

# Situation Update #153 - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## WHO Country Office for Nepal

Reporting Date: 13 - 19 March 2023 (Epi Week 11)

### HIGHLIGHTS

(Data published in the MoHP Situation Report as of 19 March 2023 and same data published in EDCD Report as of 20 March 2023)

- Of the total RT-PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases, 98.8% (989,145) of cases have recovered, 0.01% (17) are active cases and 1.19% (12,020) are deaths.
- Among the new RT-PCR confirmed cases (18) reported this week, 72.2% (13) are from Kathmandu district. Majority of the new cases 88.9% (16) have been reported from Kathmandu Valley (Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur) in Bagmati Province.

### COVID-19 vaccination coverage status (as of 14 March 2023)

Vaccine	First dose	Second dose
Covi-AstraZeneca	5,586,944	4,831,261
Vero Cell	10,390,700	9,267,276
Janssen	3,545,788	
Pfizer	4,994,235	3,798,944
Moderna	3,228,416	2,830,645

### NEPAL EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

- Since 9 May 2021, all 7 provinces in the country are experiencing community transmission.
- Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, a total of 78.2% (782,912/1,001,182) of RT-PCR confirmed cases were reported from three provinces, namely - Koshi, Bagmati, and Lumbini Provinces. The Kathmandu valley area (Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur) in Bagmati Province has substantially high case load with 44.1% of the national total (441,778/1,001,182) and 81.4% of the provincial total (441,778/542,860).
- Province-wise, RT-PCR test positivity rate in Epi week 11 ranged from 0.0% (Koshi, Gandaki, and Lumbini Provinces) to 2.0% (Bagmati Province) with a national positivity rate at 1.9%. Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpashchim Provinces did not report any RT-PCR test performed in the last week.
- Nepal reported a 20% increase in the number of new RT-PCR confirmed cases (n=18) in Epi week 11 compared to that in the previous week. Of these total cases reported last week, 94% of the cases have been reported from Koshi and Bagmati Provinces.
- Nepal did not report any death in Epi week 11, same as in the previous week.

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

(Data as of 19 March 2023)

#### NEPAL

##### Cumulative confirmed cases

RT-PCR: 1,001,182

Antigen RDT: 152,233

Cumulative deaths: 12,020

##### Cumulative tests

RT-PCR: 6,016,224

Antigen RDT: 1,528,864

#### SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION

##### Cumulative cases (%)

60,782,274 (8%)

##### Cumulative deaths (%)

803,958 (12%)

#### GLOBAL

##### Cumulative cases (%)

760,962,882 (100%)

##### Cumulative deaths (%)

6,878,968 (100%)

### ***National Influenza Surveillance***

- WHO Nepal has been providing continuous support to the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) in routine work along with the following activity:
- NIC-NPHL reported 16 diagnostic Influenza samples on Epi week 11 (13-19 March,2023).
  - One sample tested Influenza A/H3N2 positive.
  - No samples tested positive for SARS-CoV-2.
- National Influenza Center (NIC)-NPHL received 20 Influenza samples from sentinel hospitals on Epi week 11 (13-19 March 2023). Six samples tested Influenza A positive, 2 samples tested Influenza B positive, and 2 samples tested SARS-CoV-2 positive.
- Provincial Public Health Laboratories (PPHLs) reported testing of 97 samples for Influenza-SARS-CoV-2 using Multiplex kit on Epi -week 11.
  - Twelve samples tested Influenza A positive (to be subtyped), 2 samples tested Influenza B positive, and 2 samples tested SARS-CoV-2 positive.
  - A total of 1099 samples have been tested by PPHLs from 2 Jan – 19 Mar 2023.

From 2 January 2023 until 19 March 2023:

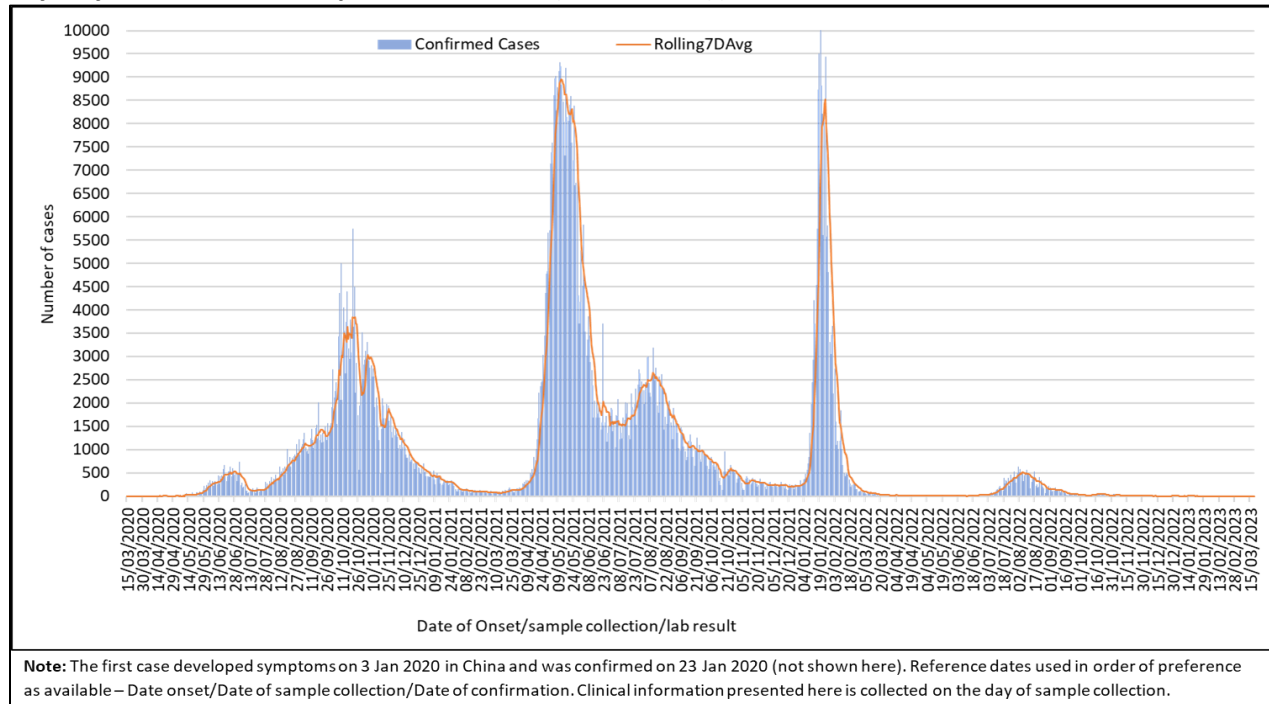
- A total of 315 samples tested positive for Influenza (36 Influenza B, 230 Influenza A/H3N2, 25 Influenza A(H1N1) pdm09 and 24 Influenza A (to be subtyped)) from 2039 samples (sentinel and non-sentinel SARI and ILI samples)
- Similarly, 12 samples tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 from dual testing of Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 in 1908 samples.<sup>1</sup>

