

Situation Update #16- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

WHO Country Office for Nepal

05 August 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

Nepal

- The Ministry of Health & Population (MoHP) has revised the ["National Testing guidelines for COVID-19"](#).
- MoHP has approved the treatment of COVID-19 suspected and confirmed cases at private hospitals that had not been included in COVID-19 designated hospitals list. Care to be provided based on mutual coordination and understanding between the patient and the private hospital. MoHP has also fixed the price of health care services per person per day at Rs 3,500 for cases with mild symptoms; and Rs 7,000 for cases with moderate symptoms.
- A total of **34** designated COVID-19 testing laboratories are now functional in the country including the six laboratories that were recently added - five from Bagmati province and one from province 5.
- Samples are collected from people entering Kathmandu valley at three different points Nagdhunga, Pharping and Sangha and tested using RT-PCR regularly.
- All seven provinces and 77 districts have been affected by COVID-19 transmission. However, no cases have been reported for last 14 days or more from 6 districts - Bhojpur, Dolpa, Manang, Mustang, Rukum East and Sankhuwasabha.

SITUATION OVERVIEW (Reported up to 4 August 2020)

NEPAL

21,007 confirmed cases

57 deaths

4,06,594 RT-PCR tests

SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION

22,42,656 confirmed cases

47, 574 deaths

GLOBAL

1,81,42,718 confirmed cases

6,91,013 deaths

Regional/Global

- The [fourth meeting of the International Health Regulations \(2005\) Emergency Committee](#) regarding COVID-19 was convened by the WHO Director-General on 31 July 2020. The Director-General declared that the outbreak of COVID-19 continues to constitute a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). [The recommendations from the Emergency Committee highlight the need for response efforts to continue over the long term.](#)
- [WHO has published a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Progress Report.](#) The report highlights the progress made from 1 Feb to 30 Jun 2020 under the three objectives outlined in the Strategic Response and Preparedness Plan: scaling up international coordination and support;

scaling up country preparedness and response by each response pillar; and accelerating research and innovation.

- WHO has published the [interim guidance](#) on provision of safe water, sanitation and waste management and hygienic conditions which is essential for preventing disease and for protecting human health during all infectious disease outbreaks, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For [World Breastfeeding Week](#), WHO and UNICEF are calling on governments to protect and promote women's access to skilled breastfeeding counselling. This is a critical component of breastfeeding support and, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, it is even more important to find innovative solutions to ensure that access to these essential services is not disrupted.

NEPAL EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

- As of 05 August 2020, 07:00 hours, (Week no. 32), in Nepal – a total of 21,007 COVID-19 cases were confirmed using polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR); 99% of these cases (20,896) were detected during weeks 20 to 32 (partial) and 26% (5,605) during weeks 28 to 32.
- In five provinces - Provinces 1, 2, 5, Karnali and Sudurpaschhim transmission has been determined as clusters of cases and in two provinces - Bagmati and Gandaki as sporadic cases. Some secondary transmission is apparently occurring in the community in the provinces showing an increasing trend in case burden.
- About 80% cases (16,904) are reported from Provinces 2, 5, Karnali and Sudurpaschhim indicating that the case load is disproportionately higher in these provinces.
- Provinces showing a significantly increasing trend in the 7-day rolling average of incident cases (as of date) are Province 2, Sudurpaschhim and Bagmati.
- Overall, the sex distribution is still highly skewed towards men, who constitute 85% (17,839) of the confirmed cases and of these 92% (16,365/17,839) are in the 15-54-year age group. This is indicative of the disproportionate case burden among migrant workers returning to Nepal, who are predominantly young men. However, there are indications that increasing numbers of women are being affected particularly in Bagmati province.
- A total of 57 deaths* (46 men and 11 women) have occurred in the country with all of them occurring between weeks 20 and 32. Out of the total death, 63% (36) had at least one known co-morbid conditions. The overall case fatality ratio (CFR) across all ages is less than 1%. CFR progressively increases with age beyond 55 years to a range of 2% to 22%.
- While less than 1% of the confirmed COVID-19 cases are symptomatic at diagnosis across all age groups, the proportion of symptomatic cases progressively increases beyond 55 years of age to the range of 2% to 11%.
- For a more detailed epidemiological update please see: <http://edcd.gov.np/news/covid-19-situation-updates>
- *Although Nepal has been able to contain COVID-19 transmission to sporadic or clustered cases by effectively quarantining or isolating international returnees, a sensitive surveillance system*

with fully functional and empowered contact tracing and follow-up teams would be critical now to detect the first signs of new hot-spots or rise in cases and control transmission quickly.

- As of 04 August 2020, 604 cases reported as influenza like illness (ILI) have been tested for SARS-CoV-2 of which eight have tested positive and included in the COVID-19 case count.

