

# INF NEPAL UPDATES

December 2020



**Greetings to you all.**

**Amid all the challenges we are facing today, we see a greater reason for Hope. We are encouraged to reflect on our vision and realise that the meaningful work, real healing and care can come in many ways.**

**We appreciate the confidence that all of our partners, INF families and prayer supporters across the globe have placed in us and in our work.**

**We see reasons for hope. We trust you see them too!**

**We are really excited to share with you some of the latest updates and news of INF Nepal.**

## **COVID-19 Updates!**

At present COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to rise in the country with an average of 1000 new cases each day. The overall national infection tally has reached 255,979 with more than 7,515 active cases. Some of our staff have been infected; so far, 38 staff have been reported to have COVID positive, all of them have already been recovered. By the grace of God, none of our infected staff has developed any major medical complications. We are continuing our efforts to care for the health and well-being of our staff, people and communities we work with.

Apart from the COVID-19 crisis, Nepal also faced numerous landslides and floods that killed 345 people [*drportal.moha.gov.np, January - December 2020*].

The government's restrictions on movements have been taken down. We have been able to resume our community work and hospital services. All our departments are functional, adopting additional precautionary measures and following the government issued protocols. As the pandemic continues, we have undertaken many preparedness and response-related initiatives. We have taken steps to prevent a widespread outbreak of the disease by procuring essential supplies, equipment, and medicine, building the capacity of community staff and medical personnel through training, and spreading public awareness through IEC materials and digital platforms. We have been able to support the Government of Nepal with additional resources needed to scale up the preventive measures and for the management of the quarantine and health facilities in INF's working areas. Thanks to our partners for their

support to make this possible. We could readily provide every protective gear to our frontline staff to keep their morale high and to keep them safe from the disease.

We're also working to address the long-term socio, economic and health impacts of COVID-19 through our services in hospitals and community programmes works. We have been implementing the COVID recovery income generation activities targeting the poor and vulnerable people in communities providing them with opportunities of sustainable livelihood support by improving their access to vocational training, community led saving and credit and small business opportunities.

Likewise, more than 500 people living with leprosy and persons with disabilities have been reached out through counselling, pickup and delivery to and from homes, providing with the package of essential medicines and other devices etc. from our hospitals. The number of patients that had remained low for three months due to restrictions on inter-district vehicular movement, started to pick up as soon as the restrictions were lifted. The number of patients seeking the services is gradually increasing in our hospitals due to our client's trust on our services and the COVID oriented modifications in our infrastructure and practices.

We are very grateful to all those partners who have generously given grants or approved reallocation of project funds to help us to prepare our hospitals and enable us to respond to needs in the communities where we work.





SHG meeting is done in two shifts with only 10-12 members in each shift

## Celebrating the 68th INF DAY

INF Nepal had a virtual ceremony to mark and celebrate the 68th year of INF service in Nepal. Taking the precautionary measures and hosting through a digital platform made the celebration this year different from the previous ones. The celebration programme was organised from the rooftop of INF Nepal Central Office with the mountains on the backdrop was a refreshing experience for all. INF Nepal Board members, expatriate volunteers, guests and INF staff from ten working districts joined the meeting.

The event also saw presentations from community programmes and hospitals. The guest speaker was a prominent motivational speaker and singer Ramesh Prasai, who has a rare condition - anophthalmia [the absence of both eyes]. Ramesh has recently earned his large followers with his strong oratory skills. He is also involved in philanthropic activities and even donated half of the prize sum he won [a popular public speaking competition of Nepal] towards the hospital construction in Kalikot. We are indeed thankful for his time that despite his busy schedule, he joined and shared remarkable thoughts and encouraging words for INF staff.

We also launched the first-ever leprosy fundraising campaign with the theme "Care for Cure" which aims to raise funds for INF's leprosy work. This is expected to help to care, to cure and ultimately to end leprosy in Nepal. Because of this virtual celebration, we saved the cost of around NPR 3 Lakhs which will be contributed for INF's Leprosy Campaign and COVID-19 fund.

Participants were welcomed by Krishna Adhikari [Executive Director] and chaired by RC Timothy [INF Nepal Board Chair]. Phil Morris [Nepal Country Director of INF International] and Gordon Russell [Expat Team Leader] made their remarks representing INF International family and expatriate volunteers respectively. Vote of thanks was made by RC Timothy [INF Nepal Board Chairperson]. The programme was hosted by Dhaka Ram BM [Liaison & Support Director].



## Leprosy Fundraising Campaign

Leprosy Fundraising Campaign "Care for Cure" was virtually launched on 17 November, 68th INF Day. This campaign is first of its kind initiated by INF Nepal to respond to the urgent funding crisis and need for INF to continue its leprosy work.