**WHO SEAR countries: Number of COVID-19 confirmed cases and cumulative incidence rate (per 100,000). Link Here- <https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/covid/>**

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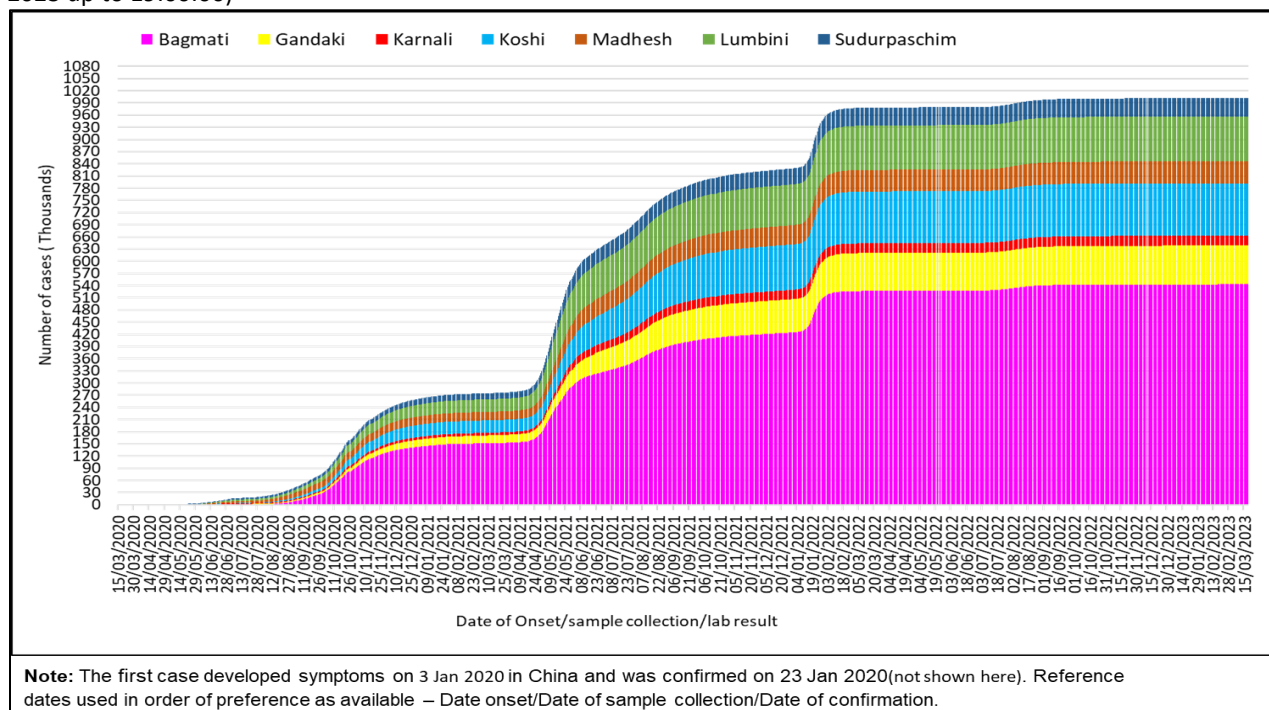
<sup>1</sup> These positive cases are included in the COVID-19 database

**Figure 1: RT-PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases and average number of COVID-19 cases over the last seven days, by date of onset/sample/confirmation (N= 1001182)(Data reported on 19 March 2023 up to 19:00:00)**



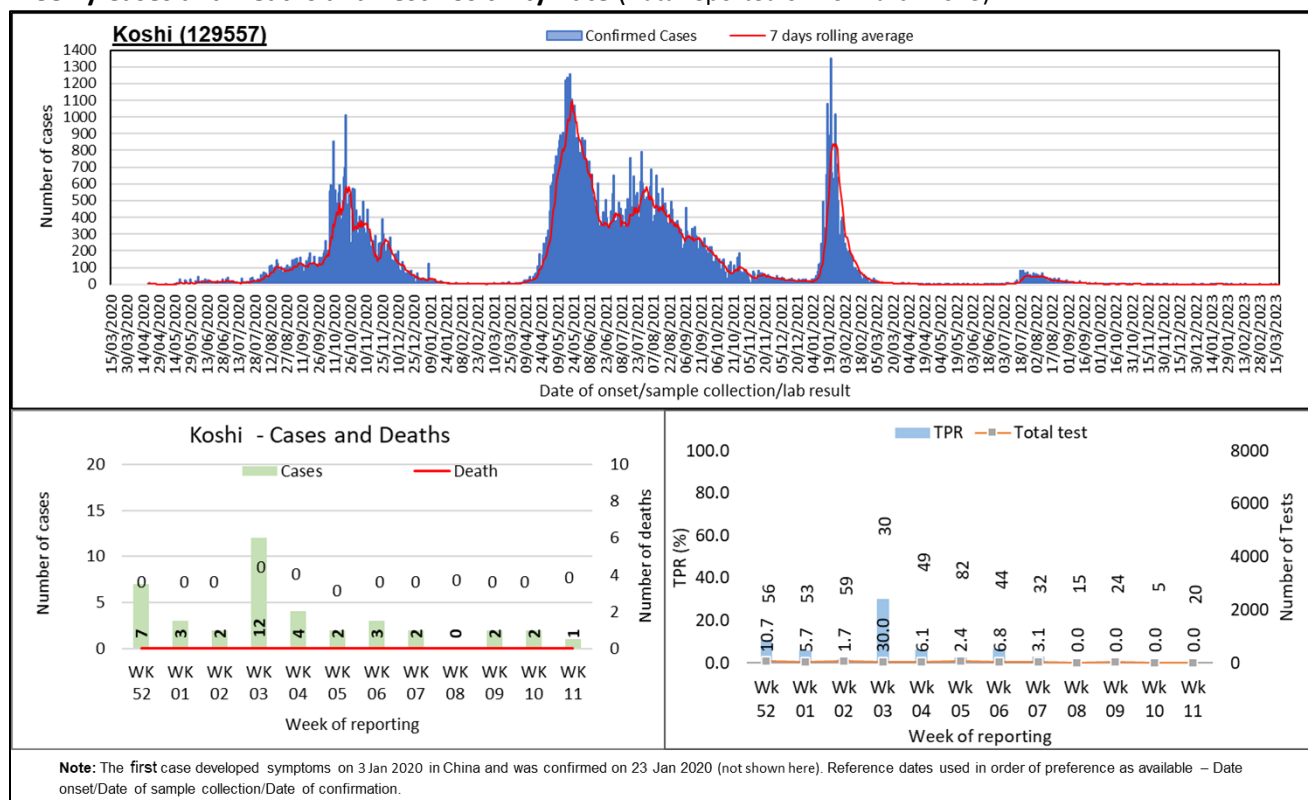
*At the national level, the first wave of cases between July 2020 and February 2021 was followed by the second wave from the middle of March 2021. Since the middle of December 2021, a third wave of cases soared up exceeding the highest number of single day cases reported in the past surges towards the end of January 2022. Another wave of cases steadily soared up towards the middle of May 2022 following an overall declining trend since the middle of August 2022.*