Figure 1: Confirmed COVID-19 cases in South East Asia Region (Data updated on 4 August 2020 from global sitrep #197)

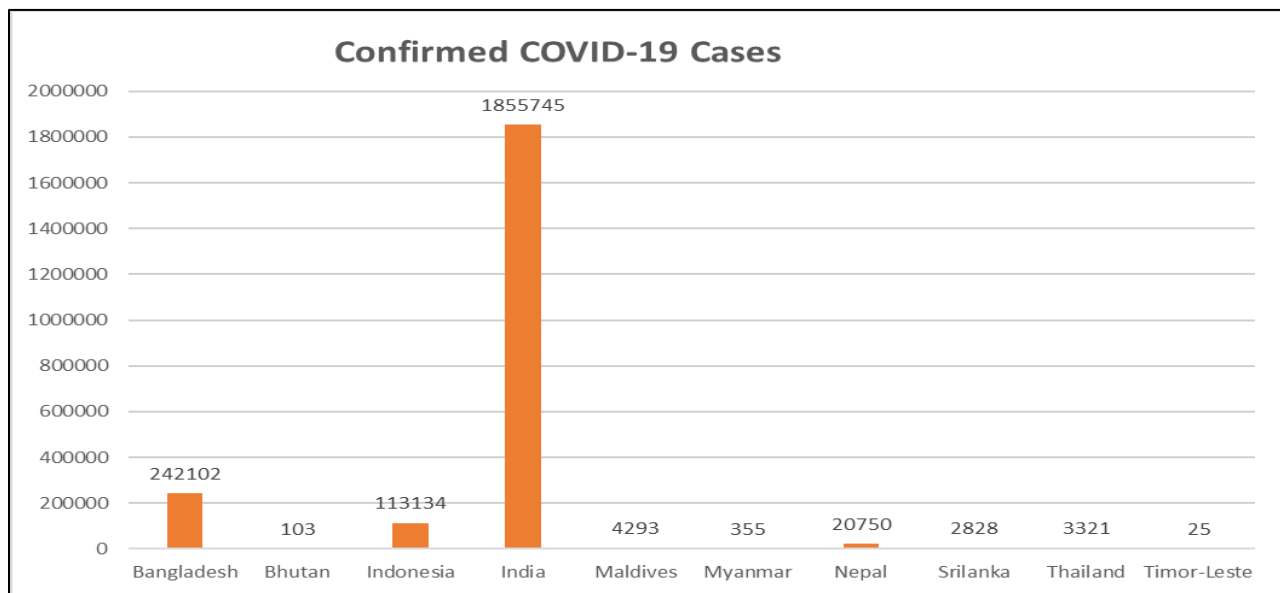


Figure 2 A: Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases and average number