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## **UN and DFID partner to support COVID-19 response and disaster preparedness and response in Nepal**

**KATHMANDU** – The United Nations in Nepal and the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) have strengthened their partnership to enhance the UN’s approach to emergency preparedness and scale-up response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having far reaching impacts globally including in Nepal, which is already vulnerable to natural disasters - the compounded impact goes beyond just the health crisis. This package of support will enable the UN to reach those impacted by COVID-19 and at the same time, prepare for any crisis Nepal may face in the future, in support of the Government.

In Nepal as of 20 August, more than 29,645 people have been tested positive for COVID-19 and 126 people have lost their lives because of the virus. Likewise, as of 19 August, floods and landslides triggered by the monsoon rain have killed 241 people 88 have gone missing.

Beyond supporting the Government of Nepal’s response to both COVID-19 and monsoon-related crises, the UN is also working to develop national and local disaster management capacity through its cluster co-leadership role. It is committed to jointly plan and prepare for emergency response in Nepal this year and beyond.

The UK has been a longstanding partner of the UN in Nepal. Under these new programmes, the UK will provide financial and technical support to tackle the outbreak of COVID-19 and scale up the UN’s ability to prepare effectively for future emergencies.

Key activities will include: support to Covid 19 contact tracing teams, health screening monitoring and data management, supporting telemedicine, providing personal protective equipment for frontline health service providers, ensuring health facilities can continue to provide sexual and reproductive health services, providing psychosocial support to survivors of gender based violence, supporting more than 35,000 children and pregnant and lactating women to prevent malnutrition, provide warehousing at 3 Humanitarian Staging Areas across the country and transport for key supplies, and supporting water and sanitation in health and quarantine facilities.

“This is a welcome step towards the commitments made by members states, including by Nepal, to the UN Secretary-General’s reform agenda which reaffirms the role of the UN Resident Coordinator in country-level coordination to deliver collective responses to the national needs and priorities by bringing the UN system together,” said Valerie Julliard, United Nations Resident Coordinator. “As the UK joins forces with the UN, together we are working on responding to the crisis and also addressing the inequalities & vulnerabilities in social, political & economic systems in Nepal,” Valerie added.



The UK support the UN agencies in preparedness both in Nepal and globally. In addition to this support, the UK endorses the role of the UN Resident Coordinator to lead on coordinating emergency preparedness and response on behalf of the international community with the Government of Nepal in the absence of a presence of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). This includes humanitarian advisory capacity, coordination, data analysis and a common service for accountability to affected populations.

Lisa Honan, Country Director for DFID Nepal said, “Nepal has suffered a great deal because of natural hazards including the corona virus. UK funded programmes continue to work with the government to strengthen its response as well as implement a green recovery from the pandemic. We are confident that our support to the UN will help improve the response to the pandemic in Nepal as well as improve preparedness for future natural hazards.”

**For more information, contact:**

Simrika Sharma  
Public Information Manager  
United Nations Resident Coordinator’s office  
Email: [Simrika.sharma@one.un.org](mailto:Simrika.sharma@one.un.org)

Utsav Shakya  
Communications and Corporate Delivery Officer  
DFID Nepal  
Email: [u-shakya@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:u-shakya@dfid.gov.uk)