**Figure 2: Cumulative case count of RT-PCR confirmed COVID-19 (N= 1001182)(Data reported on 19 March 2023 up to 19:00:00)**



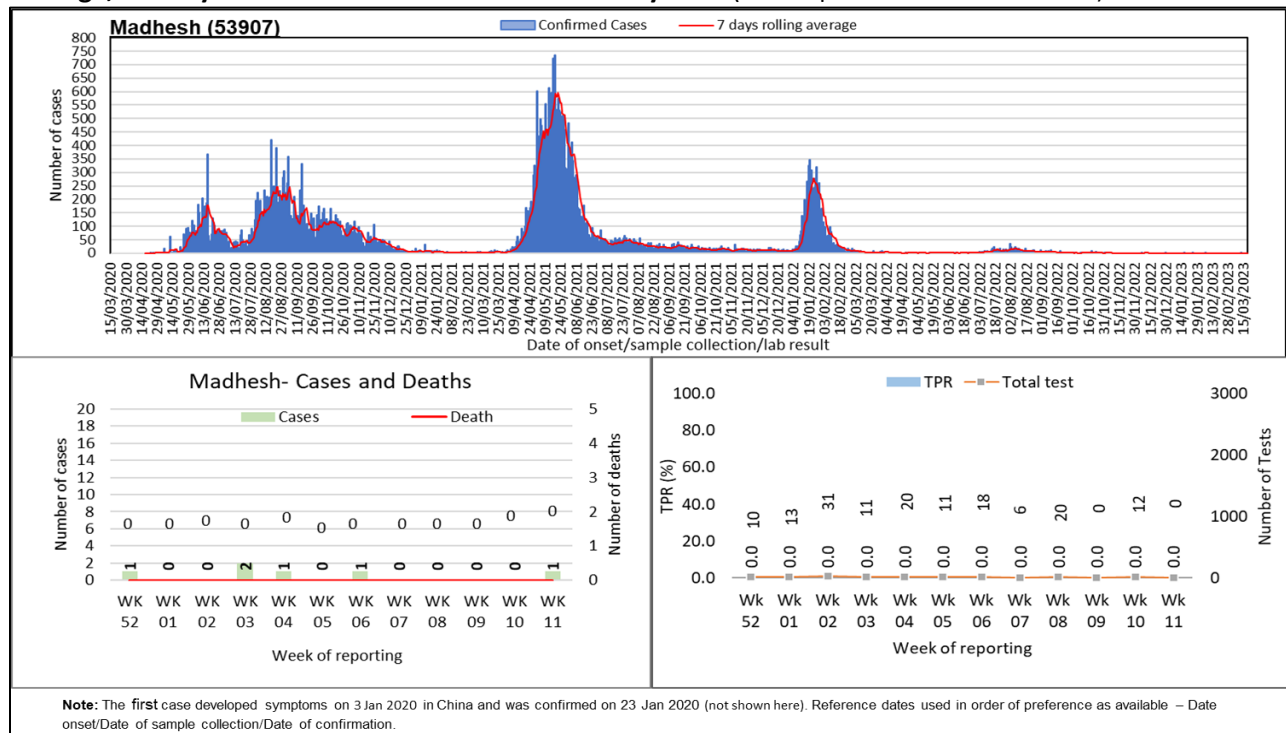
The cumulative case incidence has been increasing in Nepal since the first case confirmed on 23 January 2020. Cases have been largely reported from Bagmati Province followed by Koshi Province and Lumbini Province.

**Figure 3A1: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Province 1: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