### Purpose of the Campaign:

- To raise awareness about the situation and the need for leprosy work in Nepal.
- To ensure no one is left behind as we accelerate towards zero transmission, zero disability and zero discrimination.
- To share INF's continued commitment for the leprosy work in Nepal.
- To fundraise and support ongoing leprosy work in continuation with other INF work.

### Fundraising Target - NPR 2 Crore [USD 170 thousand]

You can join this movement and become our Partners who CARE. Your gift today will help to care, to cure and ultimately to end leprosy in Nepal. Your commitment makes all the difference! For more details, please visit [www.inf.org/CareforCure](http://www.inf.org/CareforCure).

Read more about the campaign by following the link:

<https://www.inf.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Care-for-Cure-Leprosy-Campaign-13.10.2020.pdf>



Watch the story of Chandrakala:

<https://youtu.be/RrjYtme02Fk>





## Palliative care and Chronic Disease Building

Amidst the pandemic, construction of the new building for providing Palliative Care services at Green Pastures Hospital is completed. The building's dedication programme held in November in a low key setting in presence of INF Nepal's Senior Management Team, Hospital Management Committee and representatives of Pokhara Christian community.



## International Day for Climate Action

INF Nepal organised a short refresher programme for its staff seeking the commitment from each member. The programme also highlighted why it is crucial to integrate climate action in day to day organisational operations and service delivery. The theme of the programme was "We are INF: Climate Action Every Day."

Each year the International Day for Climate Action is observed globally on 24th October. This day also marks the UN's Sustainable Development Goal no. 13 for taking the urgent action to combat climate change and reduce its impacts.

Global warming is real and is causing long-lasting changes to our climate system. If we don't act now, we might be left with the irreversible consequences.

Improving the organisational and individual level awareness by disclosing the environmental impact is essential to the management of carbon and climate risk. The programme highlighted the need for an affordable and scalable solution to waste management.



## Staff Care and Support

We have been closely monitoring and preparing for all the possible scenarios and ensuring we have the right plans and resources in place. We have formed a staff care and support team under the leadership of HRD Manager to support our staff during this difficult time. The main objective of this team is to encourage and support staff through counselling and prayers. Sharing them with the health and safety information related to COVID-19, assessing and learning the health concerns of staff who have tested positive and reporting it to the concerned team.

Looking ahead, we will continue to follow our COVID-19 protocols, rooted in staff care and seek medical expertise and advisory when needed.

## Did you know?

There are six seasons in Nepal, each lasting two months.

1. **Basanta** [Spring] *Chaitra-Baishakh*
2. **Grishma** [Summer] *Jestha-Asadh*
3. **Barsha** [Monsoon] *Shrawan-Bhadra*
4. **Sharad** [Early Autumn] *Ashwin-Kartik*
5. **Hemanta** [Late autumn] *Mangsir-Poush*
6. **Shishir** [Winter] *Magh-Falgun*



## 29th Annual General Meeting

INF Nepal's 29th Annual General Meeting [AGM] was held on 15th October 2020 at Multi-Purpose Learning Centre in GPH Complex. Only a few board members and general members were present in the AGM while remaining members were connected through a video conference call. This AGM reviewed the INF Nepal's work in the past year and discussed how it could continue to support Nepal's most vulnerable people even during this pandemic period. Given the current situation and organisational need, AGM decided to continue the term of three Board members unanimously.



## Annual Reports 2019-20 [FY 2076/77]

We have published our annual report of the fiscal year 2076-77 [2019-20]. <http://inf.org/resources/reports-and-publications/>

We hope you will enjoy reading these reports. Behind the summaries, statistics and finances as many lives and communities have been touched and transformed.



## INF's Disaster Response Activities

Each year during the monsoon season, massive rains trigger flash floods and landslides across the steep and mountainous terrain in the hilly regions of Nepal endangering many lives and communities. INF supported the landslide affected people of Myagdi, Parbat, Lamjung and Kalikot district with much-needed relief materials. All of these activities were conducted in direct coordination with the respective local government offices and following the proper physical distancing and necessary hand hygiene practices.

In Myagdi and Parbat, landslides after the heavy rainfall in the second week of July killed at least 27 people. INF's disaster response team travelled to the remote Takam village in Myagdi district where the team distributed galvanised steel panels and health hygiene items to the 27 much-affected households. Similarly, INF provided health hygiene kits to 70 families; three of the landslide affected households in Parbat district were provided with Kitchen utensils.



In Kalikot, as many as 29 people died, many injured and over 500 families were displaced due to the flash floods and landslides in the month of July and September. As many as 885 families are still living in landslide-prone areas. Due to the landslides and floods, all the roads linking up to the Narharinath Rural Municipality were blocked.

INF Nepal responded immediately to these situations with emergency relief materials such as food packages, tents, blankets, steel panels for shelter and hygiene kits to some of the affected families.

