

Situation Update #5 - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

WHO Country Office for Nepal

20th May 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

Nepal

- The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has announced the occurrence of 402 confirmed cases and 2 deaths from COVID-19 as of 19th May 2020.
- The Government of Nepal had announced the lockdown of the country effective from 24th March 2020. The lockdown is now extended until 2nd June 2020.
- The high-level co-ordination committee for COVID-19 prevention and control has decided to extend the suspension of all international and national flights until 14th June 2020.
- Hon'ble Minister of Health and Population, Mr. Bhanubhakta Dhakal addressed the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) 2020 on behalf of the Government of Nepal where he emphasized on the collective responsibility to fully secure the health rights of all people.
- The MoHP has released an [interim guideline for permitting private hospitals to test COVID-19 using rapid Diagnostics Test \(RDT\) kits RDT](#).

SITUATION OVERVIEW (reported up to 19th May 2020)

NEPAL

402 confirmed

2 deaths

37 recovered

33,006 RT-PCR tests

SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION

148,761 confirmed cases

4780 deaths

GLOBAL

4,731,458 confirmed cases

316,169 deaths

Regional/Global

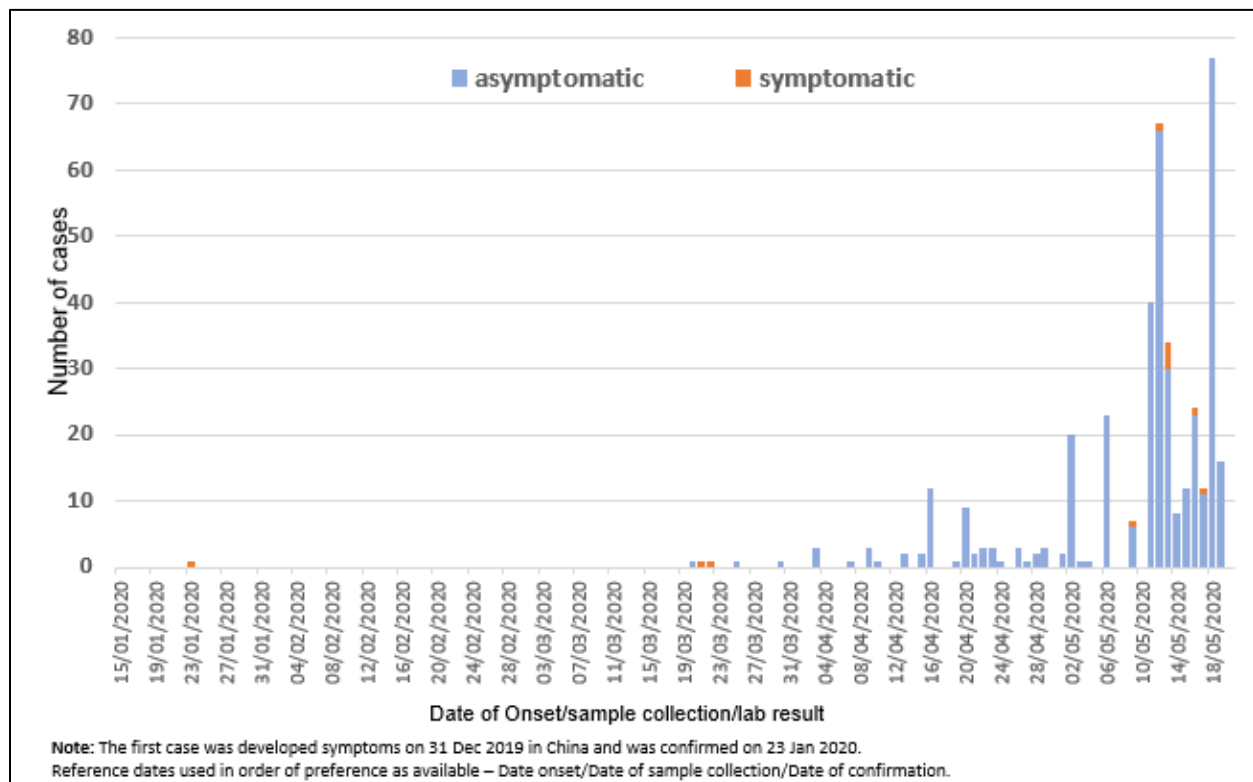
- WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh has urged countries in the region to lift public health and social measures (so called lockdowns) in a graded manner and that [Local epidemiology should guide focused action in 'new normal' COVID-19 world](#).
- WHO-HQ convened the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) this week which mainly focused on COVID-19 pandemic.
- WHO-HQ has published an interim guidance document on [Laboratory biosafety](#) for testing of clinical specimens of patients that meet the case definition of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), a document on [an overview of public health and social measures, and strategies to limit any possible harm resulting from these interventions](#) and a scientific brief on [Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children and adolescents with COVID-19](#) this week.