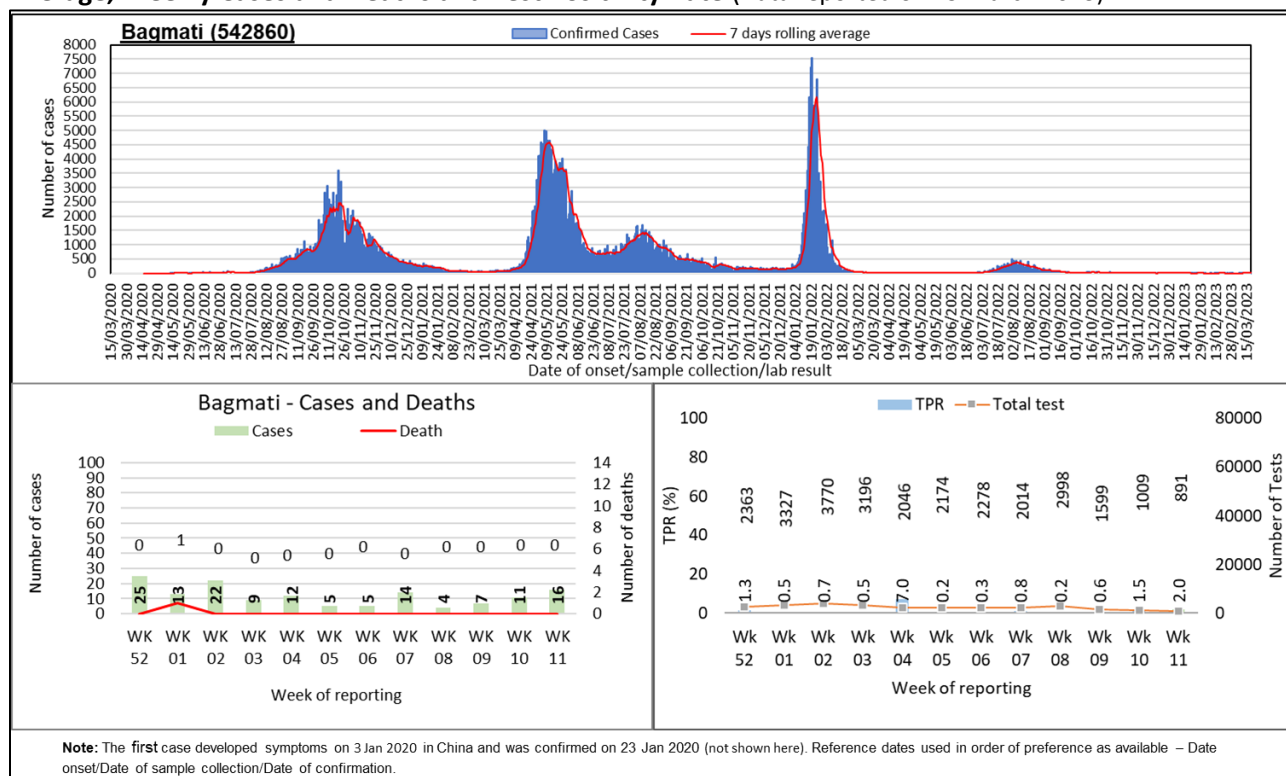
There was 1 new case reported in the past week in Koshi province. Cases have decreased by 50% in the past week compared to that in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. The test positivity rate in Koshi province retained at 0.0% in the past week. A total of 20 tests were performed in the past week, 300% more than that in the previous week.

**Figure 3A2: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Madhesh Province: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



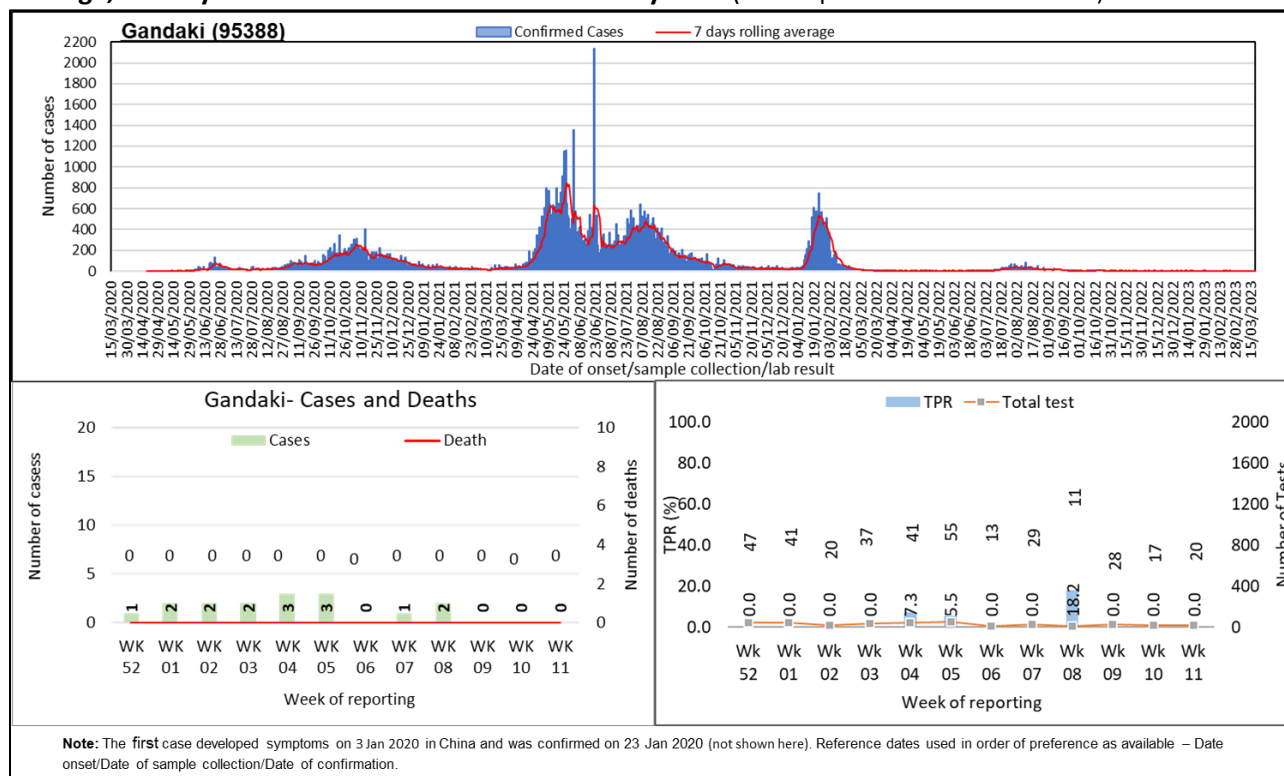
There was 1 new case reported in the past week in Madhesh province. Cases have increased in the past week compared to none in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. There was no test performed reported in the past week.

**Figure 3A3: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Bagmati Province: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



In Bagmati Province, 16 new cases were reported in the past week. Cases have increased by 45% in the past week compared to that in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. The test positivity rate in Bagmati Province increased to 2.0% in the past week. A total of 891 tests were performed in the past week, 12% less than that in the previous week.

