

Situations like the coronavirus pandemic quickly lead to misinformation, rumors and fake news, as we saw after the earthquakes in Nepal. We can all play a role in beating the virus by making sure that we are sharing validated information and using trusted sources to inform our decision-making.

The **Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC)** gathers rumours, concerns and questions from communities across Nepal to eliminate information gaps between the government, media, NGOs and citizens. By providing the public with facts, the CCC ensures a better understanding of needs regarding the coronavirus and debunks rumours before they can do more harm.



Families are more worried about food than the virus
Photo: Dibakar Bhandari



Mechanism To Contain COVID-19. Know Who is Doing What

High-Level Committee for Corona Prevention, Control, and Treatment:

Coordinating all the tasks under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister .



Corona Crisis and Management Centre:

Identifying the disease, conducting check-up and providing treatment in command and coordination of the community members, politicians, government officials, and health workers.

Province Level Committee:

The committees formed under the leadership of chief minister at the province level and under the leadership of the ward chairperson at the local level will monitor and manage the distribution of the relief packages directed by the government, keep a record of the sick people, manage medication for them and ensure economically backward people have food to survive.



Rumors - Facts



The government has expanded the quarantine period from 14 days to 21 days. What is the reality?

The people who have completed 14 days of quarantine are allowed to go home after a rapid test is conducted. However, it is mandatory for them to stay in home quarantine for additional 7 days. It is the local government's responsibility to ensure that people are strictly completing the quarantine period.



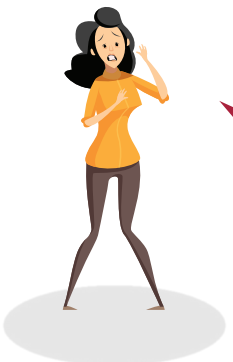
It is mandatory for health workers from private hospitals to work in public hospitals during the lockdown.

If the health workers from the private hospitals are willing to work in the government hospitals during the lockdown period, the government will let them do so by aligning their positions to the government hospitals. They will receive the same service and facilities as the government health workers. Further, the government is also going to provide allowances to the health workers who are providing COVID-19 services to patients in private hospitals.



The agricultural products of the farmers are rotting in their own field due to lockdown as there is no means of transportation. Isn't the government doing anything about it?

The government had already made a decision earlier to coordinate with local government units to transport the local agricultural products to the market. In addition to that, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration has directed the local government units to also include local agricultural products in the relief package.



A lot of foreigners stranded in Nepal during the lockdown are sent back to their homes. But, there are still a lot of them in Nepal and the lockdown has extended. What will they do?

The government has extended international flight closure until April 30. However, it has also decided to renew visas of tourists, who are stranded in Nepal due to the lockdown, for free.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

[World Health Organization](#) [Ministry of Health and Population](#)

