

**Virtual Nineteenth Health Cluster Coordination Meeting**  
**Kathmandu, Nepal**  
**13 August 2020 -THURSDAY (2:00 – 3:00 pm)**

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Samir Kumar Adhikari, Chief, Health Emergency Operation Center (HEOC) on behalf of Dr. Jageswor Gautam, Chair of the Health Cluster and Co-chaired by Dr. Lungten Z. Wangchuk, Co-lead of the Health Cluster. More than 50 health partners participated the meeting virtually. Dr. Lungten Z. Wangchuk facilitated the meeting.

**Agenda for #19 Health Cluster Coordination Meeting, 13 August 2020**

Agenda item	Responsible	Time
Welcome and Update	Dr. Jageshwar Gautam, Chair-Health Cluster	14:00-14:05
COVID-19 response: updates from NPHL	Dr. Runa Jha, Director, NPHL	14:10-14:15
Follow-up action points and brief updates from partners	Dr. Lungten Wangchuk, Co-chair, WHO	14:15-14:20
COVID-19 response: Lessons from NHTC	Dr. Yedu Chandra Ghimire, Director, National Health Training Centre (NHTC)	14:20-14:30
COVID-19 response support from WHO	Dr. Reuben Samuel, Team Lead, WHE/WHO; Incident Manager, WHO Incident Management System	14:30-14:40
Discussions/Questions	All	14:40-14:45
Summary of the meeting	Dr. Lungten Wangchuk, Co-chair	14:45-14:50
Comments/Answers to the questions	Advisors/Chair	14:50-14:55
Conclusion and closing	Dr. Jageshwar Gautam, Chair-Health Cluster	14:55-15:00

**Synopsis of the meeting**

Dr. Adhikari welcomed all the participants to the meeting and provided brief updates of tests and isolation of COVID-19 cases as of 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020. He informed that the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has endorsed following two guidelines and thanked Chaudhary Foundation for handing over eight ventilators.

- Interim guidance for dental practices during COVID-19 global emergency in Nepal, 2020
- Standards for the service delivery to senior citizens in the context of COVID-19, 2020

**As of 12 August 2020**

Total PCR sites: **38** (reporting laboratories)  
Total PCR tests done: **473,179**  
Total PCR positive: **24,432**  
Total active cases: **7,613** (31.1%)  
Total discharged: **16,728** (68.5%)  
Deaths: **91** (0.4%)  
Total isolation beds: **11,998**  
Total quarantine beds: **176,777**  
Total people in quarantine: **14,846**

Furthermore, he requested health partners (Donor communities, UN agencies, I/NGOs, Red Cross Movements, Civil Societies and others), to provide continued support in application of public health measures (SMS), COVID-19 case management and contact tracing, quarantine management, expansion of isolation facilities within hub and satellite hospitals and response through one door mechanism.

Following the national update by Dr. Adhikari, Dr. Lungten provided updates on partners support and major activities of Reproductive Health (RH) Sub-cluster. She congratulated MOHP for increasing the number of laboratories. She then provided with the updates from the analysis of 43 maternal deaths reported between Chaitra 11, 2076 to Jestha 32, 2077 of which 7 deaths has COVID like symptoms. The recommendations from RH clusters were also presented to reduce the maternal deaths through appropriate continuation of the RH services. She also emphasized the key asks from ministry ie. support in testing, tracing, isolating and managing COVID-19 cases along with monsoon response; to inform/educate field offices and response teams on "Public Health Standards, 2077" (SMS); risk communication and community engagement; and acceleration and continuity of essential health services.



Dr. Runa Jha, Director, National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) then presented the update of NPHL and laboratories for COVID-19 testing services in Nepal. She also informed that two key technical documents for Xpert Xpress SARS-CoV-2 testing, Protocol for kit verification and quality control of Xpert® Xpress SARS-CoV-2 testing using the GeneXpert Dx System in Nepal and standard operating protocol for XPERT XPRESS SARS COV-2 test for diagnosis of COVID-19, Nepal have been endorsed by NPHL and National Tuberculosis Control Center (NTCC). She also thanked Dr Lungten, WHO for coordinating this Xpert Xpress Cov-2 test introduction in Nepal and technical support since March and thanked NTCC director and the team for close collaboration in this successful introduction of this new test in Nepal. She informed that the laboratory reporting system is digitalized using "Dolphin" software and reporting through the SMS mobile messages. Dr. Runa informed that NPHL's turnaround time was 48 hours on an average.

Dr. Yedu Chandra Ghimire, Director, National Health Training Center (NHTC), then presented on the lessons learnt during COVID-19 response. He informed that virtual training package on IPC, ICU and critical care were developed and delivered. They plan to roll out the training package in all the provinces. He informed that the training package can be rolled out by partners in close coordination with NHTC.

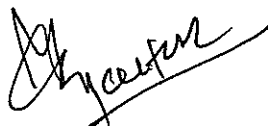
Dr. Reuben Samuel, Team lead WHE/WHO and Incident Manager, WHO Incident Management System (IMS) then presented about the COVID-19 response support provided by WHO. WHO re-purposed its staff for COVID-19 response support to MOHP. Technical Support especially to EDCD, NPHL, MD, NHEICC and HEOC are ongoing. As a health cluster co-lead WHO is providing its support at Federal and Provincial levels for health cluster coordination. WHO also provided technical support in development of MoHP's Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for COVID-19 pandemic and National Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan for Nepal. Logistic data analysis and interpretation for decision making, generation of daily and weekly epidemiological updates, case investigation and contact tracing, COVID-19 surveillance at point of entry, development of Hamro Swasthya App and COVID-19 web portal are the key interventions where WHO is providing its support. WHO conducted the risk assessment of level 2 COVID-19 designated hospitals for IPC, WASH including health care waste management.

Dr. Lungten thanked all the participants and presenters and congratulated Dr. Runa and Dr. Yedu for their continued effort in respective areas for COVID-19 response. She also appealed to the health partners to support in roll out of Xpert Xpress COoV-2 test by supporting resources for Cartridges replenishment. She also thanked Dr. Reuben for his comprehensive presentation on support from WHO. Dr. Samir Kumar Adhikari, before concluding the meeting, thanked all the presenters and participants for their presence in the meeting. She reiterated that cases are increasing, and this calls for continued collaboration in combating COVID-19.

#### Decision/Action points

- Re-enforce the Public Health Standards (SMS) in response
- Support in risk communication, community engagement; and operationalizing the CICT teams and EMDTs
- Support on expansion and/or upgrading the isolation facilities at hub and satellite hospital networks ensuring availability of treatment services ie. ICU, ventilators, oxygen, medicines, hospital supplies
- Support for COVID-19 and monsoon response through one door mechanism

Signed by the Chair:



**Dr Jageswor Gautam**  
Chair/Lead



**Dr Lungten Z. Wangchuk**  
Co-Chair/Co-Lead

27 August 2020