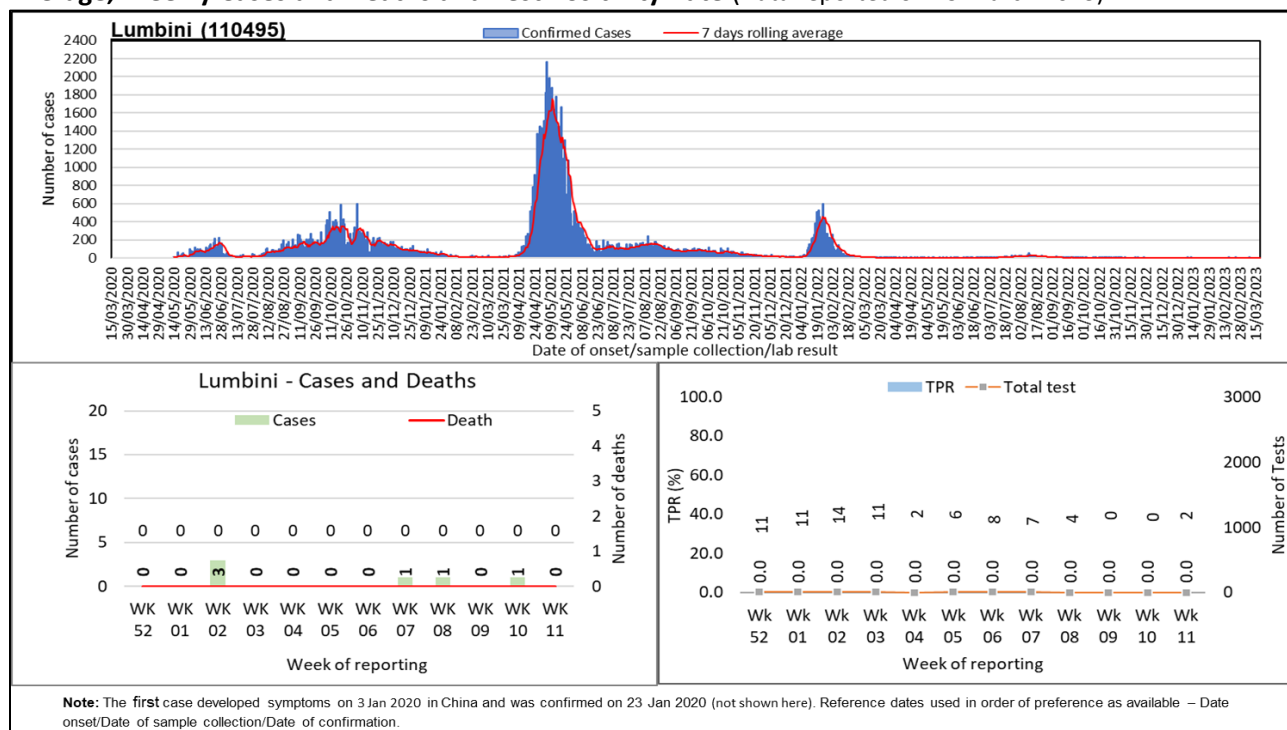
**Figure 3A4: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Gandaki Province: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



In Gandaki Province, no new case was reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. The test positivity rate in Gandaki Province retained at 0.0% in the past week. A total of 20 tests were performed in the past week, 18% more than that in the previous week.

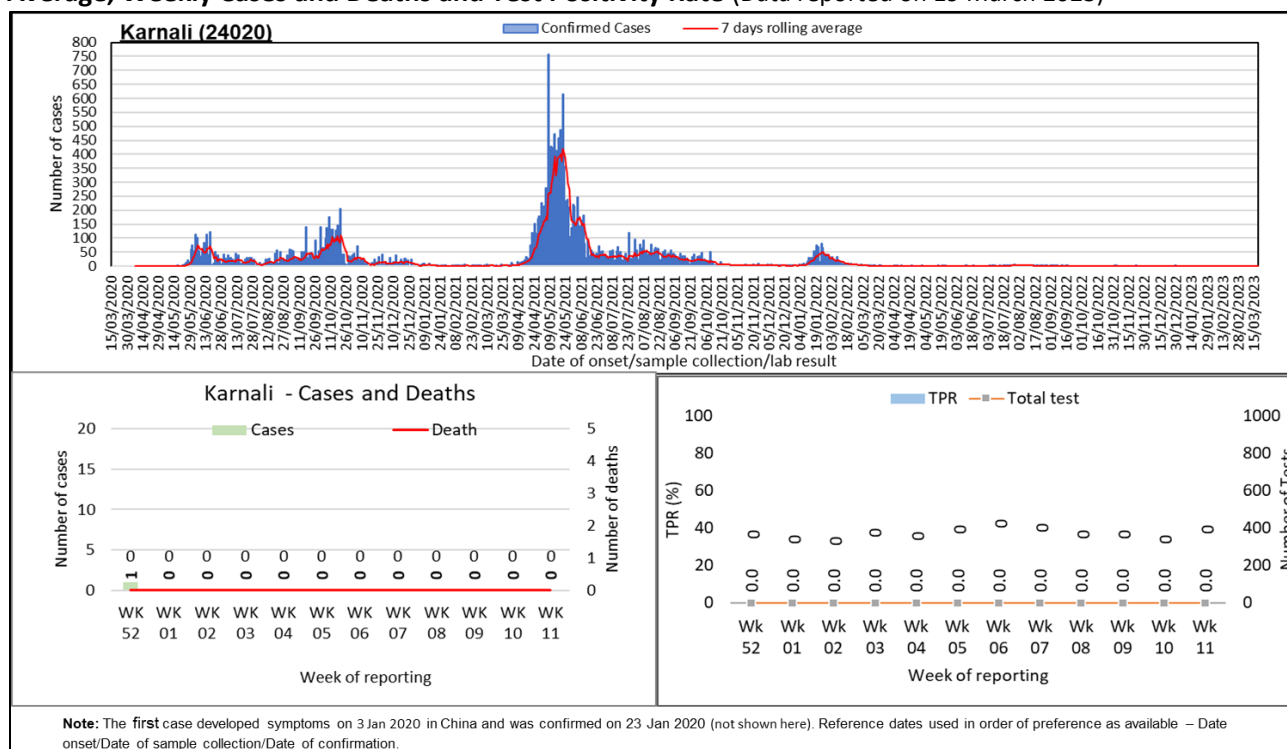


**Figure 3A5: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Lumbini Province: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