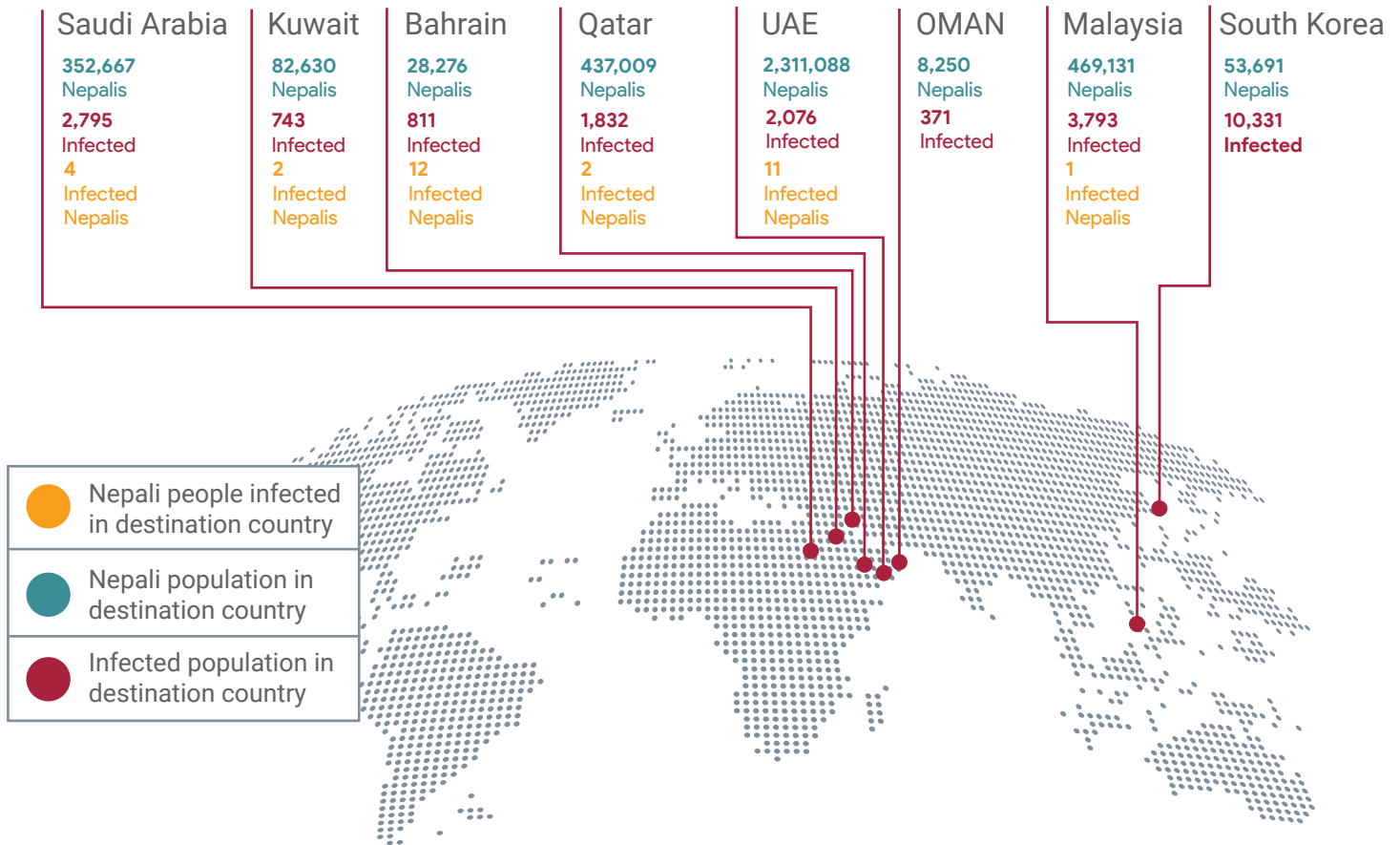
[Do's and don't's](#) [Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal](#)

[Nepal Labour Force Survey Report](#) [COVID-19 Situation](#)



Migrant workers in major destination countries



ShramikSanjal

Factual information related to COVID-19 through Whatsapp group in Qatar an UAE

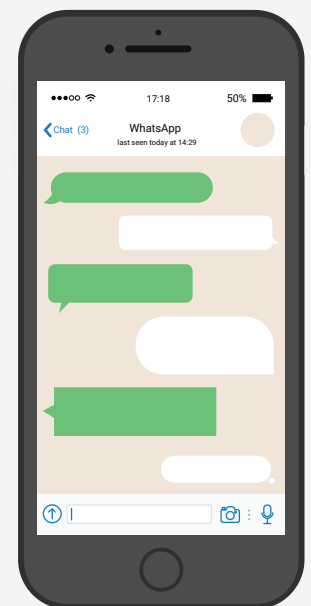
Steps to Use this service in Qatar for Nepalis

- ▶ Add the number +97460060601 in Whatsapp and send a message writing "Hi". A message to select the language will pop up.
- ▶ This number provides messages in 6 languages and to receive messages in Nepali you need to send back number 5.
- ▶ You can get the information you want to know by sending the following numbers. To go to the first menu, click "0" and if you have any other questions send the number "3".

