

# WHAT'S UP ?

Newsletter, Oxfam in Nepal

Volume 27 | July-August Edition



Photo by: Oxfam in Nepal

Group of beneficiaries receiving bucket and personal hygiene items through Oxfam's COVID Response Programme

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# MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Dear readers,

According to behavioural science, it takes three months to adopt a new habit. So, as we enter our eight month of working remotely, we could say that this is our habitual way of working, however tough this may be! The pandemic has taken different shapes in different countries and we are not able to predict the medium term for Nepal. The first wave of infection in May that affected many rural districts, especially in Terai, is now followed by a second wave that is affecting Kathmandu Valley. How long will it last? How fast will it spread? How will the health system cope? This is the uncertainty that we need to live with. As Oxfam staff, we feel the frustration of not being able to meet community members and partner organizations, but we are also very proud and uplifted to know that our long term partnerships with civil society organisations in districts across the country has allowed our regular projects to pick up when the lockdown was lifted and for our COVID response to continue smoothly. As Oxfam staff, we feel the frustration of not being able to meet community members and partner organizations, but we are also very proud and uplifted to know that our long term partnerships with civil society organisations

in districts across the country has allowed our regular projects to pick up when the lockdown was lifted and for our COVID response to continue smoothly. Through these pages, you will discover how we have been able to facilitate crucial support to communities affected by COVID and by the lockdown and to participate in the prevention of further transmission.

During this period, our team has also evolved with many new members joining, in the backdrop of a new country strategy and operational plan. Globally and in Nepal, we have also continued to advocate for a stronger focus on addressing inequality during this pandemic, as all indicators point to an acceleration of poverty across the globe.

I would like to thank you all for your support, contribution and interest in the cause that Oxfam defends.

And as we enter the period of Dasain and Tihar, I want to wish you all a relaxing and joyful time with your family, whilst staying safe and protected from the virus.

Thank you!

**Sarah Blin**

**Country Director**

# OXFAM IN NEPAL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Oxfam has declared this emergency a Cat-1 emergency and will focus globally on its core mandate: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) bringing attention to the differential vulnerabilities of women and other marginalized groups and preventing inequalities to grow through this pandemic.

Oxfam is deeply concerned about how the poorest and most vulnerable people will be hit by the coronavirus –at home and in places where there isn't much protection from it spreading, medical care for people who are sick, or ways to deal with the loss of income., water and sanitation, communityDrawing on learning from Oxfam's responses to public health emergencies with a strong community engagement component, in combination with existing knowledge and expertise in gender, public health promotion-based protection and interpersonal communication and digital technology, we have been working to ensure that poor, vulnerable and marginalized people are protected and prevented from the impacts of COVID-19. We are engaging to support communities, with focus on women and vulnerable groups (elderly, person with disability, marginalized minorities), using a flexible approach to ensure that our support will be both preventive and responsive to evolving communities' needs.

Oxfam in Nepal with support from local partners, respective District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) and local authority, has been carrying out various response activities through different projects from the start of its impact in Nepal.

During July and August, Oxfam continued its support to various COVID affected areas with awareness-raising activities, through mass media, and by establishing dedicated health desks in health care facilities to disseminate information related to the virus. In addition, hygiene and dignity kits were distributed to vulnerable populations including pregnant mothers, people with disabilities and Dalits and other disadvantaged ethnic families.



Photo by: FAYA

*A child from Kailali district washing his hand in a contactless handwashing station installed by Oxfam*



# Summary of Oxfam's COVID-19 Response in Nepal



Oxfam is responding to COVID-19 in 12 districts of Nepal



We have reached 70,000 people directly through different interventions



**2,700+** bucket with lid and tap distributed



**Awareness raising** messages on Radio and Television



**Awareness raising** messages on handwashing, social distancing etc. through IEC materials like posters, storyboard etc.



**Safeguarding** trainings provided to partner staff

**108** sets of Sanitation & Hygiene materials distributed in **53** Quarantine Centres reached, **6** Isolation Centres, and 8 Health Care Facilities



**7,400+** Hygiene Kits and **2,500+** Dignity Kit Distributed



**201** Peddle Operated Hand Washing Station Installed



Distributed **2,200** K-95 & **14,700** Surgical Masks, and **10,730** soaps

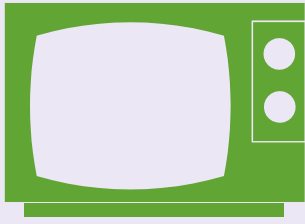


**130** Bed Sets provided in Quarantine Centres



**50** disabled friendly toilet chairs, **37** temporary latrines, **38** bathing units installed

# Activities in July-August



**560000 people**

reached through television messaging on handwashing steps, physical distancing and use of mask in local language



**362000 people**

informed about COVID safety measures and prevention through local FM.



**2500 people**

served in help desk established to provide information about COVID-19, GBV, referral mechanisms

## 13 contactless handwashing stations installed

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**8 Schools**



**3 Public Areas**



**2 Health Post**

# ADAPTING TO THE NEW NORMAL



Photo by [Chris Montgomery](#) on [Unsplash](#)

With the unparalleled challenges shaped by COVID-19, organizations across the world have had to reimagine their work to create a safe and productive working environment. Our staff has been adapting to the new normal by extensively using digital mediums to conduct meetings, seminars and workshops.

**Mahakali Sambad** was conducted virtually to identify a holistic plan of local government to curb water pollution, based on the findings shared by the citizen scientists. The participants also planned to allocate budget for citizen science approach, where citizens become an active advocate to curb water pollution in the Mahakali water basin. The meeting conducted via zoom had 80 participants and was also shared live on Facebook with more than 1000 views.