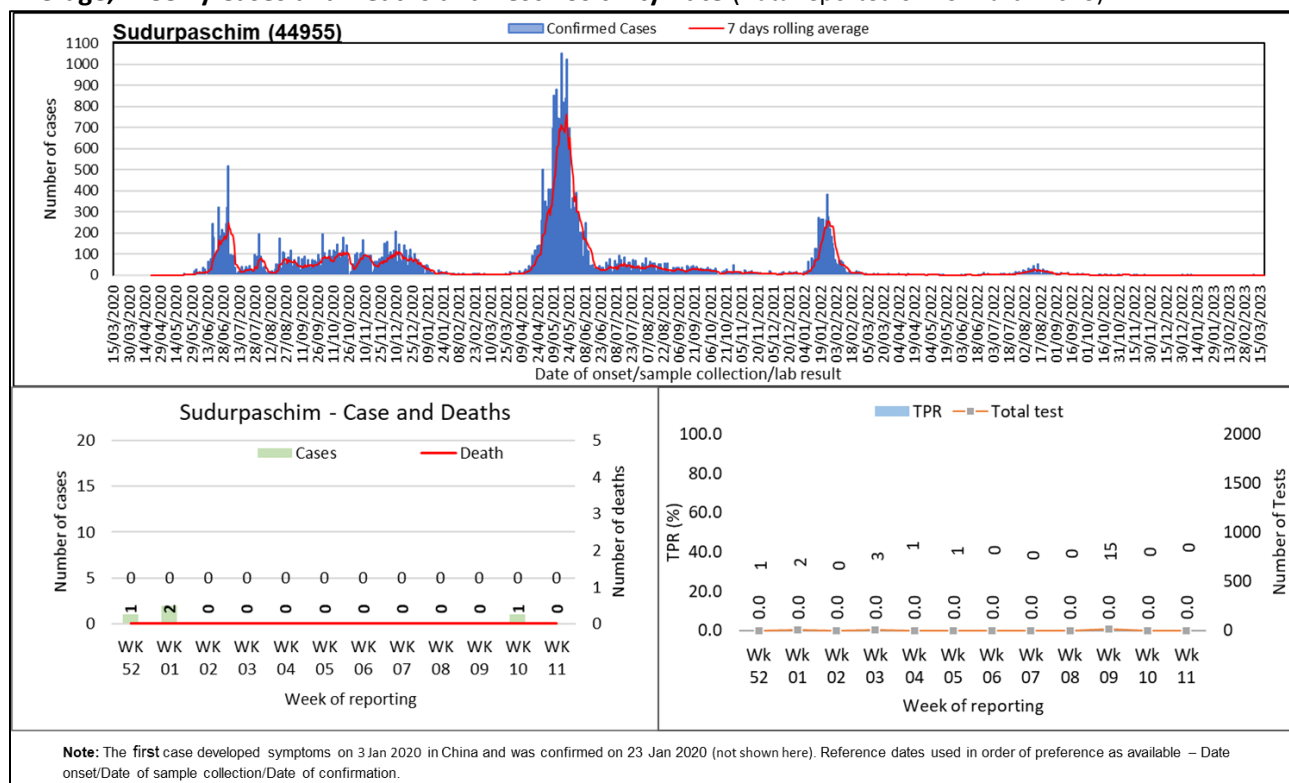
Lumbini reported no new case in the past week. Cases have decreased by 100% in the past week compared to that in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. The test positivity rate in Lumbini was 0.0% in the past week. A total of 2 tests were performed in the past week, compared to none in the previous week.

**Figure 3A6: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Karnali Province: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



In Karnali, no new case was reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. There was no test performed reported in the past week.

**Figure 3A7: RT- PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases in Sudurpaschim Province: Trend of Cases, 7 days Rolling Average, Weekly Cases and Deaths and Test Positivity Rate (Data reported on 19 March 2023)**



In Sudurpaschim, no new case was reported in the past week. Cases have decreased by 100% in the past week compared to that in the previous week. There was no death reported in the past week, same as in the previous week. There was no test performed reported in the past week.



**Table 1: Summary of confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and transmission by Provinces** (Data reported on 19 March 2023 up to 19:00:00)

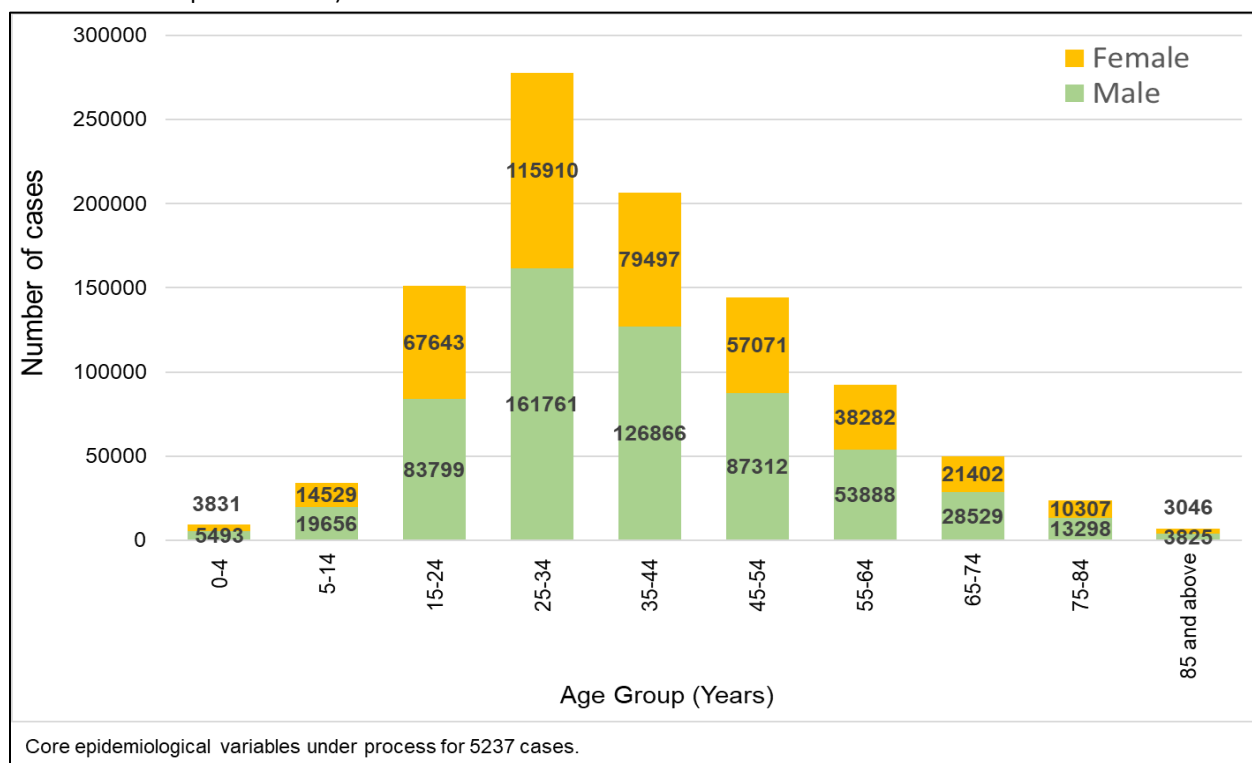
Reporting Province	Total confirmed cumulative cases RTPCR Tests	Total Confirmed cumulative cases Antigen RDT test	Total confirmed cumulative cases	% of total confirmed cumulative cases	Total cumulative deaths	Transmission classification	Total confirmed cases in last 14 days Antigen RDT test	Total confirmed cases in last 14 days RT-PCR test	Total confirmed cases in last 14 days	% of total confirmed cumulative cases in last 14 days	Total Deaths in last 14 days
Province 1	129557	30322	159879	14.1	1722	Community transmission	0	3	3	9.1	0
Madhesh	53907	1178	55085	4.9	783	Community transmission	0	1	1	3.0	0
Bagmati	542860	32780	575640	50.9	5203	Community transmission	0	27	27	81.8	0
Gandaki	95388	24670	120058	10.6	1428	Community transmission	0	0	0	0.0	0
Lumbini	110495	28141	138636	12.3	1874	Community transmission	0	1	1	3.0	0
Karnali	24020	6325	30345	2.7	492	Community transmission	0	0	0	0.0	0
Sudurpashchim	44955	6142	51097	4.5	518	Community transmission	0	1	1	3.0	0
<b>National Total</b>	<b>1001182</b>	<b>129558*</b>	<b>1130740</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12020</b>	Community transmission	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>

