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# GENDER EQUALITY UPDATE - 30

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MANAGING THE CURRENT WAVE  
OF COVID-19 AND PREPARING FOR  
MONSOON SEASON  
JUNE, 2021

*Relief distribution of food and non-food items to women in Kathmandu,  
by Aaprabasi Mahila Kamdar Samuha (AMKAS) Nepal with support from UN Women.  
Photo: Courtesy of AMKAS Nepal*

# INTRODUCTION

Each monsoon season, Nepal becomes particularly vulnerable to floods and landslides caused by heavy rain. This year, experts are predicting that Nepal will receive even more rainfall than normal between June and September. The current wave of COVID-19 has already severely impacted vulnerable populations – and now a heavy monsoon season is likely to further exacerbate their condition. With prohibitory measures enforced to control the spread of COVID-19, there is increased loss of livelihoods and hunger, especially among people who do not engage in paid employment and those employed in the informal sector. In the Gender in Humanitarian Action Task Team Meeting, held on 3 May 2021, participants reflected on lessons learned from past years and shared key recommendations to prepare for monsoon season in light of COVID-19.

## COVID-19 HIGHLIGHTS FROM 22-28 MAY 2021



116,476  
ACTIVE CASES



53,611  
NEW CASES



38.2%  
CASE POSITIVITY



542,256  
TOTAL CASES



6,951  
TOTAL DEATHS

SOURCE - Nepal: COVID-19 Pandemic Office  
of UN Resident Coordinator [Situation Report](#)  
No. 38 as of 28 May, 2021

## COVID-19 HIGHLIGHTS FROM 5-11 JUNE 2021



77,585  
ACTIVE CASES



21,561  
NEW CASES



30.8%  
CASE POSITIVITY



601,687  
TOTAL CASES



8,238  
TOTAL DEATHS

SOURCE - Nepal: COVID-19 Pandemic Office  
of UN Resident Coordinator [Situation Report](#)  
No. 40 as of 11 June, 2021



The Deputy Mayors were remarkable in responding to the COVID-19 crisis last year. Women's leadership is critical in effectively managing quarantine and isolation centers during the second wave of COVID-19 in Nepal.

**Shakti Gurung, Women Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Platform**



When will the vaccinations be available for transgender women engaged in sex work? They are in dire need of it, as they have a very high risk of being infected by the virus. They cannot be left out.

**Aanik Rana Magar, LGBTIQ+ Rights Activist**



# Key recommendations to strengthen Nepal's health response during the second COVID-19 wave:

## PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE HEALTH:



Strengthen public health authority efforts concerning local case investigations, contact tracing, and quarantine and isolation centers, in order to stop transmission.



Hire, train and establish Case Investigation Contact Tracing Teams, especially in remote areas, and mobilize them to care for people isolated at home.



Deploy an emergency medical team to manage cases on an as-needed basis across different locations.



Increase access to the Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Test in different communities and point of entries.



Ensure telemedicine facilities are available and scaled up across the nation.



Continue enforcing public health measures, such as wearing face masks, washing hands, using sanitizer and avoiding crowded places.



Ensure that vaccination information is distributed equally across all communities and make efforts to address inaccurate news reports.

## HEALTH SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT



Ensure coordinated actions to manage the current wave at the district, municipality and village (ward) level, and not limited only at the provincial level.



Increase the federal ministry's involvement in acquiring resources and providing technical input.



Strengthen private sector engagement to ensure an adequate number of hospital beds available for COVID-19 patients, especially those with moderate and severe cases.



Relief distribution of food items to survivors of domestic violence residing in Saathi's shelter home. Photo: Courtesy of Saathi

# Key recommendations to prepare for potential monsoon floods and landslides during the second COVID-19 wave:

## COLLECTIVE ACTION:



Encourage collaboration on disaster risk reduction between the government and humanitarian partners at the federal, provincial and local levels, with a focus on potential monsoon floods and landslides.



Ensure the safety of evacuees is a priority throughout the pandemic.

## GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION INTEGRATION:



Ensure the disaster preparedness, relief operation and response addresses GESI.



