Nepal is struggling to cope with the second wave of COVID-19 which started around mid-April 2021. The government of Nepal (GoN) imposed a strict lockdown from the end of April 2021 and is still ongoing. Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) from the 1<sup>st</sup> week of May 2021 is adopting the "work from home" modality. All the development project works in the field have been halted until further notice and the focus is now diverted to COVID-19, where all 77 NRCS district chapters are now actively involved in the response of COVID-19. NRCS is currently supporting GoN to fight back and decrease the impact of COVID-19 in every aspect, right from supporting large numbers of medical gears and equipment to the ministry of health, to volunteer/staff mobilization in immunization camps, support in isolation centers, raising awareness of the people/community, etc. Despite all the efforts, the death toll is a record high in the second wave as the transmission rate of the corona virus is much higher. However, after strict implementation of lockdown from June 2021 the transmission graph is projected to be in decreasing order, and GoN with its ongoing vaccination program aims to achieve immunity in its people who can fight better with the virus.

### COVID-19 Situation Overview (as of 9 June 2021)

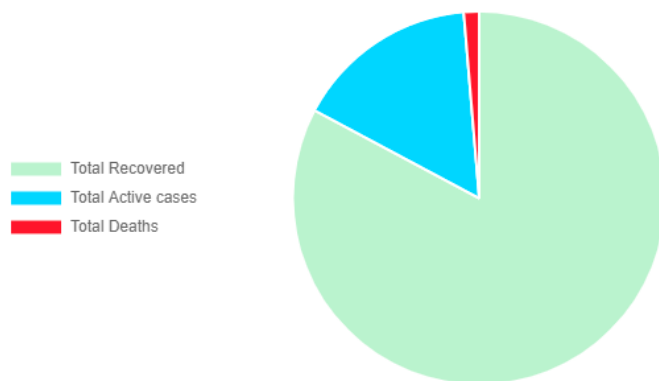
Description	Nepal	Global
# of confirmed cases	595,364	174,753,055
# of patients recovered	504,530	158,165,813
# of death	8,098	3,762,983
# of people in isolation	82,736	12,824,259
# of countries affected	192	
(click for updates): <a href="https://covid19.mohp.gov.np/#/">https://covid19.mohp.gov.np/#/</a> <a href="https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html">https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html</a>		

### ✖ Surging death and deficiency of supplies: Impact due to COVID-19

The new epi-center for COVID-19 in the South Asian region of this world has been badly infected by the coronavirus especially in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Observing the spike of COVID-19 incidence in Nepal and increasing mortality rates, Nepal's Ministry of Health and Population confirmed three variants of the virus. "B.1.617.2 is the new variant seen in India while B.1.617.1 is seen in the UK.

The public health concern is increasing with a recent rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in Nepal. To curb this pandemic, Nepal is facing some forms of lockdown, encouraging people to implement social distancing to reduce interactions between people which could eventually reduce the possibilities of new infection; however, it has affected the overall physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of the people.

COVID-19 is no exception and has triggered increasing unemployment, loan defaults, and major economic losses around the globe. The economic downturn caused by COVID-19 can increase the economic instability, health inequalities, and social disparities in Nepal, which can have a huge impact on the poverty levels. While the lockdown has affected traders, especially people with small shops and those with limited sources of income. The poor, marginalized people and daily wagers are more vulnerable. Different research has shown that a pandemic like COVID-19 can result in increased mental burden to marginalized or low-income people via socio-economic disadvantages such as job insecurity, housing instability, discrimination, and food insecurity. Hospital facilities have been stretched beyond their capacity due to the higher number of patients seeking treatment facilities. Similarly, major life-saving equipment and medical supplies (medical oxygen, ventilators, etc.) are inadequate in Nepal. The quality of education appears to have plummeted as never before. The whole of social dynamics has been altered with the second wave of COVID-19 in Nepal. A developing country like Nepal has unique challenges with vulnerable populations and scared resources to respond to the pandemic.