*\*Total reported in Health Emergency Operation Center (HEOC) Sitrep as of 12 March 152233, IMU reported 129558.*

Notes:

1. The source for the case data used in this update is from RT- PCR test positivity reported by laboratories from various locations across Nepal, as shared by HEOC Sitrep; and IMU/IHIMS.
2. Case data is screened and cleaned by our data team for double entry, wrong entries and manual errors such as city names in place of districts, district names in place of province etc.
3. Whereas the test positivity rate is calculated based on the test positivity reported in Sitrep for RT-PCR which may or may not be scrutinized or cleaned the same way and mark the cases on location of the laboratories rather than their place of residence.

**Figure 4: Distribution of RT-PCR positive COVID-19 cases by age and sex (N= 995945)**(Data reported on 19 March 2023 up to 19:00:00)



Overall, the sex-distribution remains skewed towards males. The incidence of cases is higher in the economically productive age group (15-54 years) for both males and females.

**Table 2: Age Specific Case Fatality Ratio and Co-morbidity of Deaths in RT-PCR confirmed COVID-19 cases (N= 1001182)**(Data reported on 19 March 2023 up to 19:00:00)

Age Group (Years)	Total confirmed cases	Death (male)	Death (female)	Deaths with any known comorbid condition	Age specific case fatality ratio (%)
0-4	9324	16	23	13	0.42
5-14	34185	13	7	10	0.06
15-24	151442	92	96	70	0.12
25-34	277671	387	265	151	0.23
35-44	206363	875	452	281	0.64
45-54	144383	1396	645	574	1.41
55-64	92170	1691	803	783	2.71
65-74	49931	1640	893	957	5.07
75-84	23605	1228	659	773	7.99
85+	6871	524	289	279	11.83
Unknown	5237	19	7	11	0.5
<b>National</b>	<b>1001182</b>	<b>7881</b>	<b>4139</b>	<b>3902</b>	<b>1.20</b>

$$\text{Case Fatality ratio (CFR, in\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of deaths from disease}}{\text{Number of confirmed cases of disease}} \times 100$$
 COVID-19 positive lab result is temporally associated with death; causal association under investigation.

*A total of 12,020 deaths have been reported. Out of the total deaths, 7,881 (65.6%) were male and 4,139 (34.4%) were female. Amongst the deaths, 3,902 persons (32.5%) had at least one known comorbidity. The age specific case fatality ratio (CFR) progressively increases with age, ranging from 0.06% to 11.8%.*

## **PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

### **What are the Government of Nepal (GoN) & the Ministry of Health & Population (MoHP) doing?**

- From 3 November 2022 onwards, the Government of Nepal has started administering second dose COVID-19 booster vaccination for people aged 55 and above and the vulnerable population (immune-deficiency/chronic patients, pregnant women, and health workers) group.

### **What is the WHO Country Office for Nepal doing?**

#### ***Laboratory Diagnosis***

- WHO Nepal has been providing support to the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) in continued routine work.

#### ***Technical Expertise and Training***

- Continued routine work from the team of Technical Expertise and Training.<sup>2</sup>
- WHO Nepal supported the handover ceremony of Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) Treatment Facility to the MoHP and the Nepal Armed Police Force Hospital, Kathmandu, on March 14, 2023, in the presence of the WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh; Secretary, MoHP, Dr. Roshan Pokharel; Chief of Armed Police Force, Inspector General Raju Aryal; and WHO Representative to Nepal, Dr. Rajesh Sambhajirao Pandav. The 92-bedded facility is the first field hospital (large-scale) in Nepal built in collaboration with the MoHP, the Armed Police Force, and WHO to respond to mild, moderate, severe, and critical cases of COVID-19, including any other respiratory infectious diseases. The structure, with the provision of central oxygen and High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtration systems, is designed to minimize infection, control further outbreaks, and stabilize the recovery of patients. The facility is carefully designed by segregating the setup into screening sections with safety precautions and placement of the patients according to the condition for further treatment.

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<sup>2</sup> The routine works of the technical expertise and training team included technical support to the Ministry of Health and Population and its department for developing different guidelines/manuals, conducting health programs, and conducting capacity building activities. To perform these activities, the team coordinates and discuss with relevant government authorities and partners for effective planning and conducting the various activities.



Visible site of Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) Treatment Facility (white in color) at APF Hospital, Balambu-Kathmandu, Nepal. Photo Credit: WHO Nepal



(Left) Site visit by WHO officials along with government counterparts at Armed Police Force Hospital, Balambu- Kathmandu, Nepal. (Right) All the stakeholders in one frame who contributed directly/indirectly. Photo Credit: WHO Nepal.

