



1,000 sets of non-food items being delivered to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law in Province 1. The sets will be distributed to holding centres in Morang and Sunsari districts (12 August 2020).

Overview

A steady increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases in Nepal has been reported in recent weeks, forcing some local governments in various parts of the country to impose complete movement restrictions in the respective areas. The Federal Government of Nepal has eased the nation-wide lockdown with a few preventive measures in place. As of 14 August, the number of total cases stands at 25,551 with 8,375 active cases and 99 deaths.

The number of returns from India has slowed down significantly, and according to the COVID-19 Crisis Management Committee (CCMC), a total of 51,441 Nepali migrants have been repatriated as of 14 August. The Government of Nepal plans to bring only 500 migrants per day from now on. The Government has recently endorsed a plan to cover return transportation costs of vulnerable migrant workers who had gone for foreign employment

through regular channels. The challenge of reintegrating returnees into the national labour market and creating work opportunities that matches skills and interests of returnees as well as needs of national economy lies ahead.

To address this situation, IOM Nepal, in coordination and collaboration with partner agencies, has been supporting the Government to ensure that returnees are included in all aspects of COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts.

IOM's approach is aligned with the WHO Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan and, in Nepal, it comprises six thematic areas: 1) Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE); 2) Surveillance; 3) Point of Entry (POE); 4) Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM); 5) Protection; 6) Socio-Economic Recovery. Planned and ongoing activities are described in the sections below.

United Nations Socio-Economic Response Framework (UNSERF)

The global UN Socio-Economic Response Framework (UNSERF), as part of the UN's response to COVID-19, is designing the UN approach to socio-economic response and recovery over the next 12-18 months. The UNSERF is divided into five pillars: 1) Health, 2) Protection, 3) Economic Response and Recovery, 4) Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration, and 5) Social Cohesion and Community Resilience.

The UNSERF builds upon comprehensive consultations being conducted by UN agencies, which will shape the design of the Framework and all subsequent efforts.

IOM co-leads the Social Protection Sub-Group together with UNICEF under the Protection Pillar, and is the lead agency for Migrant focused consultations.

IOM is also supporting the Economic Response and Recovery as well as the Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration Pillars.

Key stakeholders for the UNSERF include national, provincial and local governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), most affected and vulnerable groups, the private sector, academia and research institutions, and development



I. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

On 5 August, a [press note](#) was released covering the official handover of a newly constructed multipurpose community centre in Bhimeshwar municipality, Dolakha district. The building will be used as a coordination hub by the municipality in its response to crises like COVID-19. The official handover was also covered on 6 August on [Karoobar English Daily](#).

The Open Space Map Book of Bhimeshwar municipality has been finalized and will soon be available in electronic copy. IOM Nepal has been promoting it through social media channels. More about the Open Space Map Book and the role of the multipurpose community centre during COVID-19 and disasters can be found on page 4 'CCCM'.



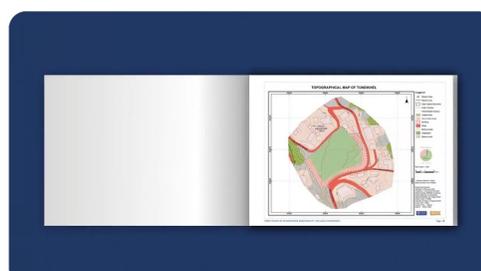
Official handover of the Bhimeshwar multipurpose community centre (5 August 2020).

IOM continues to develop and share awareness raising messages targeting monsoon-related disasters in the context of COVID-19 and basic preventative measures through its social media channels.



An outlook of the 'Open Space Map Book' of [#Bhimeshwar](#), Dolakha in video. The book covers all details of designated [#OpenSpaces](#) to be used for humanitarian purposes in the event of a [#disaster](#).

Plz, tune in to our social media outlets to get an electronic copy of the full book.



IOM tweet with a video of the Open Space Map Book for Bhimeshwar (10 August 2020).



2. Surveillance

On 3 August, the IOM team attended a **Population Mobility Mapping (PMM)** training at IOM premises in Kathmandu focusing on the concepts at the basis of the PMM, key features of the PMM methodology, practical simulation of Participatory Mapping Exercise and a training on KOBO Collect, a software used during data collection.

On 10 August, IOM obtained the approval from the Ministry of Population and Health (MoPH) for conducting PMM in the selected sites in Nepal. The first team left for Sudurpaschim Province on 12 August to initiate data collection and PMM activities in the field.

Another PMM training was conducted on 14 and 15 August with a team from the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), the project implementing partner, in English and Nepali. The training was conducted in Dhangadi municipality, Sudurpaschim Province.

The NRCS team is composed of 12 people in each Province, in addition to three NRCS focal points, and will support IOM PMM staff in rolling out PMM activities in the field. The data collection at the Provinces is estimated to last for one month, depending on the situational context (i.e COVID-19

cases, government restrictions).