of COVID-19 cases over the last seven days, by date of onset/sample/confirmation (N=21007) (Data updated on 4 August 2020)

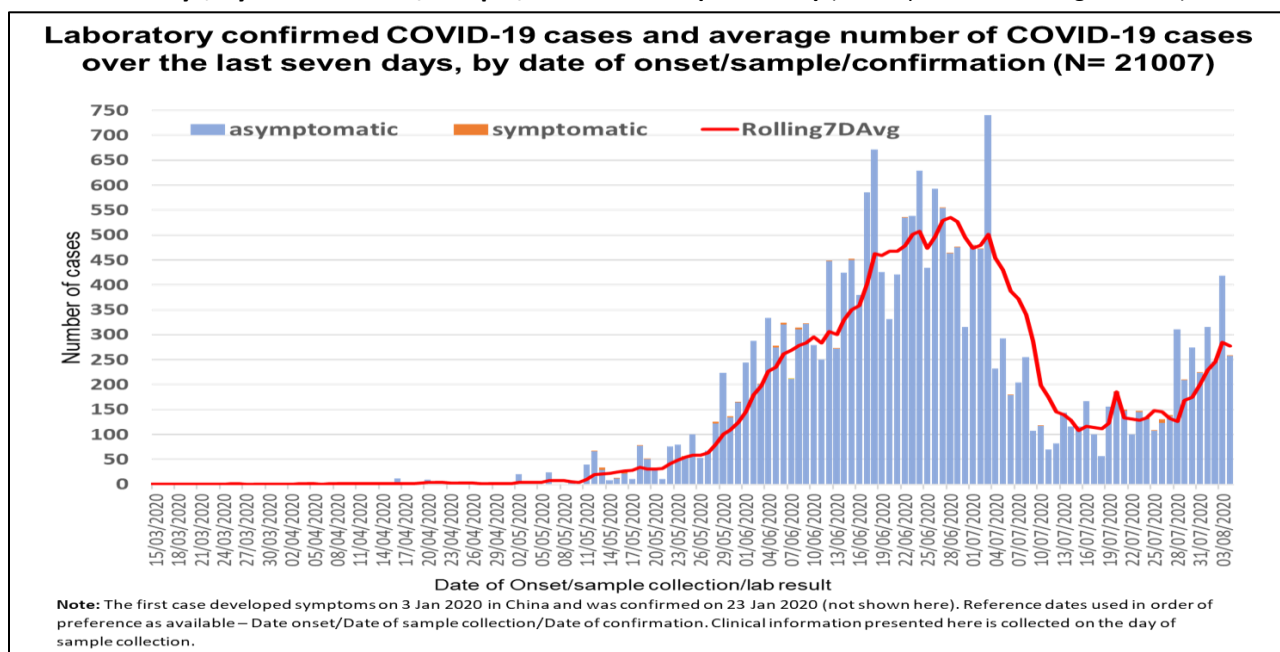
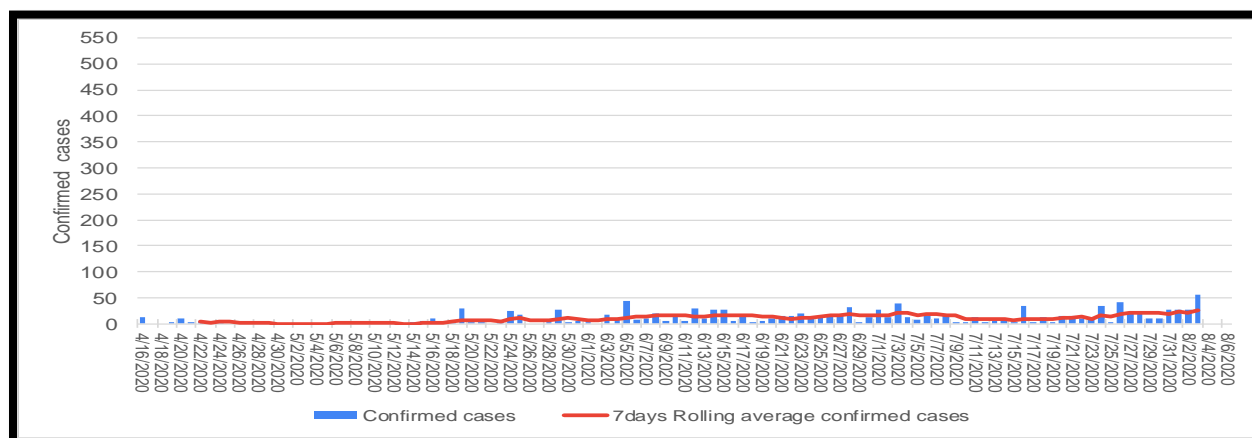
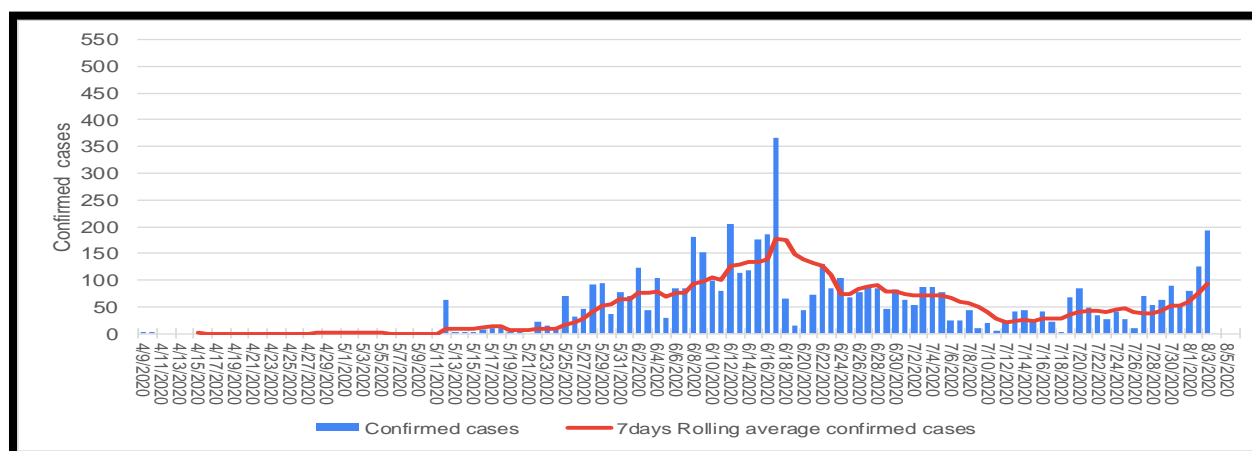