Total Recovered: 82.78% Total Infected: 15.88% Total Deaths: 1.33%

COVID-19 situation chart  
(PC: Ministry of health and population)

## ✖ NRCS approach

### NRCS Partners Call

With the escalating situation of COVID-19 second wave, NRCS jointly with IFRC had called for partners call who are in-country or involved in some ways in NRCS through different projects on 12th May 2021 virtually with an aim to mobilize the collective capacities and assets for safer and healthier communities facing a range of risk associated with COVID-19 and save lives. During the call, the NRCS presented a global and national scenario of C-19, C-19 vaccination status in Nepal, NRCS current position on C-19 response, government and NRCS priorities and challenges. Mr. Azmat Ulla, IFRC Nepal Head of Delegation (HoD) stated, ***"NRCS is coordinating closely with government on critical needs and IFRC is in full support to provide timely life-saving support. Thus, we request all the partners to extend their support to Nepal."*** IFRC APRO stated that the regional office is currently pursuing four key priorities at the moment:

- ◆ Procurement of life-saving supplies. Time is of the essence.
- ◆ Support the NS key services in the prevention space (as vaccines are slow to come)
- ◆ Support vaccination campaigns
- ◆ Humanitarian diplomacy on a fairer distribution of support in the region.

All the partners have been positive to extend their support to Nepal in the most possible ways. The American RC has stated any of its staff in Nepal is at NRCS disposal. Reallocation of development funding will also be discussed with NRCS. Also sharing info. from Nepal with back donors will be conducted. Ongoing discussion on a proposal to enhance plasma therapy. Danish RC will be supporting the procurement of body bags and oximeters. Finnish RC, British RC, Australian RC, Japanese RC, Irish RC have worked with the project team and reallocated the budget from its development project for COVID response. Canadian RC, Italian RC, Swedish RC, Swiss RC have shown interest in either vaccination, medical items (such as oxygen supplies), or in-kind support and discussion ongoing with back donors.

iRaiser has been launched by the NRCS on 8th May 2021 and has been also shared widely where interested can donate through international cards. iRaiser platform allows NRCS to receive:

- ◆ ***Individual donations domestic and international***
- ◆ ***Create separate pages for employee giving campaigns of interested corporates abroad***

(Click on the link to donate: <https://bit.ly/3nXndUh> or use the QR code)



### Using "Lookback Study" as post-monitoring tool

In the year 2013, NRCS had conducted a "lookback study" of WASH project in Rolpa district with support of IFRC and Latrobe University, Australia. During the study, drivers and motivators for sustainable total sanitation initiative were researched and have extracted precise recommendations for future programmes. Most of the findings were related to Open Defecation Free (ODF) campaign in the project. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescents (IFRC) developed the 'look-back' study concept which states ***"it is the study to assess the degree of impact and sustainability, using a set of tools, by revisiting the project after completion of three to five years or more"***. It targets that 70% of project outputs (both infrastructure and behaviour change) should have been achieved and maintained over a 10-year period.

Again, NRCS is now planning to conduct a "lookback study" in Earthquake Recovery Operation (ERO) three districts which were completed in 2018. In this study, IFRC will provide financial support and technical backstopping to write up a quality report of the study. There may be question- ***What would happen after "lookback study"?*** The "lookback study" results are critical for the organizational learning process and should play a key role in informing the design and development of future programmes. After the "lookback study" in three districts, NRCS will focus to resolve problems with non-functioning facilities and lapse behaviours by initiation of remedy actions with IFRC and PNSs supports with the following initiations:

- ◆ Prepare a new proposal for a 'hygiene promotion and sustainability' project, including best practices by focussing on engagement, operation and maintenance, support to and coordination with local authorities, and well-designed behaviour change strategies.
- ◆ Support to local private sector actors for supply of spare parts for water or sanitation facilities and management of Water User Committees.
- ◆ Linking with local authorities, make sure that the WASH committee is legally mandated, recognized and re-organise the community WASH committee, including re-training on maintenance, repairs, financial management, accountability.