**TROSA** project conducted a virtual meeting on the topic, 'Women Empowerment Centres' Role in Developing Sand Mining Guideline at Mahakali Basin'. The 20 participants who attended the meeting were informed about the current state of sand mining at Mahakali Basin, and the role of Women Empowerment Centre in developing sand mining guidelines. The meeting concluded with the possibility of linking the guidelines into practice on both sides of the river.

**Creating Spaces** project conducted a virtual orientation with 20 partner staff on distant monitoring mechanisms and branding and visibility. The orientation facilitated by the Knowledge Management team, encouraged the partners to collect information remotely from the project locations. In addition, the workshop on branding and visibility provided clarification on the use of logo, photographs, and using consent forms.

**Alternate Management Model** conducted a virtual meeting with private sector organization FixIT to discuss precautionary measures to prevent COVID-19 transmission. Representatives from both the organizations explored the possibilities of developing an online platform to facilitate AMM.



Photo by: Oxfam in Nepal  
*Water supply tank construction supported by AMM project*



Photo by: Oxfam in Nepal  
*A construction worker washing hands from a handwashing station installed by AMM project*



Photo by: Oxfam in Nepal  
*Construction of water reservoir supported by Purnima Project*



Photo by: Oxfam in Nepal  
*Construction of household tap supported by Purnima Project*

As civil construction of the water tank continues, Oxfam’s AMM project installed handwashing stations in its construction sites, and oriented workers on proper handwashing steps to prevent the spread of the virus. The project also provided handwashing orientation for more than 800 families at the household level.

**HELPING COMMUNITIES ACCESS WATER**

Oxfam’s Purnima project is helping people access water through construction of different water supply systems



Construction of water reservoir benefiting 900 people



Intake of Water Supply System benefiting 142 people



Construction of Household water tap for 711 people



Transmission pipeline benefiting 321 people



# CULTIVATING THE HABIT OF HANDWASHING

For 32 years old Laxmi Kapfle, the Focus Group Discussion conducted by Oxfam came as a dire realization on how she was putting her entire family at serious risk of infection by neglecting to handwash. Laxmi, who is a mother of a 6 years old boy says, “Even though I have heard about the steps of handwashing, I have always neglected it”.

Laxmi’s reflection during the discussion session embodies a large group of people in Nepal where handwashing is often neglected during crucial times like cooking, and after using toilets.

At Oxfam, we realize that behaviour change in habits like handwashing requires constant reminders using different mediums of information dissemination. Oxfam is regularly conducting focus group discussions with different groups of people using a unique approach called Mum’s Magic Hand. Mum’s Magic Hands is an interactive approach based on storytelling that uses field-tested, emotional and health motivators to promote effective hand washing.

In Laxmi’s case, Oxfam staff narrated a story of a conscious mother who encouraged her daughters to wash their hands, which led them to live a healthy life, and thus enabling them to become doctors. Being a mother herself, the discussion session was an eyeopener for Laxmi as she realized the importance of handwashing habits in her as well as her children’s life.



*Laxmi Kaphle, 32, a participant of Oxfam’s focus group discussion on hand hygiene, with her 6- years old son*

Listening to the story, Laxmi says, “Before this session, I did not pay much attention to the handwashing habits of my children; this session has made me realize how important handwashing is to ensure the bright future of my children”.

As the discussion session wraps up, Laxmi adds, “If the mother in the story had not paid attention to the handwashing habit of her daughter, she probably would have fallen sick more often and would have never become a doctor”.



# BEEKEEPING FOR RETURNEE MIGRANT WORKERS



Photo: Dharma Raj Sitaganga-5 Ward Chairperson Kamal Poudel handing over bee-hive to the woman member of migrant family

Seasonal migration to Indian cities and agriculture are two major sources of income for people living in Arghakhachi district. Following the spread of COVID-19, many returnee migrant workers lost their jobs, as factories in Indian cities have closed.

As a result, many returnee migrant workers seeking income-generating activities in Arghakhachi district requested support from Oxfam supported, Sarokar Samajik Mahila Udhhami Cooperative.

Responding to the economic impact on the returnee migrants, Oxfam's Building Economic Resilience (BER) Project supported 100 beehives for 20 returnee migrant families in Jukena and Sitganga municipalities of Arghakhachi district. In addition, the cooperative has been supporting the returnee migrant workers by promoting their micro-enterprise through low-interest loans and providing technical assistance to run the business.

## IN THE NEWS

### नागरिक विज्ञानबारे महाकाली संवाद

काठमाडौं, १३ चैत्र २०७३



News Link - <https://bit.ly/3jPcrwv>



News Link - <https://bit.ly/3nEsDmn>

Local Media covered issues discussed in Mahakali Sambad organized by Oxfam's TROSA project

# FIGHT AGAINST CHILD MARRIAGE

Oxfam's Creating Spaces project continued its activities in 180 discussions centres reaching 4500 women and girls.

Members of  
community  
Discussion Centres,  
talking to parents  
about the ill-effects  
of child marriage



Masks produced by  
CDC members to  
prevent the spread of  
Coronavirus



If you have any concerns or queries regarding Safeguarding, please contact the following number **16600150076** or send email at **[whistleblowing@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@oxfam.org.uk)**

## FEEDBACK?

Do you have programme updates, stories, pictures, videos to share? Or, any important questions on the newsletter?

Please contact: **Grishma Raj Aryal, Media and Communication Officer at**

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