Figure 2B: Lab confirmed COVID-19 cases and 7-day rolling average of cases by date of onset/sample/confirmation by Provinces (Data updated on 4 August 2020)

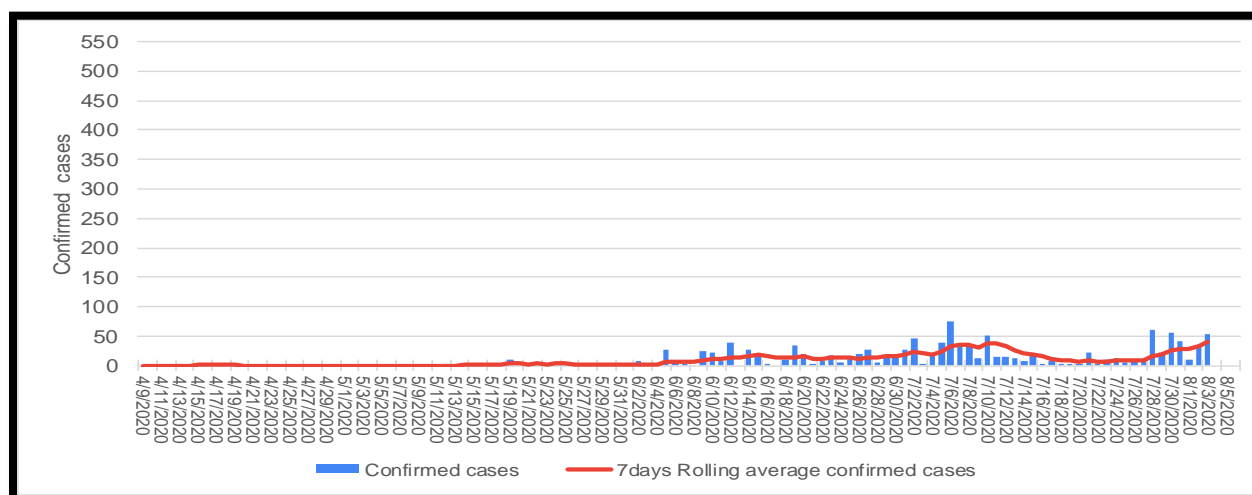
Province 1



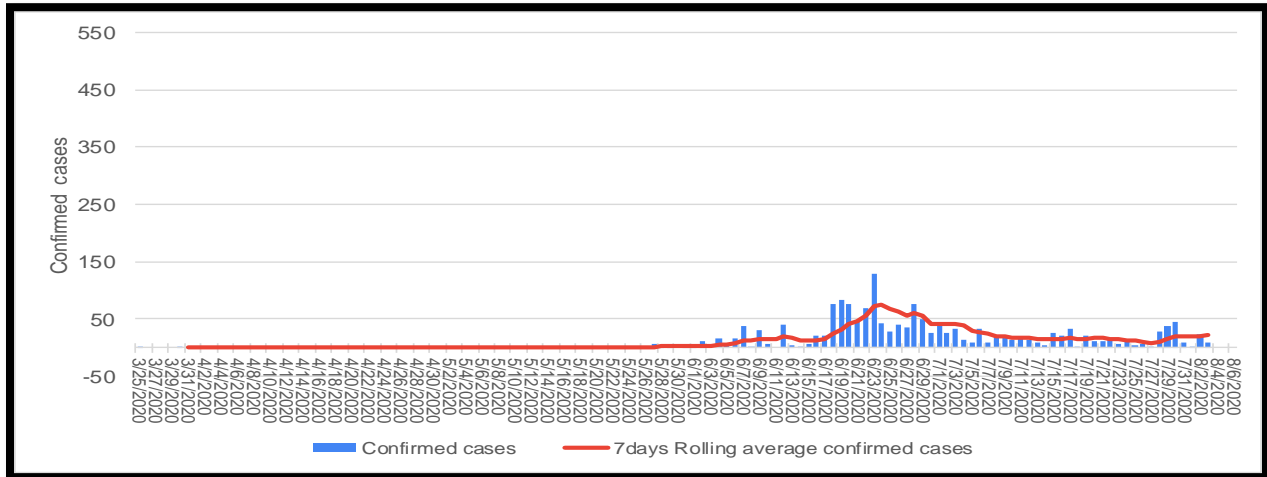
Province 2



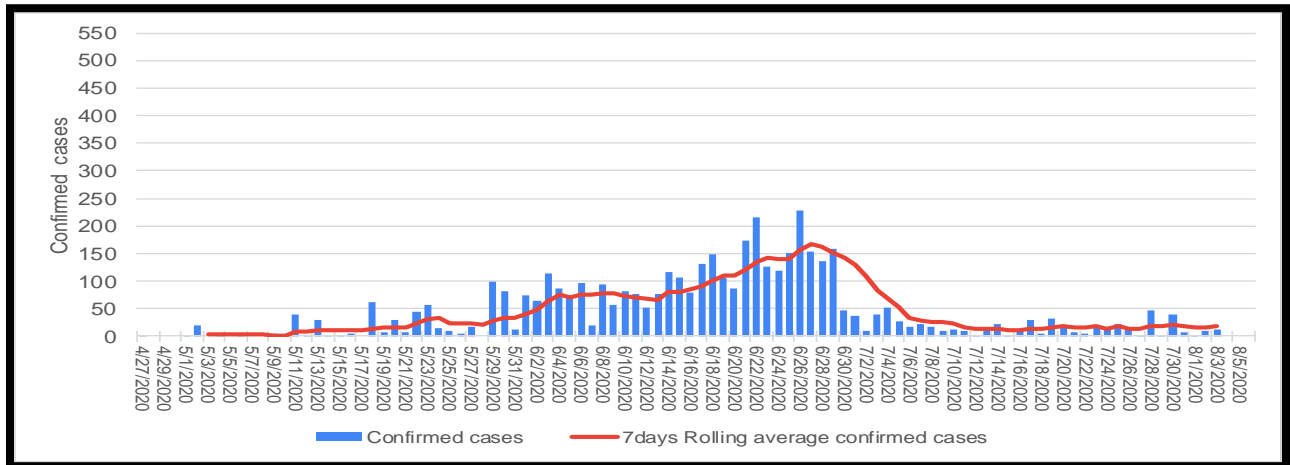
Province 3



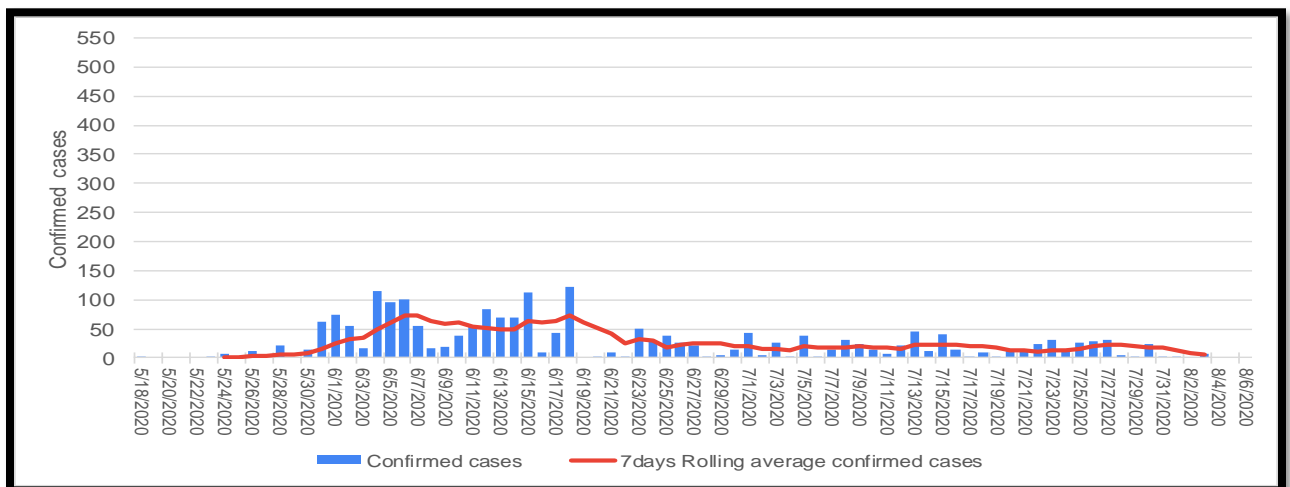
Gandaki Province



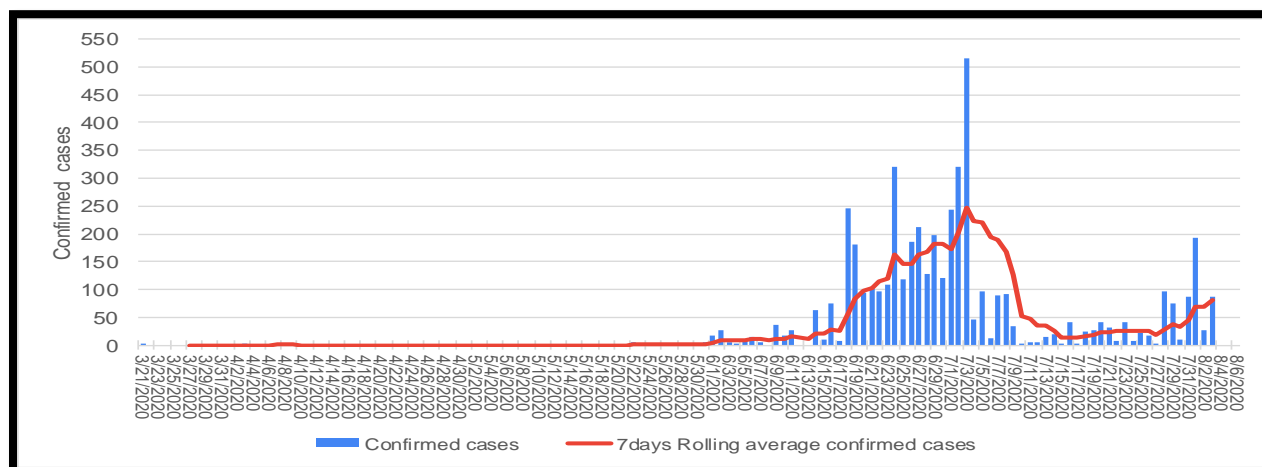
Province 5



Karnali



Sudurpaschim



Provinces showing significant increase in 7-day rolling average case incidence: Province-2, Sudurpaschim and Bagmati.

***Note for all the Provinces:** The first case developed symptoms on 3 Jan 2020 in China and was confirmed on 23 Jan 2020 (not shown here). Reference dates used in order of preference as available – Date onset/Date of sample collection/Date of confirmation. Clinical information presented here is collected on the day of sample collection

Figure 2C: Cumulative case count of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 by province (Data updated on 4 August 2020)

