

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations and Partners in Nepal Launch Emergency Covid-19 Plan and Call for International Solidarity to Bring Life-Saving Aid to Nepal's Most Vulnerable People and Communities

KATHMANDU, 21 May 2021- As Nepal faces breaking point amidst its worst COVID-19 outbreak, the United Nations and partners are today launching the [Nepal Covid-19 Response Plan](#) calling for US\$ 83.7 million to mobilize an emergency response over the next three months to assist 750,000 of the most vulnerable people affected by the pandemic. The plan was endorsed by the Nepal Humanitarian Country Team and the Government of Nepal's COVID-19 Crisis Management Centre and lays out critical areas of support required to complement the Government of Nepal's response efforts.

UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Sara Beysolow Nyanti said: "The current outbreak is having a devastating impact not just on health but across all sectors, hitting the poorest and most marginalized people in Nepali society the hardest. The COVID-19 Response Plan that we are launching today calls for swift action and international solidarity that is desperately needed to save lives and prevent unnecessary suffering today, tomorrow, and in the difficult weeks to come. We have no time to lose."

After several months of relatively low daily cases in Nepal, cases began to increase rapidly in mid-April, rising from 150 cases per day in early April to over 8,000 cases per day since 5 May. Over 44% of COVID-19 tests nationally are coming back positive, suggesting that case numbers are much higher than reported. Despite the surge beginning almost three weeks after India's, Nepal is experiencing roughly the same number of daily cases per capita as India, but with a health system whose capacity is much more limited.

Dr. Rajesh Sambhajirao Pandav, WHO Representative to Nepal, said: "The recent surge in cases has resulted in an unprecedented need for medical supplies including oxygen, medicines, ventilators, diagnostic kits and vaccines. While WHO and partners are supporting the Nepal Government's endeavors in mounting a robust response, fighting the pandemic necessitates international solidarity. I appeal to friends of Nepal from around the world to come forward and help with fulfilling the needs of the hour."

Millions of people in Nepal are struggling not just with the direct health impact of COVID-19, but also with hunger, malnutrition, devastating economic losses, and other health needs that are being overlooked. The Nepal COVID-19 Response Plan brings together the priority response activities as set out by the [COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan \(CPRP\)](#) to address both the health and humanitarian consequences of COVID-19. The Government of Nepal is leading the response, but capacities are stretched to breaking point and international solidarity is urgently needed to assist the most vulnerable people with life-saving response activities in health, food security, education, nutrition, shelter, protection and water and sanitation.

Ms. Elke Wisch, UNICEF Representative for Nepal, said: "Nepal is experiencing an alarming new COVID-19 surge, with a steep rise in cases that has overwhelmed Nepal's fragile health system. As we respond to the immediate health crisis to help save lives, we cannot forget the devastating broader impact the current COVID-19 surge has on children and young people in Nepal. They are being cut off from vital support networks, losing parents and caregivers, and witnessing scenes no child should ever see. We must come together, nationally and internationally, if we are to prevent interrupted childhoods in Nepal from being lost for good."

The Nepal COVID-19 Response Plan can be downloaded here: <https://un.org.np/resource/covid-19-response-plan-nepal-may-2021>





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