- According to the [World Health Statistics 2020](#) published by WHO-HQ this week, COVID-19 pandemic is causing significant loss of life, disrupting livelihoods, and threatening the recent advances in health and progress towards global sustainable development goals.
- WHO-HQ has announced the launch of the [WHO Academy and WHO info mobile applications](#) which is designed to support health workers during COVID-19 and provide the general public with real-time mobile access to the latest news and developments respectively.

NEPAL EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

In Nepal, 402 people have tested positive by RT-PCR for COVID-19 and 2 deaths related to COVID-19 has been reported. Only 1% of these confirmed cases are symptomatic at the time of diagnosis. Most of those who have tested positive recently are returnees from a neighboring country. At present, investigations and contact tracing is ongoing and it does not appear that there is widespread community transmission of SARS-CoV-2 within Nepal. The large number of positive results is the result of an aggressive testing approach by the government under which “hot spots”, returnees, waste management workers, security personnel and suspected cases are identified and tested irrespective of presence of symptoms.

Figure 1A: Epidemic curve of laboratory confirmed COVID-19, by date of onset/sample collection/confirmation (N=402) (Data updated till 19th May 2020)



Note: Asymptomatic/symptomatic at the time of detection

Figure 1B: Cumulative case count by province (Data updated till 19th May 2020)