1st stage: Preparatory and literature review	2nd Stage: Coordination, networking & relation building	3rd Stage: Field implementation /study rollout	4th Stage: Wider dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion on conceptual understanding on look back study</li><li>• Discussion-presentation with IFRC and stakeholders</li><li>• Team formation</li><li>• Preparation/finalization of procedure, guidelines, questionnaire, inventory, etc</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conceptual understanding and study objective sharing to NRCS local chapters</li><li>• Selection/identification of enumerators/volunteers</li><li>• Orientation/training to enumerators/volunteers on the look-back study, their role, and responsibility</li><li>• Conceptual understanding and study objective sharing</li><li>• Rural Municipality Authorities and Ward authorities of the project area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carry out a look back study in each selected project</li><li>• Finding consolidation/drafting by team</li><li>• Study finding sharing for inputs/feedback; IFRC/NRCS/experts</li><li>• Standard report writing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wider dissemination through IFRC: PNSs and Stakeholders</li></ul>

## ✖ NRCS approach

### Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) in Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)

Cash transfer is rapidly increasing in emergencies, recovery, and development phases by the government and humanitarian agencies as an effective way to assist people affected by disasters and crises. The cash and voucher assistance (CVA) maintains the dignity, flexibility, and choices of the affected population over their basic needs and even boosts up the local economies in many ways. NRCS in the past has already engaged in several CVA in many disasters which consist of emergencies and reconstruction as well as in conflict response.

Some of these include – livelihood support to most vulnerable and ultra-poor people, micro-economic initiative (MEI) support to conflict-affected families in 2006, cash support to erect a temporary shelter to affected families in the Koshi flood in 2008, progressive shelter in the mid-west flood in 2014, several cash-based interventions after 2015 earthquake and cash assistance packages to flood and landslides affected families in recent monsoon Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) operation in 2020.

All these indicate that NRCS has undertaken cash transfer as a priority or one of the feasible options in development programs and disaster response. NRCS, has, therefore, put CVA as a possible option of assisting and responding to different disaster situations. NRCS has set a target to reach 5,000 households with a multi-purpose cash grant in a medium type of disaster through mobilizing internal and in-country resources. In a mega-scale disaster, 50,000 households will be reached with viable cash modality and delivery mechanism through movement surge support.

NRCS cash preparedness initiatives since 2019 have shown some remarkable efforts and results such as the development of cash SOP, leading national cash coordination group, established cash working group at headquarters, produced quarterly cash newsletter, strengthen coordination with government, other stakeholders, and learning from cash response.

Recently, NRCS has conducted a CVA capacity assessment of society in five-area of leadership commitment; process, system, and tools; financial, human resources and capacities; accountability to affected populations, coordination and partnership, and, test, learn, and improve. The capacity assessment aims to develop a 3-year action plan for NRCS. This makes the national society (NS) a credible and accountable actor for CVA within the country.



Ward chair of silichong RM, Sankhuwasava, distributing cash to landslide affected families for winterisation support through monsoon DREF operation  
PC: Ramesh Ghimire (NRCS, HQs)

### Volunteer Promotion Guideline in Emergency WASH (a brief note)

NRCS has been involved in water and sanitation since the 80s and expanding its sector to hygiene promotion and other cross-cutting issues with the span of time. Considering the long-term experience in the sector of WASH, NRCS has decided to work in acute need of water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion integrating other relevant cross-cutting sectors in disaster and crisis with an endorsement of Emergency WASH 5 years' strategic framework 2020-2024. Its strategic objective is to strengthen NRCS capacity in water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion for life-saving of disaster and crises affected people. As per the need of the country and organizational scope, NRCS emphasizes longer-term water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion interventions including preparedness, relief/ response, and recovery activities which are an integral part of WASH programs. NRCS has developed Emergency WASH five years' strategic framework 2020-2024. Its objective is to strengthen NRCS capacity in emergency water, sanitation and hygiene promotion for lives saving of disaster and crises affected people.

- ♦ The five years' WASH framework defined the four action area for five years until 2024 through the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Division:
- ♦ Development and capacity building of volunteers in emergency water, sanitation and hygiene promotion.
- ♦ Prepositioning of WASH relief kits/materials in HQs and warehouses located in strategic points
- ♦ Improved tools, guidelines, and mechanisms for emergency WASH response
- ♦ Institutional linkage, coordination, collaboration, and partnership with local, national, provincial, and global organizations.

