



दलित गैरसरकारी संस्था महासंघ Dalit NGO Federation (DNF)

Lalitpur-22, Chakupat, Patan. Ph. 977-01-5261912, web: www.dfnepal.org, Email: dnf@dnfnepal.org

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An Appeal on COVID-19

The Novel Corona virus (nCoV), the Corona virus Diseases, shortly known as COVID-19 pandemic emerged on December 2019 from Wuhan city of Hubei province of China has been rapidly spreading out all over the world. Since highly developed world powers mainly the USA, China, UK, Italy, Spain, and Japan etc. have been struggling for overcoming this pandemic, it has become a severe and common human threat for the entire world.

In Nepal also, COVID-19 has been rapidly spreading. This is the welcome and admirable task of the Government of Nepal which made the decision of nationwide "Lockdown" to be effective from 25 March 2020, 06:00 am to 31 March and it has been extended till 7 April 2020. Due to the precautionary measures adopted by the government of Nepal in one hand and may be the few numbers of lab test being done in the other, the infected people from this pandemic is limited into single digit and no one is dead till date which is a good experience for us. But there is still the high risk of infection and with the aim to assist in Government's action to control COVID-19, as well as feeling the duty as an organization Dalit NGO Federation (DNF) makes an appeal to all people to abide by the government's decision to stay in isolation in home during whole Lockdown period and wish you to be safe yourself, your family and your community in very responsible manner.

Equally, DNF would like to request the Government of Nepal and related stakeholders to be responsible for making inclusive response mechanism, proceedings, formulating rules and regulations and policy, it's working modalities to fight against COVID-19 by considering the inclusive provision, equity and non-discrimination at all levels.

At this troublesome and critical juncture, all the human being of the world community should render their determined and unified effort without any biases to win corona virus pandemic. Natural calamities and such pandemic doesn't leave particular race, caste, class, gender, ethnicities and descent but rather equally attacks and poses threats but the ability to fight against such pandemic may be different for different groups. It is common that there is always the high risk of transmitting the diseases where basic necessities are not adequately available. The Dalits, women and poor people would be highly vulnerable in such pandemic because of some unhygienic practices and beliefs as well as poor living conditions. Particularly the working class of people such as laborers, the subsistence farmers who depend on daily earnings, would be extremely vulnerable. The information regarding safe behavior, precautionary measures to be adopted to become safe from corona virus is not fully disseminated since they lack access to mass media and communication



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including cell phones. The women, who usually spend their lives in household chores, taking care of their children and husband as well as other family members would be at high risks of infections.

There is a higher risk of pandemic among poor and marginalized people such as Dalits and working class; there is equal possibility of starvation due to unavailability of food and their purchasing capacity. Though there are few reported cases of starvation among any groups, however, no one can deny that it will happen if lockdown continues to another level.

DNF strongly makes an appeal to the Government of Nepal and all stakeholders to adopt special measures to protect the health and living of Dalits, women, workers, farmers, and wages laborers who are at the bottom of all the state-provided services and economic opportunities. And it urges to entire DNF Members organizations, and general public to abide by the government's decision and get isolated at home and adopt preventive measures to be safe yourself and protect other from virus infection.

1. The Dalits in Nepal, who are facing injustice, caste-based discrimination and untouchability for thousands of years, always remain at a high risks of infection, socio-economic vulnerability, and further subjugation in every natural calamities and epidemic and they are highly vulnerable and at high risk of COVID-19 too. Thus, the government of Nepal must adopt the principle of fundamental equality and take special measures in health-care and treatment of those peoples.
2. Mostly the Dalits are engaged in informal service sector and they mostly rely on daily wages base work and employment and their living condition has become worst of all due to the nation-wide "Lockdown". DNF strongly urges to declare the special relief package to Dalits so that they could have sufficient and comfortable living.
3. Due to the lack of awareness and access in information and it's technology, Dalits are not properly getting the right and required information on COVID-19, and DNF strongly urges to disseminate the adequate information through accessible means.
4. DNF strongly urges to the Government of Nepal to form entire mechanism and organs of federal to provincial and local levels inclusive of Dalits and Dalit CSOs for making and formulating the decisions and policy procedures needed to fight against corona viruses and providing relief package for the people affected from it.
5. In every pandemic and natural calamities, Dalits, women, wages-laborers, landless people, people with disability etc. would become highly vulnerable and remain at high risk in one hand and lacks the Rapid Assessment to measure the gravity of their vulnerability. In this connection, DNF would strongly urge government to bring about the special package for them by conducting Rapid Assessment.
6. We urge the international community, multilateral and bilateral development partners, international non-government organizations and civil society organizations to support Nepal to prevent and protect from Corona virus (COVID-19) to the people and mitigate of the adverse consequences of it along with relief, response and recovery.



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7. DNF urges to private sectors and corporations, NGOs, CSOs and other concern stakeholders to extend their support and solidarity with government for coping this adverse situation in a proper manner.
8. Thousands Nepali people are laying and stuck across the borders of India and seeking support for their proper rescue and relief. We urge the government of Nepal to take immediate necessary actions including food, quarantines, isolations and medication with humanitarian behaviors.
9. DNF also urges entire DNF Members organizations, and citizens to fully abide by the government's decision of "Lockdown" and get isolated at home and adopt preventive measures and to protect yourself, your family, your community and the nation from COVID-19.

Besides, it is to inform you all that DNF has already shut down the office and perform writing and communication tasks of Board and Staff from respective home in isolation by following the decision of 23 March 2020 to be effective from 24 March until the government allows to open. Lastly, DNF requests all of you to make the contact to the following person and numbers while in emergency.

1. **Bhakta Bishwakarma**, Acting Chair, and **JB Bishwakarma**, Secretary General, DNF (for Policy related task), Email: dnf@dnfnepal.org, gbkbhakta@yahoo.com, Cell: 9851084469, 9851125499
2. **Ekraj Lakandri**, Secretary and **JitendraPaswan**, Treasurer, (emergency response) Cell: 9841475200, 9854031521
3. **Eman Singh Sunar** Executive Director and **Sabitra Pariyar**, Advocacy Manager, (Other information), ed@dnfnepal.org, sabitra.am@dnfnepal.org Cell No. 9846874851, 9849550277

Bhakta Bishwakarma
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Dalit NGO Federation (DNF)
&
On behalf of Dalit CSOs of Nepal