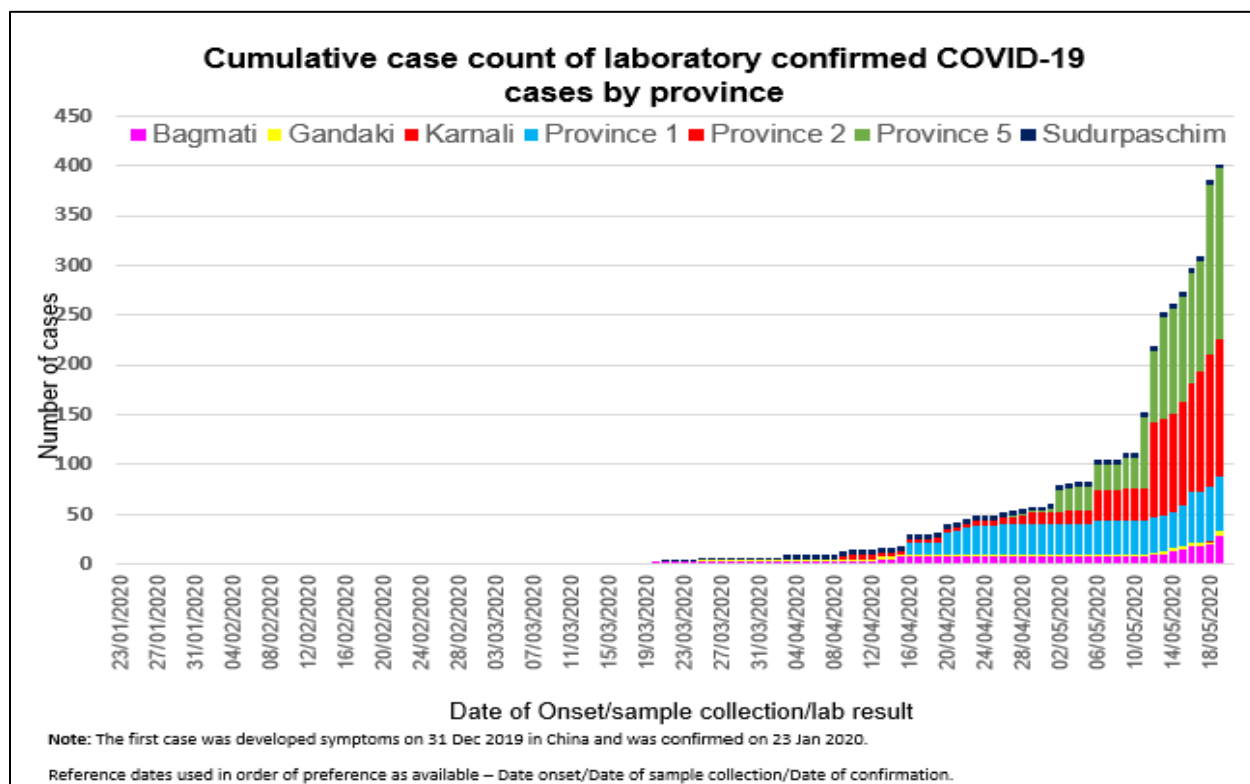


Table 1: Provinces with reported lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases & deaths. (Data updated till 19/05/2020)

Reporting Province	Total confirmed cumulative cases	Total cumulative deaths	Transmission classification*	No of districts affected	Date of last case [#]
Province 1	54	-	Cluster of cases	7	18 May 2020
Province 2	137	-	Cluster of cases	8	19 May 2020
Bagmati	29	1	Sporadic cases	10	19 May 2020
Gandaki	4	-	Sporadic cases	3	19 May 2020
Province 5	172	1	Cluster of cases	7	19 May 2020
Karnali	1	-	Sporadic cases	1	18 May 2020
Sudurpaschhim	5	-	Sporadic cases	2	07 Apr 2020
National Total	402	2		38	19 May 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 2: Municipalities (by domicile) with reported laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases

(Data updated till 19th May 2020)