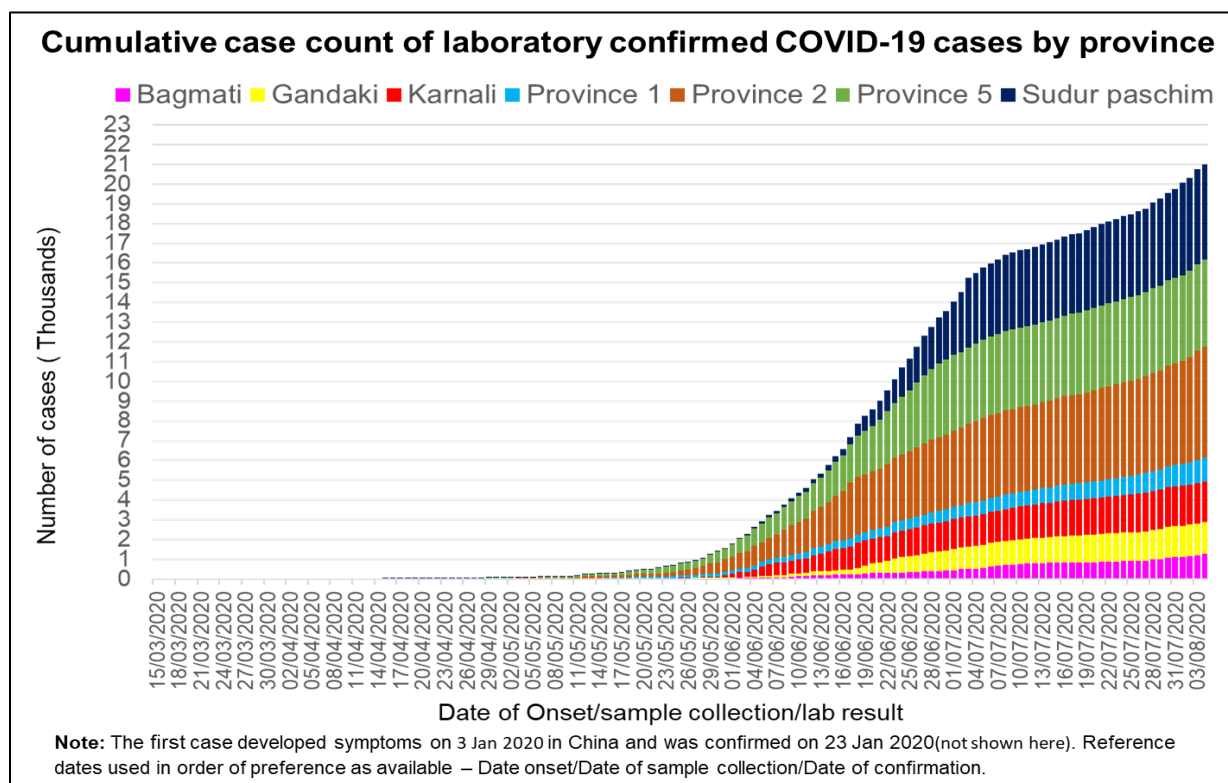


Figure 3: Municipalities (By domicile) with reported laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases (Data updated on 4 August 2020)

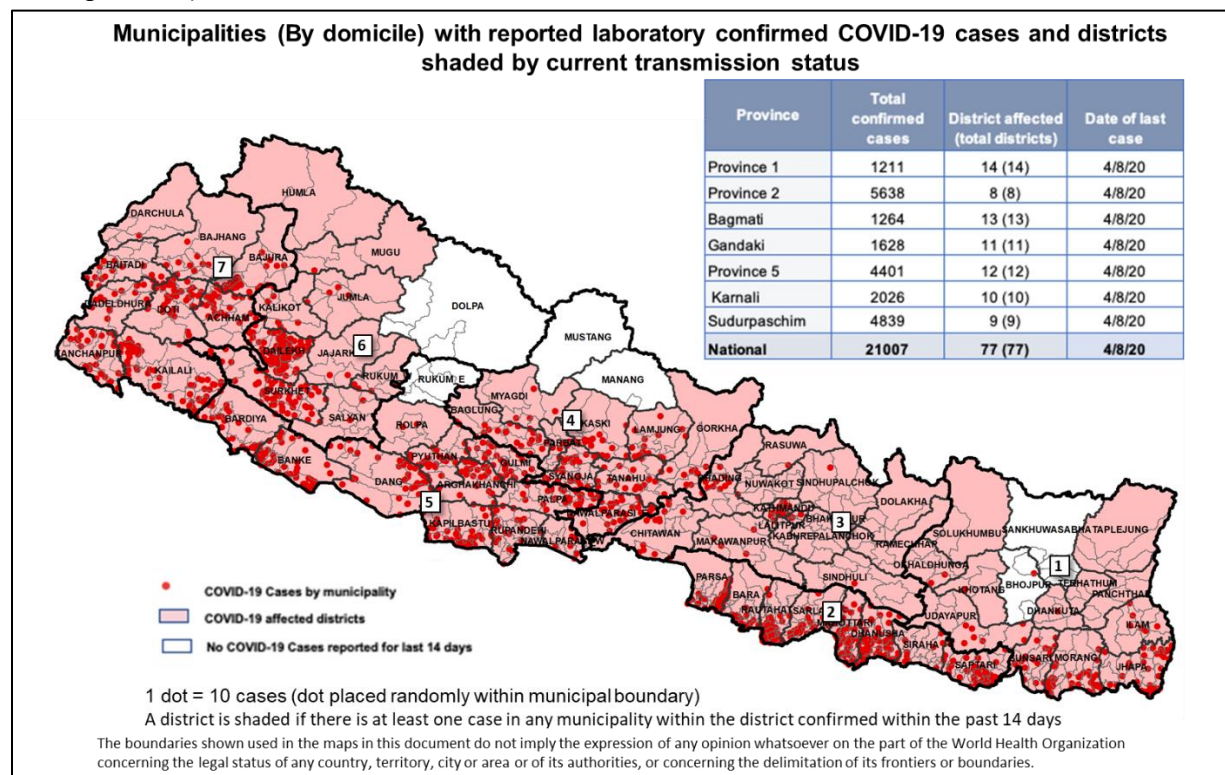


Table 1: Summary of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and transmission by provinces.
(Data updated on 4 August 2020)

Reporting Province	Total confirmed cumulative cases	Total cumulative deaths	Transmission classification*	Districts affected (total districts)	Date of most recent case [#]
Province 1	1211	3	Cluster of cases	14 (14)	4 August 2020
Province 2	5638	17	Cluster of cases	8 (8)	4 August 2020
Bagmati	1264	11	Sporadic cases	13 (13)	4 August 2020
Gandaki	1628	5	Sporadic cases	11 (11)	4 August 2020
Province 5	4401	10	Cluster of cases	12 (12)	4 August 2020
Karnali	2026	4	Cluster of cases	10 (10)	4 August 2020
Sudurpaschim	4839	7	Cluster of cases	9 (9)	4 August 2020
National Total	21007	57	Cluster of cases	77 (77)	4 August 2020

[#] Date of last case is the date of onset or date of sample collection or date of lab report based on information available.