Similarly in Lamjung, following the landslide in Marshyangdi Rural Municipality, INF in coordination with the local government conducted the emergency relief distribution to the affected family in Tarpu village. Twenty-four families who were severely affected by the landslide were provided with the food packages and hygiene kits while others partially affected 82 families were provided with the hygiene kits.





## Bajura COVID Response activity

INF Bajura conducted a three-day Off Season Vegetable Farming Practices training in Badimalika and Budinanda municipality of Bajura district in close coordination with the local governments. A total of 30 participants took the training. Participants were the migrant returnee, member of COVID affected households, member of forest user groups and community improvement committee. The mayor of Budinanda municipality Mr Padam Raj Giri expressed his gratitude for organising the training. He hoped that the training will somehow help for the economic recovery of covid affected households.

One of the participants in the training was Ujjala. She returned from India after she lost her job due to COVID crisis. After coming to Nepal, she tried vegetable farming in her small piece of land. She had no proper idea about the cultivation. The training has given her opportunities to learn about different farming techniques for different types of vegetables. With the technical support and proper guidance, she is confident that farming can bring sustainable livelihood for her and her family.



## Income generation support in Kapilvastu

The immediate adverse effect of COVID-19 pandemic other than health is the socio-economic status of people. It has potential to further increase the vulnerabilities of people already with low income sources. INF Nepal Kapilvastu programme through the agriculture-based livelihood interventions has provided seed and equipment support to farmers to promote vegetable farming pocket areas. It has also established and provided grant support as revolving fund to seven self-help groups.



## Capacity development of project staff

During this period, INF Nepal Kapilvastu team received different types of orientation and training. The training was aimed at developing the capacity of project staff and community mobilizers acknowledging that growth, learning, and change is needed to successfully implement the projects.

The trainings provided were:

1. Safeguarding – Facilitated by HRD manager.
2. Photography orientation- Facilitated by Communication Team [Training conducted through virtual sessions]
3. General Counselling training- facilitated by Green Pastures Hospital
4. Basic CBR Training- Facilitated by CBR coordinator.
5. KOBO tools- Facilitated by QAD
6. Counselling to COVID-19 Infected – facilitate by Tirtha Kumari BC



## Community Facilitation and Awareness Raising

INF Nepal Mugu team facilitated the meetings of eighteen SHG [disability] for their sustainability. During this reporting period, discussion on Coronavirus and its safety measures among the SHG members was facilitated and community people were made aware and alert about virus transmission from one person to another. The focus was on hand-washing maintaining social distancing and avoid mass gathering.

Similarly exit meetings will take place and there will be follow-up of children with disabilities for their enrolment in schools.



## STAFF FEATURED

### Ashish Rana Magar

*Ambulance Driver, Shining Hospital - INF Banke*

In the current COVID-19 crisis too, INF has been supporting through various means and measures. Whether through the distribution of much-needed food packages or health hygiene items or supporting the quarantine centres with tarpaulins and blankets or even by working closely with the provincial health office to produce health hygiene messages for public awareness. Yet another support INF has been providing is through its Ambulance service to transport the COVID-19 patients to the dedicated hospitals and centres in Banke district, one of the highly affected areas.

Our Banke Ambulance is being used in coordination with the various government offices such as district administration offices or municipalities or district health offices as per the need and the situation. Our ambulance driver Ashish Rana Magar is on standby.

Initially, it was only the INF who was supporting the ambulance service for transporting the COVID-19 patient as many hospitals were fearful or didn't have the proper ambulance.

When asked to share his experience, Ashish replied: "Of course I was afraid, but at the same time I had a deep sense of responsibilities". At the time when no other hospitals were ready to carry the patients, it was only INF that came in support of the government's effort. Ashish pointed out the importance of following the guidelines strictly to protect self and others. The INF ambulance having two separate compartments for the driver and patients also helped him gain confidence. He used to stay in the INF Banke office back then as his friends and neighbours were not welcoming him to his community to the fear and stigma.



There was once a challenging situation in one of the quarantine centres. The army had to be called to escort and carry the people in quarantine who were found to be infected. That night Ashish transported 17 confirmed patients to one of the isolation centres. The INF ambulance has travelled as far as Dang district carrying patients to the dedicated hospital.

Ashish also got training about the disinfection of the ambulance after each transport though. Our Banke ambulance is also used taking the recovered people from the hospital to their homes.

INF Nepal is proud of Ashish Rana for his unwavering determination to continue to provide services during COVID-19, representing INF during national emergency. He has been putting in demanding hours away from his homes and risking possible exposure to COVID-19 because, to provide the most essential service to public while nobody was ready to act on it.

He has been recognised for his services by national and local media. We are pleased to see him receive this deep appreciation and we're proud to have this opportunity to recognize him as the frontline heroes as he deserves.

To all the drivers out there just like Ashish Rana... A huge Thank You!



For more information and updates:

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