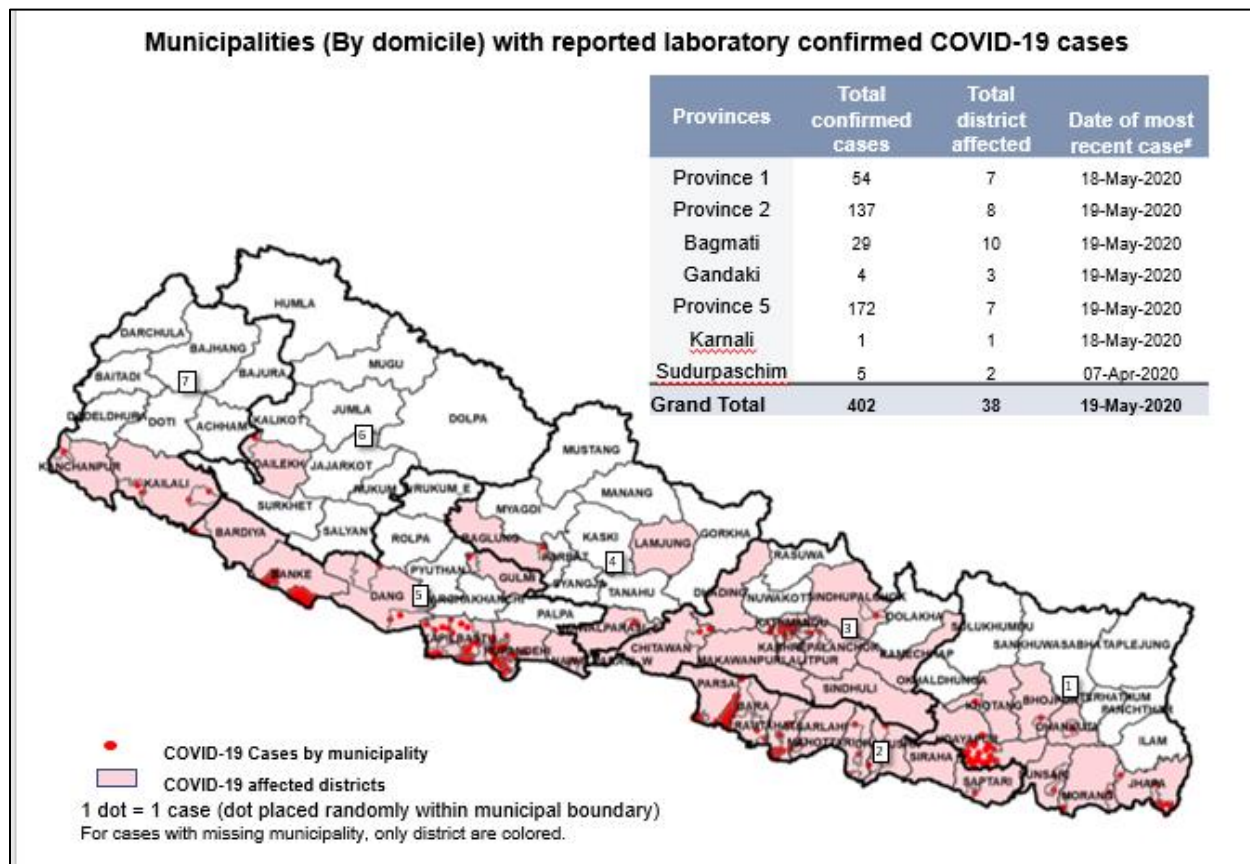


Figure 3: Epidemiological characteristics of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases

(data updated till 19th May 2020)