This Volunteer promotional guideline especially focuses on the first key action area of the five years' strategic framework and it is prepared to align with NRCS Volunteer Management Guideline. The trained volunteers and staff are selected, recruited, deployed, and promoted or rewarded as per NRCS volunteer management guidelines. This guideline will also adapt the IFRC competency framework which will align with the surge optimization process. As of now, NRCS WASH division will be adapting the competency framework at a national level and ToT training. This guideline will support in performance appraisal of the volunteers. This guideline will systematize the process of retaining trained human resources along with an updated roster mechanism, their skills, and knowledge to capacitate the effective WASH response during emergencies.



## ✦ Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) in Action



NRCS/IFRC handed over 90 sets of oxygen concentrators and PPE set to MoHP (PC: Annapurna post, National daily newspaper)



Orientation to adolescent girls on making of menstrual reusable pad during MHM day (PC: Srutinath Chaudary, NRCS, Dailekh)



Handover of ventilators and health equipment to Sindhuli Hospital (PC: NRCS, Sindhuli)



Ongoing construction of school toilet (PC: Narayan Pokharel, NRCS, Dailekh)



Public awareness campaign on control and minimization of COVID-19 disease (PC: NRCS, web portal)



NRCS trained volunteers serving for dead body management (PC: Sameer Awasthi, NRCS, Myagdi)



Handover of health safety equipment to COVID-19 management committee, Province-2, Bara (PC: NRCS, Bara)



## ✦ Highlight stories

### Eye-opening for Rupa

As usual NRCS WASH motivators did a household visit of Rupa Bi. Ka. and encouraged her to attend upcoming health education class. As anticipated, on the third day of the household visit Rupa joined the health education class that was organized in a school of Jaisidanda. There she learned a lot about communicable disease, safe sanitation, and hygiene practices. After the class, she said, **"with very limited knowledge on safe sanitation and hygiene practices in our family, we were forced to visit the doctor frequently"**. After expressing her emotional feelings about the knowledge gained in the class, she then promised to construct all the total sanitation amenities in her house. Right after around 15 days, during the usual round of household visit, it was found that she had constructed all the amenities and were properly using all of them. She then tells the motivator, **"I hope all the diseases will go away from my house now onwards!!"**. As a result, these days she is very happy that no one from her family is ill as before. Moreover, she now has utilized her time and effort to participate in the plumber training for which she's making all the required fittings for the water supply scheme that is being constructed in her community. Now she proudly states, **"I think my days of hardship are over since my family is no more ill and I am a trained plumber, I will earn more from the skill I learned. Thank you Nepal Red Cross for making my life beautiful"**.

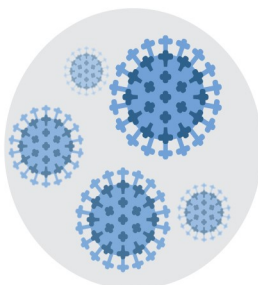


Rupa Bi. Ka. Participating in Plumber training  
PC: Srutinath Chaudhary, NRCS, Dailekh

## ✦ Coordination and collaboration

All NRCS actions related to COVID-19 are in-line with GON MOHP, HEOC guidelines and initiatives. NRCS province offices, district chapters and sub-chapters have remained in close contact with local authorities and has supported their plan for quarantine, isolation and holding site assessment, establishment and management. Participation in district disaster management committee meeting in all districts. Participation in WASH cluster meeting (national and provincial) and other meeting such as media interaction program.

## HOW DO VACCINES WORK?



Vaccines introduce a weak or inactive form of the disease to the body.



The body reacts by stimulating the immune system and creating antibodies.



The antibodies remember the disease and can defend against it if a person becomes exposed to it.