Provide technical support to develop a GESI-integrated COVID-19 and monsoon preparedness plan at the local level, with women's involvement and representation prioritized.

## SCALE UP CASH AND IN-KIND SUPPORT



Expand livelihood, cash and in-kind support to women and other excluded groups by customizing relief packages based on a needs assessment conducted in each community.



Ensure that relief materials are transported to communities effectively, especially considering travel risks during monsoon, such as potential landslides.



Build or lease out warehouses at the local level to store and distribute relief packages.



Coordinate with local women's organizations to ensure that COVID-19 relief packages reach the most vulnerable and excluded communities.

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS



Broadcast warnings about disasters, such as floods, to target communities; "mike" in areas where people do not have access to radio, TV or the Internet.



Translate key information into local languages and adapt it to ensure it is accessible for people with disabilities.



Disseminate COVID-19 information and helpline numbers across different communication platforms, with a focus on raising awareness about mental health and gender-based violence.

## What to include in relief packages for communities affected by monsoon flooding and landslides during the second COVID-19 wave:



Medication, oximeter, thermometer, hand sanitizer, masks, Personal Protective Equipment, menstrual products, and urinary bags and catheters for people with disabilities.



Information on helpline services about COVID-19, gender-based violence and mental health counselling, translated into local languages and formatted in a way that is accessible to people with disabilities.



Ready-to-eat and staple foods, such as rice and lentils, along with cooking oil, salt and sugar.



Mosquito net for protection against dengue and malaria.



Cooking gas, utensils and matchboxes.



Clean water and water purification tablets.



Tarpaulin sheets and tents



Warm clothes and blankets.



Family planning commodities.



Cash

SOURCE - [Nepal Monsoon Emergency Response Preparedness Plan 2020](#) and GiHA Meeting on Managing the Current Wave of COVID-19 and Preparing for Monsoon Season

## How can you take care of your mental health during COVID-19?



Get adequate sleep, which should be at least seven to eight hours each night.



Take a break from the news. Only consume information from authentic news sources.



Disconnect from social media and gadgets at least one to two hours before going to bed.



Engage in healthy, fun activities, such as exercising, playing with children, listening to music, and gardening.

- Karuna Kunwar, Senior Psychologist, CISMU-UNDSS Certified Stress Counsellor

# HELPLINE NUMBERS

## COVID-19-Related Information from Ministry of Health and Population:

1133	(24 hours)
1115	(6 AM to 10 PM)

## Gender-Based Violence and Psychosocial Counselling:

Nepal Police: 100	(Available 24 hours)
National Women's Commission: 1145	(Available 24 hours)

## Helpline Dedicated to Support the LGBTIQ+ Community:

Blue Diamond Society	9841 313 377, 9849 027 019
Support Love	9821 987 952, 9847 498 849

## Forum for Women, Law and Development Legal Counselling for Gender-Based Violence:

Province 1: Advocate Mina Giri	9842 045 843
Province 2: Advocate Om Kumari Sah	9841 747 032
Bagmati Province: Advocate Lalita Shrestha	9845 031 945
Gandaki Province: Advocate Kalpana Bhandari	9856 008 973
Lumbini Province: Advocate Sushma Gautam	9851 120 060
Karnali Province: Advocate Gita Koirala	9863 126 060
Sudurpashchim Province: Advocate Kaushila Yogi	9868 002 020

## Cyber Violence Helpline Number (Available 24 hours)

Nepal Police Cyber Bureau	9851 286 770, 9851 286 770
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## Mental Health:

The Centre for Mental Health and Counselling-Nepal	1660 018 5080
Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Nepal	1660 010 2005
Koshish Nepal	1660 012 2322
Women's Rehabilitation Center	1660 017 8910
Tarangini Foundation	1660 012 0004
Teaching Hospital	9849 630 430

## Suicide Helpline (Available 24 hours)

Teaching Hospital	9840 021 6000
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**RESOURCES:**  
GESI Checklist on Disaster/Emergency Preparedness in the COVID-19 Context  
Gender Equality Update 23 on Monsoon Response  
Gender Equality Update 28 on Mental Health  
COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plans

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Photo: Courtesy of WOREC Nepal