### **Operational Support and Logistics**

- Continued routine work from the team of Operation Support and Logistics.<sup>3</sup>

### **Risk Communication and Community Engagement**

- Support provided to the MoHP for the weekly media briefing. The briefing on 15 March 2023 included the key messages on: COVID-19, significance of public health and social measures, importance of COVID-19 booster dose, information on QR code certification, call for action to public for vaccinating

<sup>3</sup> The routine works of the operation support and logistics team included technical support to the Management Division of the Department of Health Services for the forecasting, quantification, procurement, and distribution plan of COVID-19 commodities. The other routine activities included daily operational support to the WHO country office and seven provincial health emergency operation centers, including fleet and travel management and the procurement of required logistics and supplies.

children under national immunization program, update about a three-day workshop on capacity building for effective community involvement to end tuberculosis in the WHO South-East Asia region, and information on the organ transplant services in Nepal and Shahid Dharma Bhakta National Transplant Center - a coordinating unit for brain death and organ donation. The briefing also included the update on the handover of the SARI Treatment Facility. MoHP has decided to stop the briefing that used to be broadcasted on Wednesday at 4:15 PM via Nepal Television until further notice.

- The news of the courtesy call between WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, and Honorable Prime Minister, Shri Pushpa Kamal Dahal, was shared via Facebook (link [here](#)) and Twitter (link [here](#)). Dr Singh appreciated the role played by Nepal in the response to COVID-19 and congratulated Nepal for achieving over 90% vaccination coverage against COVID-19. In addition to this, he stressed that access to health services should reach remote communities and mentioned that proper budget allocation in the health sector is important.
- The news of the courtesy call between WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, and Hon'ble Speaker of the National Assembly Ganesh Prasad Timilsina, was shared via Facebook (link [here](#)) and Twitter (link [here](#)). Dr Singh highlighted the role of parliamentarians in the health sector, while Hon'ble Speaker said that the role of parliamentarians will be important in the work from allocating sufficient budget for health to advocating the promotion of multi-sector partnership and advancing health issues to address current and future health challenges.
- The news of the handover of the SARI Treatment Facility, located at the Armed Police Force Hospital, to the MoHP by WHO, Country Office for Nepal, and World Food Programme Nepal, was shared via Facebook (link [here](#)), Twitter (link [here](#)), Instagram (link [here](#)), and website (link [here](#)).
- The news of the GOARN Regional Partners Meeting, organized by WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia in Kathmandu, was shared via Facebook (link [here](#)), Twitter (link [here](#)), and website (link [here](#)).
- The news of the handover of a high capacity scalable server and 1,155 vials of Tocilizumab to MoHP by WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, was shared via Twitter (link [here](#)). The donation will support to strengthen Nepal's health information system and COVID-19 case management.
- IEC materials on the following topics were shared via social media:
  - I. Importance of vaccines,
  - II. Important of following recommended COVID-19 preventive measures,
  - III. Preventive measures against COVID-19,
  - IV. Origins of the SARS-CoV-2
  - V. Physical activity and COVID-19
- The *Weekly COVID-19 EPI Dashboard* was uploaded on *ReliefWeb* (link [here](#)) and WHO, Country Office for Nepal, website (link [here](#)).
- The *Weekly WHO Nepal COVID-19 Situation Update* was uploaded on *ReliefWeb* (link [here](#)) and WHO, Country Office for Nepal, website (link [here](#)).
- The *Focused COVID-19 and Health Media Monitoring* was uploaded on *ReliefWeb* (link [here](#)).

### **What are the health clusters partners doing?**

- Continued routine work from the team of Partner Coordination and Donor Relation<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The routine works include coordinating with all the divisions, units, centers of Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) and Department of Health Services (DoHS), and the health partners for effective conduction of Health Cluster Coordination meeting. Furthermore, the works included the documentation and distribution of meeting minutes, health partner's support updates in the 3Ws (Who, What, Where) and thematic mapping, updates of WHO's support in the UNRCO 3W sheet, participate in multi-sectoral and emergency and disaster preparedness and response platforms and activities and the humanitarian country team



- UNICEF and WHO are providing overall support for COVID-19 vaccination campaign in close coordination with health partners and donors.
- All members of the Health Cluster are supporting the COVID-19 vaccination campaign of Nepal.
- Health partners are continuing their technical, operational, and logistics support for COVID-19 responses to health-related offices and institutions throughout the country.
- COVID-19 consultation is being provided continuously by specialist teams through tele-medicine services.
- WHO, Country Office for Nepal, coordinated for concurrence with MoHP and provided support to the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO) to conduct the meeting of the South-East Asia Regional Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) partners in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 15 and 16 March 2023. The objective of the meeting was to strengthen engagement of current and potential regional GOARN partners of the WHO South-East Asia Region to effectively respond to outbreaks. The opening ceremony of the two-day event was chaired by Dr Roshan Pokharel, Secretary, MoHP; Dr Sangeeta Mishra, Additional Secretary, MoHP; Ms Yeshoda Aryal, Chief, Health Coordination Division; Dr Rajesh Sambhajirao Pandav, WHO Representative for Nepal; technical team from WHO HQ, SEARO, and Country Offices of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Nepal; and representatives from 21 GOARN partners and potential partners from the SEAR were present. In the two days, presentations were made from GOARN HQ, SEAR, Country offices, GOARN partners along with Q&A sessions, discussions, group work, panel discussion, and recommendations.

#### **WHO's STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE- [link here](#)** **RECOMMENDATION AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC**

- [Protect yourself](#)
- [Questions and answers](#)
- [Travel advice](#)
- [EPI-WIN](#): tailored information for individuals, organizations and communities

#### **USEFUL LINKS**

- MoHP COVID-19 official portal is available [here](#).
- Nepal COVID-19 regular updates and resources are available [here](#)
- For COVID-19 updates from the WHO South-East Asia Region Office, please visit [here](#).
- For information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Pandemic from WHO, please visit [here](#)
- Please visit this [site](#) for all technical guidance from WHO.
- Online courses on COVID-19 from WHO can be found [here](#)
- WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard can be found [here](#)
- Visit the WHO Nepal [Facebook page](#) and webpage on COVID-19 [here](#)

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operational meetings. Moreover, necessary support for effective coordination of Health Emergency Operation Centre (HEOC) with different stakeholders is provided.



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