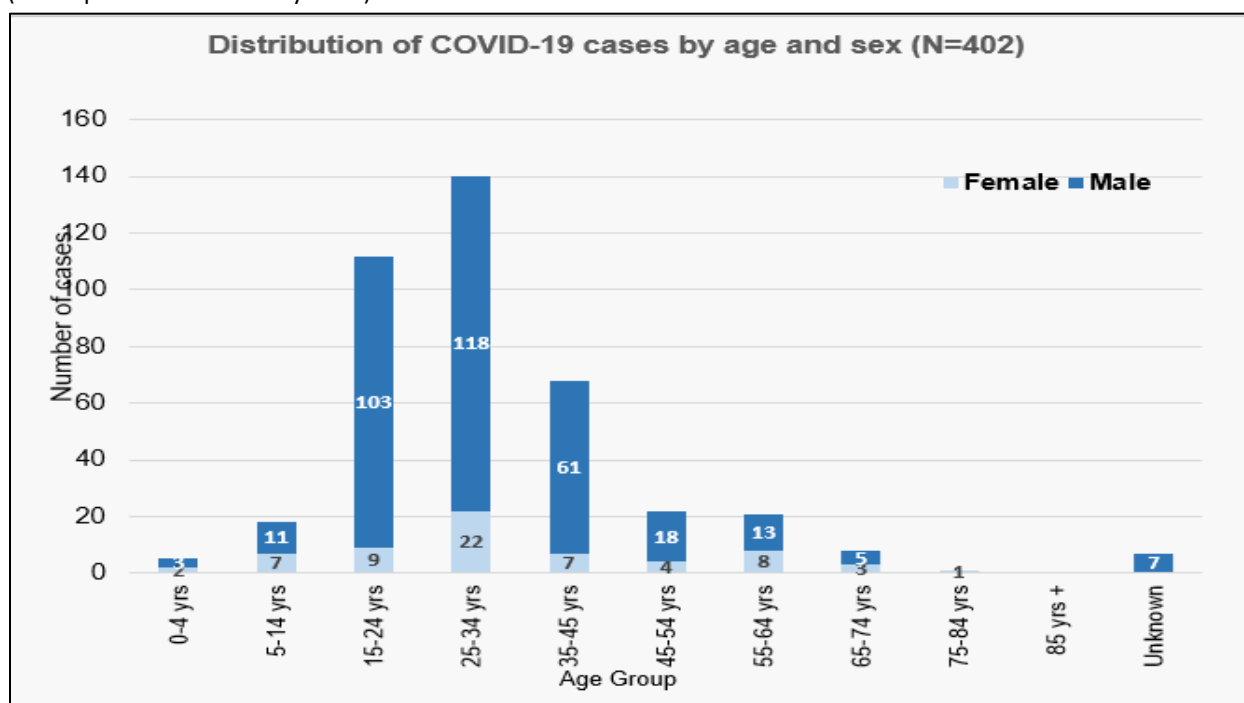
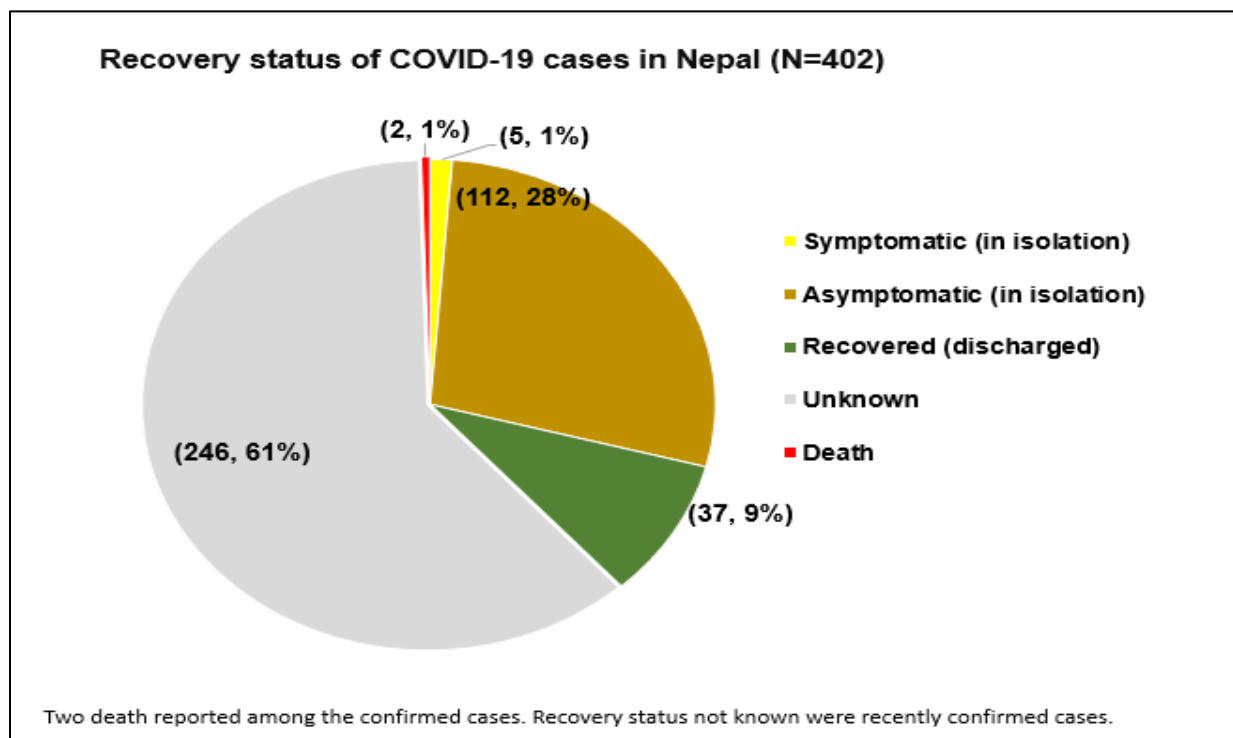
