Background

Nepal as a disaster prone country. With more deadly forecasted third phase of COVID-19 on the verge, this monsoon season brought new and unexpected disastrous situations. In the plains, regular inundation was witnessed but this year hill and mid-hill reasons were most devastated. Landslides, flash floods, earthquakes and eruption of choked waterways caused major havoc in the hill and mid-hill reasons. Numbers of national pride projects were damaged, numerous lengths of roads along with bridges were swept away, loss of personal and public properties was observed. With multiple disastrous events, the loss of lives (human and cattle) was inevitable.

During all those hard times, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) with its reach of volunteers and staff through district chapters and sub-chapters were always on-site to serve the community in need.

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP)

COVID-19 is one of the ongoing health catastrophes. The federal government and local governments have realized the essence of their planning for COVID-19 preparedness and response. The local governments have led the plan on ground. Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) has strongly supported local governments to prepare and roll out these plans. NRCS has supported to prepare and implement the plans in more than 70 municipal areas. Out of the total, NRCS is supporting 50 municipal areas in collaboration with UNICEF Nepal. Additionally, NRCS is supporting in more than 20 municipal areas through its COVID-19 appeal budget funded by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescents (IFRC). The plan has enabled local governments to function more successfully and efficiently in disaster and crisis management. The practice to make these plans at municipal levels are prepared with different styles based on available data and response capacity. However, the following outlines are generally included in COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan such as; a) Background, b) Objective of Preparedness and Response Plan, c) Caseload scenario, d) Preparedness and Response actions with quantity and timeline, e) Municipal budget for the response, f) Municipal level stakeholders and responsibility, etc.

As per the decision of the Nepal Government held on 29th March 2020; federal, provincial and local governments have established the COVID-19 Crisis Management Centre (CCMC) dedicatedly working for prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 in their respective level. Based on the decision, municipal CCMC has made their COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan and allocated fund to roll out envisaged remedial actions.

Furthermore, this COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan has interlinked to Local Level Disaster Risk Reduction Strategic Action Plan Guideline 2078 and Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan Formulation Guideline 2076 which assists to prepare the local level disaster plans with the following specific stepwise process as: a) Institutional decision and plan preparation, b) Analysis of hazards/loss and disaster risk, c) Define the goal and indicators, d) Strategic action plan and e) Implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

COVID-19 Situation Overview
(as of 25 August 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Nepal</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of confirmed cases</td>
<td>752,863</td>
<td>214,209,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of patients recovered</td>
<td>703,964</td>
<td>191,691,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of death</td>
<td>10,612</td>
<td>4,469,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people in isolation</td>
<td>38,287</td>
<td>18,049,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of countries affected</td>
<td>220</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Hygiene promotion usually refers to sceneries and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases. Hygiene promotion is a planned, systematic approach to enable people for taking action against water, sanitation and hygiene-related diseases. It can also provide a practical way to facilitate community participation, accountability and monitoring of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH) programmers.

Every year disasters occur in different communities which needs prompt response as per available sectoral assistance. In every disaster there will be a specific response mechanism, which cover 70-80% of the WASH sector directly or indirectly. Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion is a very computable sector, having eight (8) sub-competence areas where hygiene promotion is one of the major.

Nepal Red Cross Society has translated and contextualized Hygiene Promotion in the Emergency guideline as per national practices in the Nepali language which is developed by International Federation Red Cross and Red Crescents Societies. After this translation and contextualization, this guideline will be in reach of individual reader’s, community hygiene promoters as well as hygiene practitioners which will lead to entire awareness and practices of hygiene promotion in emergencies. This guideline focuses more on the implementation of hygiene promotion activities in parallel to software and hardware intervention and practices with effective and efficient involvement of community peoples, motivators, program manager and engineers for hygiene promotional activities.

Additionally, this guideline will support the hygiene promoters in analyzing the existing taboos and myths which are the barriers and help them find the motivators for the promotion of hygiene with community peoples. This guideline will assist conceptual readers, motivators and practitioners for the practical operation of the hygiene promotion in any emergency. This guideline with cope with the individual reader’s, motivators and practitioners for the development and management of hygiene promotion activities. The guideline highlights eight (8) different steps of hygiene promotion which will guide systematically for the proper promotion of hygiene to the people in need.

**8 Steps of Hygiene Promotion in Emergency**

1. Identifying the problem
2. Identifying target groups
3. Analyzing barrier and motivators for behavior change
4. Formulating hygiene behaviors objectives
5. Planning implementation
6. Monitoring and evaluation
7. Review, Re-adjust
8. Action fund for immediate relief

Heavy rainfall since mid of June triggered flood in various rivers across several districts of Nepal, particularly Sindhupalchok, Lamjung and Manang were affected the most. The flood damaged several settlements along the riverside affecting along downstream communities. The rainfall also triggered landslides in the upstream area of Melamchi river which blocked the river flow forming a dam, which later entered into settlements of Helambu to Melamchi Bazaar causing massive damage to properties and also causing human casualties in Sindhupalchok district. Similarly, floods in Marshyangdi river have displaced more than 90 families from Tal village in Nason and Chame Rural Municipalities in Manang district. The district is also disconnected due to damaged roads in many sections of Lamjung district opting airlifting as the only means of transportation of relief goods to the affected areas.