* Case classification is based on [WHO transmission classification](#)

No cases- provinces with no cases

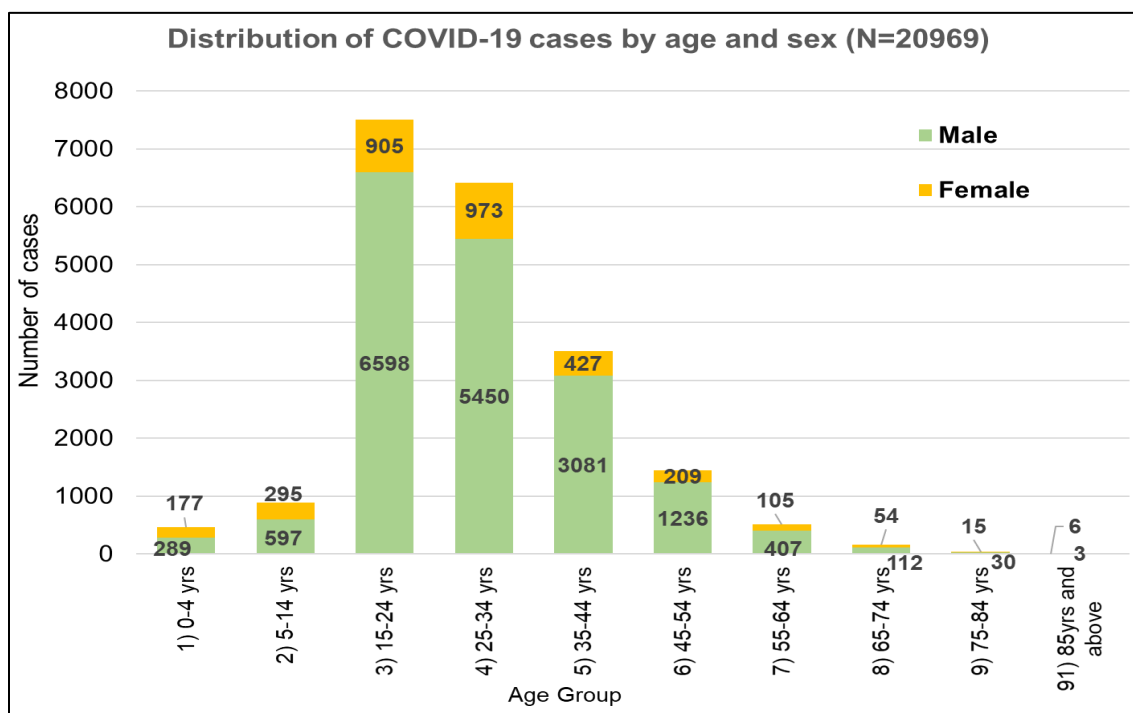
Sporadic cases- provinces with one or more cases, imported or locally detected[#]

Cluster of cases- provinces experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures

Community transmission- experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to:

- Large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains
- Large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance
- Multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area

Figure 4: Distribution of COVID-19 cases by age and sex (N=20,969) (Data updated on 4 August 2020)



Details for 38 cases are yet to come

Table 2: Age Specific Case Fatality Ratio and Co-morbidity of Deaths* in COVID-19 confirmed cases. (N=21,007) (Data updated on 4 August 2020)

Age-specific case fatality ratio and comorbidity of deaths* in COVID-19 confirmed cases (N= 21007)					
Age Group	Total confirmed cases	Death (male)	Death (female)	Deaths with any known comorbid condition	Age specific case fatality ratio (%)
0-4 yrs	466	1	1	1	0.43
5-14 yrs	892	1	0	0	0.11
15-24 yrs	7503	1	1	1	0.03
25-34 yrs	6423	4	2	3	0.09
35-44 yrs	3508	8	1	3	0.26
45-54 yrs	1445	8	2	7	0.69
55-64 yrs	512	10	1	9	2.15
65-74 yrs	166	9	2	8	6.63
75-84 yrs	45	3	0	3	6.67
85+ yrs	9	1	1	1	22.22
Unknown	38	0	0	0	0
National	21007	46	11	36	0.27

*COVID-19 positive lab result is temporally associated with death; causal association under investigation. * Source: <https://covid19.mohp.gov.np/#/>*

Table 3: Distribution symptomatic/asymptomatic COVID-19 cases at presentation (N=21,007)

(Data updated on 4 August 2020)

Distribution symptomatic/asymptomatic COVID-19 cases at presentation (N=21007)				
Age Group	Total confirmed cases	Asymptomatic	Symptomatic (n)	Symptomatic (%)
0-4 yrs	466	464	2	0.4
5-14 yrs	892	890	2	0.2
15-24 yrs	7503	7493	10	0.1
25-34 yrs	6423	6399	24	0.4
35-44 yrs	3508	3496	12	0.3
45-54 yrs	1445	1440	5	0.3
55-64 yrs	512	503	9	1.8
65-74 yrs	166	156	10	6.0
75-84 yrs	45	43	2	4.4
85+ yrs	9	8	1	11.1
Unknown	38	38	0	0.0
National	21007	20930	77	0.4

PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

What are Government of Nepal (GoN) and Ministry of Health & Population (MoHP) doing?