As of 15 August, five meetings have been held with IOM and NRCS in preparation for the program implementation, of which two were held virtually and three face-to-face.



PMM training conducted with the NRCS team in Dhangadi municipality (14 August 2020).

IOM has also completed a rapid phone survey and report that will be shared soon with the Government and stakeholders. The implementation of the PMM project is part of the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan in Nepal (2020), and is being conducted in nine municipalities as shown below.





3. Point of Entry

The development of a **POE Assessment Tool** is underway and is comprised of a checklist for data collection. The checklist is twofold, containing a baseline assessment as well as a COVID-19 preparedness assessment. IOM has already approached the Ministry of Health and Population and shared with the COVID-19 Crisis Management Center.

The baseline assessment gathers data on the geographical and physical attributes of the POE, human resources, infrastructure and resources available, volume of migrant flows and the presence of medical personnel. The COVID-19 preparedness assessment gathers data on screening processes (communication and border coordination) and screening operations (including capacity, equipment, logistics, access to PPEs and standard operative procedures).

IOM supported the following materials to Damak and Mechinagar municipality to strengthen the holding centers and points of entry:

- 240** Medical gloves
- 120** Hand sanitizers (litres)
- 900** Surgical masks
- 600** Plastic bags for large dustbins
- 16** Hard utility gloves
- 26** Harpic toilet cleaner
- 13** Toilet brushes
- 12** Lizol surface cleaner (litres)
- 8** Cleaning mops
- 12** Buckets
- 20** 4% Sodium Hydrochlorite (5 litres)
- 4** Sprayer pumps with long handle (5 litres)
- 8** Fiber mops
- 8** Measuring bottles (50 ml)
- 16** Face shields
- 120** Gowns
- 4** Gum boots
- 1** Handwashing station with tank



Handover of handwashing station in Mechinagar municipality (August 2020).



4. Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)

In response to monsoon floods and landslides across Nepal, on 6 August IOM has initiated a Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Site Assessment in 11 municipalities located in Province 1, Bagmati Province, Gandaki Province, Province 5 and Karnali Province. Between 15-24 July, IOM conducted a [DTM Baseline Assessment](#) which was finalized on 29 July.

A newly constructed **multipurpose community centre** in Bhimeshwor municipality, Dolakha district, was officially handed over to the municipal authorities on 5 August. The building will be used as a coordination hub by the municipality as part of its **disaster preparedness and response** efforts including response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the onset of disasters, the centre will be used to provide shelter for displaced people with priority given to the most vulnerable, including pregnant and lactating women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

In times when no disasters or emergencies are prevalent, the building will serve as a venue for community and municipal activities, including women and youth groups, community-based trainings, recreational pursuits, information dissemination and income generating activities. Construction of a multipurpose community centre in Neelkantha municipality in Dhading district has also been finalized and is currently undergoing inspection.

Construction of multi-purpose community centers is still underway in Chautara Sangachowkgadi municipality in Sindhupalchowk district, Bungmati municipality in Lalitpur district, Shankharapur municipality in Kathmandu district, Gosaikunda municipality in Rasuwa district and Gorkha municipality in Gorkha district.

The construction is a part of the People to People Support for Building Community Resilience through Recovery and Reconstruction in Nepal (P2P) project, funded by the Royal Thai Government.

IOM has donated the following materials to the multipurpose community centre in Neelkantha:

- 1 Projector
- 1 Projector screen
- 3 Dispenser for liquid soap
- 2 Hand sanitizer dispenser
- 3 Hand Sanitizers (5 litres)
- 1 Bulletin Board
- 1 White board
- 2 Fire Extinguishers (6 kg)
- 1 Water Filters (21 litres)
- 1 Water Dispenser
- 2 Sodium Hypochlorite bleach (5 liters)
- 10 Sanitary pads for women
- 1 Thermal Guns
- 1 Disinfectant Sprayer (16 litres)
- 3 Buckets and Mugs
- 2 Liquid Soap (5 liters)
- 3 Garbage Cans (240 litres)
- 2 Plastic Tables for filters
- 80 Plastic Chairs
- 6 Dustbins for Toilets (20 litres)
- 2 Sanitizer Stand
- 3 Cotton Towel
- 1 APC Battery Backup

On 5 August, IOM conducted a validation workshop in Bhimeswhor municipality for open spaces mapping. The workshop was the final stage of validating the identified and mapped open spaces in Bhimeswhor municipality. The open spaces have been compiled in the **Humanitarian Open Spaces Map Book**, which will soon be released by IOM. The identification and mapping of open spaces serves to strengthen emergency preparedness and to provide the initial response planning framework for local governments and partner agencies.