## ✦ Upcoming/participated event

- ◆ National WASH cluster meeting every Tuesday
- ◆ NRCS health and community service committee meeting on 16th May, 2021
- ◆ MHM PA meeting on 18th May, 2021
- ◆ Exclusive meeting on Emergency WASH monsoon preparedness and response on 24th May, 2021
- ◆ RCRC menstrual hygiene management experience webinar 4 on 28th May, 2021
- ◆ CVA and WASH TWG meeting on 3rd June, 2021

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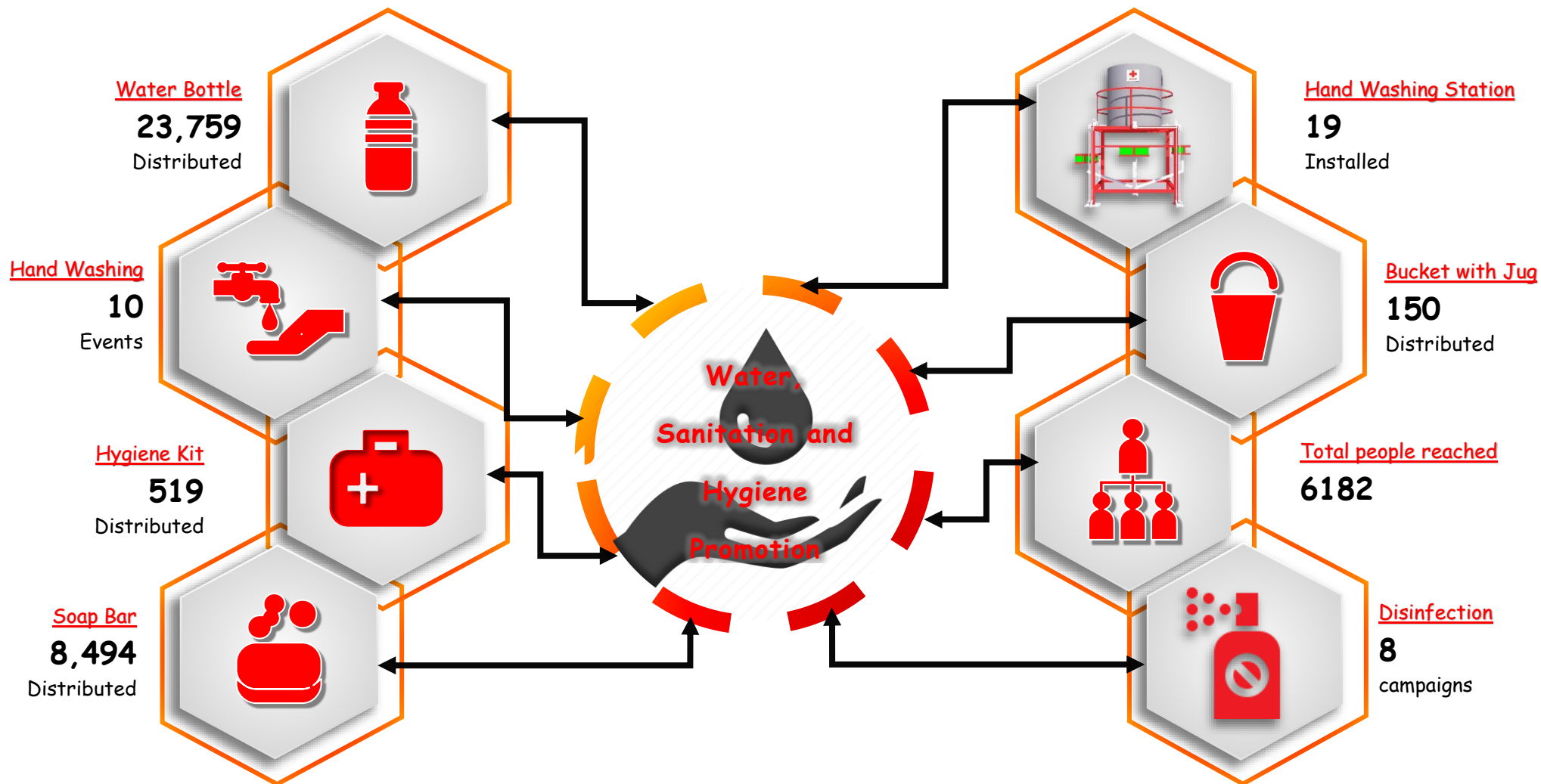
### Contributors

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# WASH

## COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE OPERATION (Second Wave)



Update as on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2021

Source: [NRCS Dashboard for COVID-19](#)