- The Prime Minister organized a high-level consultation with political leaders, government officials and public health experts on 4th August 2020 to discuss about the future strategies for COVID-19.
- MoHP would soon be issuing the Public Health Standards for festivals.
- MOHP has amended the testing guideline to expand the testing strategy and formed Central level coordination team for case management, referral, contact tracing, case investigation and Emergency Medical Deployment Team (EMDT) mobilization.
- As of 4th August 2020, a total of 4,06,594 RT-PCR tests have been performed nationwide by 34 designated COVID-19 laboratories functional across the country.
- There has been an instruction from MoHP for Hub hospitals to increase the isolation facilities.
- Given the current rise in COVID-19 transmission, a Press Statement (**5 August 2020**) has been released by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) with instructions to all security agencies and the District Administration Offices (DAOs) for compliance and effective enforcement of the following directives for the prevention and containment of COVID-19 transmission:
 - Ensure strict compliance to the public health protocols issued by the MoHP and the safety protocols of the MoHA. Individuals who do not wear masks or fail to abide by these protocols will be fined. Those violating the public health and safety protocols will face action including the administrators even if it is groups or institutions.

- Strictly enforce the 7:00 PM-7:00 AM restriction on the entry of all kinds of passenger vehicles, except those related to essential supplies, to Kathmandu Valley. August 06 onwards, odd-even rationing will be applicable on public and private vehicles, except those related to essential services, in the Kathmandu Valley and districts with more than 200 active COVID-19 cases. Vehicular movement will be restricted from 9:00pm to 5:00am in city areas in such districts.
- The District COVID-19 Crisis Management Committees (DCCMC) are to take decision on closing off high-risk areas/districts following risk assessment and make arrangement for more COVID-19 tests.
- Strictly prohibit the movement of people, except those permitted by the Government of Nepal, at the international borders.
- Restrict group meetings, parties, seminars and other gatherings in hotels and restaurants.
- International travel and borders will remain closed till 16 August 2020. Long route bus services and domestic and international passenger flights to resume from 17 August 2020 onwards as per the recent decision of Government.

What is WHO Country Office for Nepal doing?

- WHO has provided technical assistance to the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL):
 - in revising the 'Interim guidelines for SARS-CoV-2 PCR laboratories in the National Public Health Laboratory Network Nepal' which has now been endorsed by the MoHP.
 - in the preparation and reviewing SOPs for the validation of testing kits including SD biosensor and for sample aliquoting.
 - in organizing a virtual meeting on 'Laboratory Experience Sharing from SARS-COV-2 Testing Laboratory Network of Nepal' where 15 designated COVID-19 laboratories participated, and the WHO expert consultant presented on 'RT PCR result interpretation and trouble-shooting'.
 - for monthly National Quality Assessment (NQAS) of all designated laboratories - as of date NQAS samples have been received from 28 laboratories with their results found to be satisfactory.
- WHO Nepal has drafted a guidance on IPC and staying healthy for patients and their care takers prior to discharge from isolation centers and hospitals respectively.
- WHO has developed and ICU Readiness Checklist to complement provincial Level-II hospital action plans following findings from the Rapid Assessment.
- WHO continues to provide short summaries to the Secretary of Health of recently updated and released WHO technical guidance documents, also translated into Nepali.
- Support to the MoHP for drafting Guidance Document on COVID-19 Transmission Risks related to social and faith-based festival gatherings
 - Celebration of World Breastfeeding Week with infographics and key messages and sharing of "Anurodhs" (Translation in English: Appeal) from WCO Nepal to MoHP for the daily live media briefing; WHO FAQ on Breastfeeding Week and COVID-19 for health care workers (*Translated in Nepali*).

- Infographics and key messages for *World Hepatitis Day 2020*; and Eid Al-Adha translated in Nepali and contextualized for Nepal.
- The following interviews of Dr Jos Vandelaer, WHO Representative were published:

SN	TITLE	URL	PUBLICATION	DATE	LANGUAGE
1	समुदायस्तरमा व्यापक संक्रमण देखिने सम्भावना छ, भिडियो (There is a high possibility of massive infection/transmission in the community)	Link	Kantipur (Print and Online)	August 2	Nepali
2	संक्रमण नियन्त्रणका लागि व्यक्तिगत सुरक्षाका उपाय पालना गरौं (We must use personal protection measures to prevent infection/transmission)	Link	Kantipur (Full Interview; YouTube)	August 2	English
3	WHO Representative to Nepal Dr. Jos Vandelaer On Nepal's COVID-19 Status	Link	Kantipur (10-minute clip; YouTube)	August 1	English
4	Nepal's Flat COVID-19 Curve Seems Silence Before Storm, Warns WHO	Link	Nepali Sansar	July 29	English

- WHO Nepal support to the development of the Emergency Health Facility (EHF) has been continuing in collaboration with WFP engineering team and the draft facility layout has been finalized; rough order of cost (ROC) of the facility is nearly finalized both from WFP and WHO; power requirements are being calculated in cooperation with WFP; non-construction ROC is under final revision by WHO team.
- Support to operationalize the Health Desk at PoEs:
 - Breakdown of required items is finalized.
 - Site assessment form is finalized and shared with WHO team for feedback.
- Continued technical support for national COVID-19 logistics forecasting, quantification, costing as well as plan for procurement and distribution.

What are the health cluster partners doing?

- Health partners have been supporting the continuation of other health related services while supporting the COVID-19 response throughout the country.
- Mental Health sub-cluster partners in coordination with WHO and Epidemiology and Diseases Control Division (EDCD), DOHS developed and finalized the National Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan for Nepal.
- Health cluster and other partners are also supporting the response to emergencies related to monsoon incidents in the affected districts and provinces.

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 WHO South East Asia Region Office, please visit [here](#).
- For information regarding coronavirus disease 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](#).
- Global coronavirus disease situation dashboard can be found [here](#).
- Visit WHO Nepal [Facebook page](#) and webpage on COVID-19 [here](#).

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