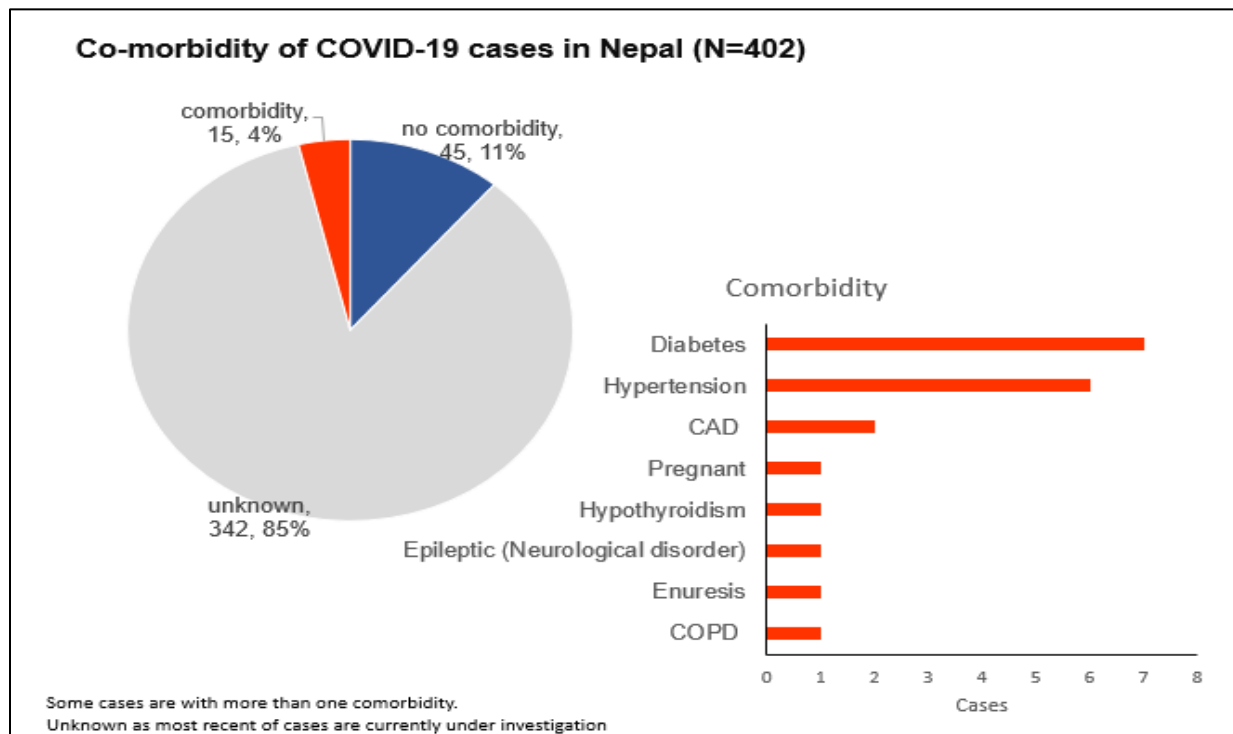