IOM Nepal is engaged in **CCCM and Shelter activities** through the ongoing Preparedness and Response to COVID-19 in Nepal programme funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) through the [Nepal Multi Partner Trust Fund](#).

The programme is supporting the overarching objectives of the National Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19:

1. To support the Government of Nepal in preparing and responding to a COVID-19 outbreak that necessitates an international humanitarian response.
2. To ensure that affected people are protected and have equal access to assistance and services without discrimination.

Through this programme, IOM has donated **4,000 sets of essential non-food items** (NFIs) to authorities and communities in Province 1. Each set contains a face mask, 120ml hand sanitizer and a mosquito net.

The sets have been provided as follows:

1,000 sets donated to the Provincial Health and Emergency Operation Center (PHEOC) to be distributed at quarantine and isolation centres.

1,000 sets donated to the Provincial Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law to be distributed to holding centres in Morang and Sunsari municipalities.

200 sets donated to Rangeli municipality to be distributed to people staying at quarantine centres and home isolation.

500 sets donated to Biratnagar metropolitan city to be distributed at quarantine and isolation centres.

500 sets donated to the local IOM level in Jhapa to be distributed at quarantine and holding centres.

800 sets donated to be stored for further distribution in most urgent areas as per the Provincial Government's recommendation.



Biratnagar metropolitan city receiving 500 sets of non-food items from IOM Nepal. The sets will be distributed at quarantine and isolation centres in the municipality. The donations are funded by DFID through the Nepal Multi Partner Trust Fund (7 August 2020).



5. Protection

IOM has been conducting screening interviews of vulnerable migrants returning from third countries besides India, who are residing at designated NGO shelter homes in the Kathmandu valley. The purpose of the screening interviews is to undertake needs and risk assessments, to make necessary referrals and to support with immediate protection services.

Through the screening interviews, 200 (167 female and 33 male) vulnerable migrants have been supported with **immediate cash transfer assistance** to meet basic needs and to support with travel cost to their home districts. The cash assistance targets the most vulnerable returnee migrants.

IOM, as the thematic lead for Migrants Protection under the National Protection Cluster, attended the regular Cluster Meeting on 7 August and the Provincial Intra-Cluster meeting on 10 August. In the role as Migrants thematic lead, IOM briefed the Cluster members including Government

officials, CSOs and NGOs on IOM's ongoing protection response activities which include screening assessment of vulnerable migrants, cash transfer support and ongoing socio-economic protection assessment including the Government's Repatriation Guideline 2077 for Stranded Nepali Migrant workers.

Additionally, the preliminary findings from the assessment were also shared, which includes migrants facing psychosocial distress due to loss of jobs and challenges for income generation opportunities in Nepal, uncertainty of getting new jobs and discriminatory behavior and stigmatization by the community.

IOM also co-leads the Social Protection Sub-Group with UNICEF under the Protection Pillar of the UNSERF.



6. Socio-Economic Recovery

Through activities in the socio-economic response thematic area, IOM is contributing to three Pillars of the UNSERF: Pillar 2) Protecting People, Pillar 3) Economic Response and Recovery, and Pillar 4) Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration.

As of part of the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi Partner Trust Fund, IOM will provide recovery support to selected migrants and their families in Province 1. For this, a consortium of NGOs have been selected as implementing partners to help identify the returnee migrants affected by COVID-19. The implementing partners will assist IOM in providing financial literacy orientation, required psychosocial support and recovery assistance to the target beneficiaries.

Under the EU DG DEVCO funded project Technical Assistance to the Government of Nepal to address COVID-

19, an impact assessment is planned to be conducted in August in selected municipalities of Province 1 and Karnali Province with their high influx of returnee migrants. The impact assessment will focus on the immediate vulnerabilities and risks faced by migrant workers and their communities, as well as impacts of COVID-19 on socio-economic response and recovery.

The findings of the impact assessment will be disseminated amongst development partners and UN agencies, serving as baseline information to plan long-term interventions to engage returnee migrants and their communities to contribute to and uplift their socio-economic status.

IOM is in the process of drafting a report based on a rapid phone survey conducted among migrants workers to build understanding on return intentions, social protection in destination countries and reintegration plans upon their return in Nepal. The findings will be shared with the National Planning Commission and serve as an evidence base to plan and design reintegration programmes. The report will also be widely disseminated among the concerned stakeholders.

Additionally, IOM is in the process of mapping of skills of returnee migrants in coordination with concerned authorities and stakeholders. This will provide first hand information on skills that returnee migrant workers have and/or learned while working abroad, which can be linked with the demand in Nepal. The outcome of this document will support the Government's efforts in linking skills with opportunities in country.

The survey is supported by IDF and conducted jointly with UNDP under the Nepal Migration Profile: Promoting Strategic and Evidence Based Policy Making project. Initial coordination is underway with the related federal authorities, i.e. the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and provincial authorities.

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