American Red Cross released a Quick Action Fund (QAF) to support affected people of Sindhupalchok, Manag and Lamjung districts as immediate relief. Assessment in the districts indicated that the displaced people are staying in nearby schools, public places and taking shelter in relative's houses, thus, the urgent need for non-food relief items (NFRI) was observed. Similarly, for the affected families living in temporary shelters; health and WASH supports are important at this stage. Apart from this, household receives cash for work for debris clear ance, cash or in-kind support for transitional shelter constructions.

As the COVID-19 has further complicated the response mechanism, it is now more crucial to maintain personal hygiene and follow mandatory safety protocol, for which it is important to distribute masks, sanitisers, soaps, buckets along with management of handwashing stations. NRCS has been responding to these needs from the existing stockpile in the respective district.
“Where is your mask?” campaign led by health volunteers and UAT (PC: NRCS, Rautahat)

Health volunteers supporting disable person for vaccination (PC: NRCS, Lalitpur)

Bottled water distribution to returnee from India in PoE (PC: NRCS, Rupandehi)

UAT members supporting in vaccination camp (PC: NRCS, Surkhet)

NRCS Secretary General and IFRC Head of Delegation in conversation with health volunteers (PC: NRCS, Rupandehi)

IFRC handed over health safety equipments to NRCS (PC: NRCS, HQs)

Conducting hand washing practice session by UAT member (PC: NRCS, Udayapur)

Participants of Pre-Construction Management Training (PC: Purna Prasad Hamal, NRCS, Salyan)
**Highlight stories**

**Sanitation & hygiene practice in Sada community**

According to Bhuliya Devirishidev, 65 of Sada community of Bhokranarishings RM, Sunsari, a year before, this community could not pay attention in safe hygienic practices with their limited knowledge. During the corona crisis, COVID-19 preparedness and response program has been conducting by NRCS in support of UNICEF. Unit Action Team (UAT) members and programme supervisors disseminated COVID-19 related awareness activities several times in the community. One of the representatives of this community, Bhuliya Devi learnt a lot about proper sanitation and hygiene behaviours and started to practise hand-washing with soap, several times a day. She also knew when to use a mask, especially while going out. She practised social distancing by staying two-meter away from strangers by wearing a mask. She has a lot of changes in her behaviour regarding wearing a mask, cleaning hands and other hygiene practices.

Community people after these awareness activities knew how corona was spread and also knew about protection measures. Thus, the change in the hygiene and sanitation behaviour of people is seen clearly in the community. In this way, rapid change in the behaviour of the community is seen which will likely have a long term impact on public health.

**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.

**Upcoming/participated event**

- WASH literature club meeting every Friday
- UNICEF Partners meeting 2nd August, 2021
- NDRT curriculum writeshop 2nd to 4th August, 2021
- CVA and WASH TWG meeting 5th August, 2021
- MHMPA meeting 12th August, 2021

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

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**Home isolation with positive mind set made me win over COVID-19**

I am currently working as a Social Mobilizer (SM) in Integrated Community Resilience Project, which is being implemented in Darma Rural Municipality of Salyan district. Effect of COVID-19 second wave was also hitting Salyan district. One day while returning home after finishing the usual activity, I felt a sudden headache, fatigue and pain in my eyes and joints. I felt nausea with fever the whole night. The fever was under control for some time after medication but in no time temperature starts rising followed by aggravated pain in the body, eyes and severe headache.

Feeling and facing these COVID like symptoms, I was in panic and consulted the local doctor. After Antigen test, I was diagnosed positive of COVID-19. However, after consultation of doctor, I stayed in home isolation. During my home isolation some negative thoughts came to my mind and I was worried that I might die as the symptoms were more prominent physically. As per the consultation of doctor, I started to be strong mentally, started the medication (even local herbs), followed safety protocol, maintained safe hygienic practices. With all the above activities conducting in regular basis, after 10th day, medical team of Darma health post checked my status and told me that I am recovering well. Right after, 18th day visit from the same team suggested me to return back to family after 20th day and start my life normally.

I would like to thank the Darma RM Chairman, health branch and the entire local government. Likewise, I would like to thank the NRCS Salyan family, my relatives, friends and well-wishers. I am with you today because of your support.
WASH

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE OPERATION
(Second Wave)

Water Bottle
120,912
Distributed

Bucket with Jug
385
Distributed

Hygiene Kit
750
Distributed

Soap Bar
12,735
Distributed

Hand Washing Station
42
5 New and 37 repair

Mobile Toilet
10
Installed

Total People Reached
297,515

Disinfectant
6,516
supplies

Update as on 21st August, 2021
Source: https://mis.nrcs.org/