Figure 4: Comorbidity and recovery status of COVID-19 cases in Nepal (data updated till 19th May 2020)



PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

What are Government of Nepal (GoN) and the MoHP doing?

- The MoHP is fully engaged in facilitating case investigation and contact tracing for COVID-19 and testing through teams mobilized in different parts of the country.
- The MoHP has released a [guidelines for management of front line health care service providers and other workers involved in the management of COVID-19 cases](#), this week.
- Incident Command System of the MoHP has endorsed the service continuity matrix/template to collect information from the health facilities across the country.
- EDCD, the MOHP has endorsed the “Patient Profile Format for COVID-19 hospitals” for Case Investigation and Contract Tracing Teams (CICTT) to collect data.
- The MoHP chairs weekly Health Cluster meeting.
- The GoN has formally expressed its interest to join the global “Solidarity Trials”.

What is the WHO, Country Office for Nepal, doing?

- Strategic and technical inputs provided for revising the national testing guidelines in the changing epidemiological and risk profile of the country
- Strategic discussion and inputs provided to the ICS/MoHP for revision of current and inclusion of new interventions related to testing, quarantine, isolation and contact tracing for alignment with the current and imminent changes in the epidemiological risk profile and operational realities of the country
- Since the start of the COVID-19 response in March, several WHO staff from all units have been embedded in most the MOHP units, centers and teams to provide hands- on support every day. This support continues.
- WHO co-leads, together with the MOHP, the Health Cluster weekly meetings participated by all provinces and more than 150 partner members from more than 50 agencies. The final endorsed the MoHP’s Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for COVID-19 pandemic was presented to all partners at the 6th Health cluster meeting this week. This week, the Health Cluster had also formally engaged Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD) Director in the Health Cluster meeting to present weekly COVID-19 Epidemiological situation and its implication on response. This will promote one door information sharing and data dissemination without duplication.
- EDCD teams and WHO field personnel (SMO, FMO) are supporting provinces and local levels in conducting case investigations and contact tracing.
- WHO is providing ongoing support to EDCD in data analysis of COVID-19 cases and data management and entry in the Go.Data
- WHO supported EDCD to revise the standard operating procedure) on COVID-19 case investigation, contact tracing and testing.
- WHO supported National Public Health laboratory to conduct hands on training on COVID-19 PCR testing to laboratory personnel.
- WHO supported the MoHP to draft Provincial Preparedness and Response plan for COVID-19 and Monsoon Preparedness Plan templates and shared with all WASH cluster leads and co-leads in the provinces for its finalization. This will be further shared with National WASH Cluster to enable them to prioritize and improve the WASH conditions in quarantine sites.
- WHO supported the MoHP to capacitate its provincial teams for undertaking the Rapid Assessment on Infection Prevention and Control, Health Care Waste Management, Water Sanitation & Hygiene and Clinical Readiness for management of COVID-19 cases through a virtual training.

- WHO-Nepal has facilitated several webinars on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) which was participated by government agencies, UN agencies and RCCE partners agencies.
- WHO Representative of Nepal's [interview](#) on the response to COVID-19 and collaboration with Ministry of Health and Population in Nepal was published in a widely circulated national daily paper in Nepal.
- WHO supported the MoHP for building leadership on crisis communication. Media Centre and Health Emergency Operation Center, the MoHP were supported for message development, integration of RCCE principles and delivery for the daily briefings for TV telecasts.
- WHO provided technical assistance to National Health Education Information Communication Center (NHEICC) for validation and dissemination of COVID-19 related messages by WHO and other UN agencies including radio PSA/ Scripts/ Animations/ Video/ Jingles.
- WHO Nepal is also actively supporting **One UN** in conveying staff safety and wellbeing information on COVID-19 regularly through Townhall meetings.
- WHO facilitated a mental health webinar which was participated by 200 UN Volunteers across the country.

What are partners doing?

- Several partners have coordinated response to address the ongoing need for increased number of RT-PCR tests and the Government of India contributed 30,000 PCR test this week.
- Health cluster and WASH cluster are working together in addressing WASH needs of the health and quarantine facilities.

WHO's STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

The overarching goal is to control the pandemic by slowing down the transmission and reducing mortality associated with COVID-19. The global strategic objectives are as follows:

- **Mobilize** all sectors and communities to ensure that every sector of government and society takes ownership of and participates in the response and in preventing cases through hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and individual-level physical distancing.
- **Control** sporadic cases & clusters and prevent community transmission by rapidly finding and isolating all cases, providing them with appropriate care, and tracing, quarantining, and supporting all contacts.
- **Suppress** community transmission through context-appropriate infection prevention and control measures, population level physical distancing measures, and appropriate and proportionate restrictions on non-essential domestic and international travel.
- **Reduce** mortality by providing appropriate clinical care for those affected by COVID-19, ensuring continuity of essential health & social services; protecting frontline workers & vulnerable populations.
- **Develop** safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics that can be delivered at scale and that are accessible based on need.

RECOMMENDATION AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

- [Protect yourself](#)
- [Questions and answers](#)

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

USEFUL LINKS

- 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](#).
- For global WHO situation report, please visit this [site](#).
- Global coronavirus disease situation dashboard can be found [here](#).
- For COVID-19 updates from WHO South East Asia Region Office, please visit [here](#).
- Visit WHO Nepal [Facebook page](#) and webpage on COVID-19 [here](#).
- The MoHP's COVID-19 official portal is available [here](#).
- Regular updates on the MoHP Nepal's COVID-19 updates (including situation reports) and resources are available [here](#).

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