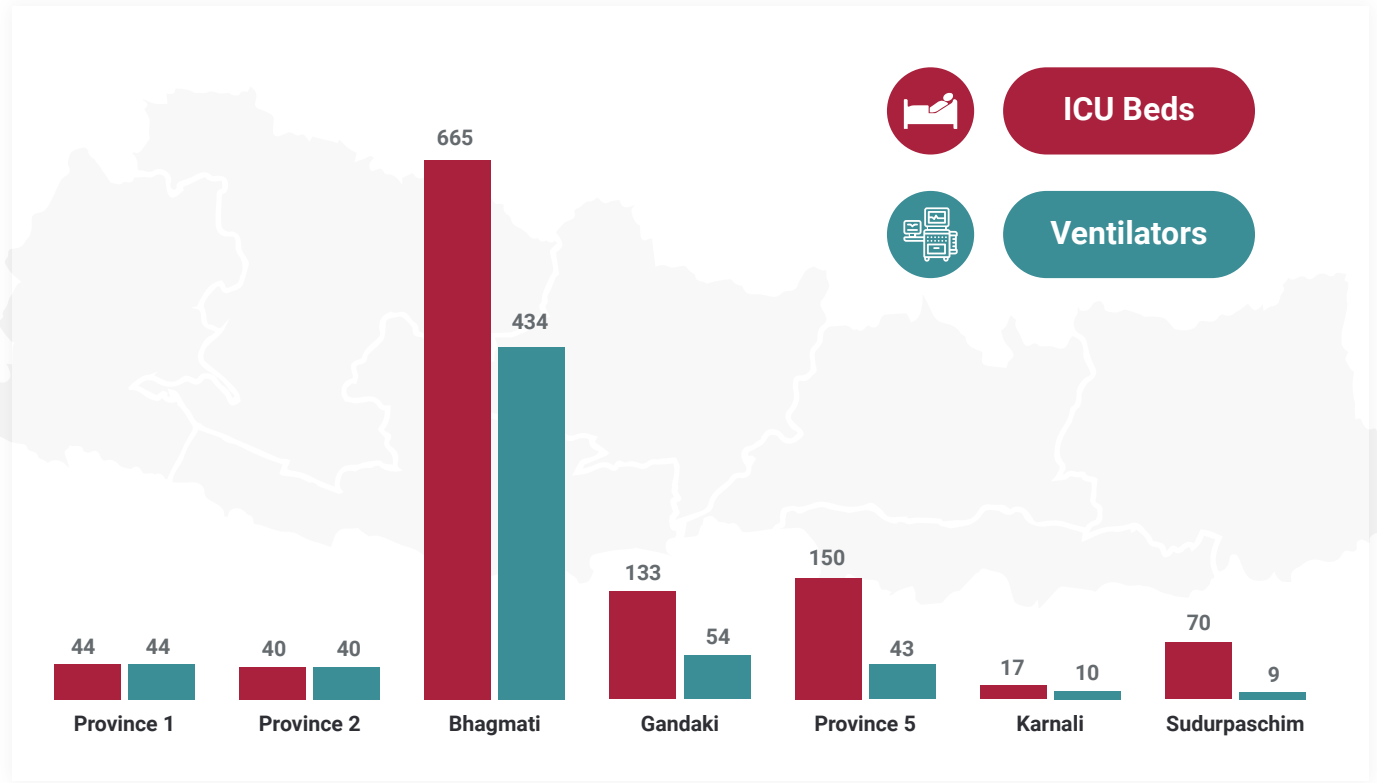
"1" Current Number, "2" Be safe, "3" Your question answers, "4" Fake News, "5" Travel Suggestions, "6" Media and Press, "7" Collaboration, "8" Stay at Home, "9" Change the Language, "10" Important contacts during this period

Steps to Use this service in United Arab Emirates for Nepalese

- ▶ Add the number 971563713090 in Whatsapp and send Hi.
- ▶ Then, you will get a code number for the questions. You can send the code as per your queries. For instance to get the information on Coronavirus you can type A and send it.
- ▶ You can get information about 14 different topics and in case of emergency you can also dial 999.



Is the government prepared to treat COVID-19 patients?



According to WHO, about 15% of COVID 19 cases require ICU beds and ventilators. The above graph shows that Karnali and Sudurpashim province have very few ICU beds and ventilators. Nepal is likely to have more cases in those two provinces because of migrants workers coming from India. The government needs proper plans to increase ICU and Ventilators in those provinces in specific, and all province in general, to better prepare for COVID 19 response.

Follow the Money



Social stigma and discrimination regarding COVID 19



Stigma associated with COVID 19 is associated with health. This is a negative association between a person or group of people who share similar characteristic or disease. It is also sometimes related to the profession. As you can see there has been incidences targeting doctors and health workers working in the frontline against COVID 19.



COVID 19 is an infectious disease caused by virus. It can infect anybody. They say, viruses don't discriminate and neither should we!



There are many reasons associated:

- 1 Ignorance and fear of unknown as this is a new disease which has no proper cure, no vaccine yet and still many unknown things.
- 2 Fear related to transmission of disease.
- 3 Associate that fear to others mainly strangers.

People who could face stigma and discrimination:

- 1 People who have traveled, especially to "high-risk" regions
- 2 Frontline health workers
- 3 People who are quarantined
- 4 People with cough and runny nose

Stigma and can have serious impact:

- 1 People will feel discouraged to seek treatment and will try to hide illness.
- 2 Stigma hurts everyone by creating fear or anger towards other people.
- 3 Social avoidance or rejection
- 4 Denials of healthcare, education, housing or employment
- 5 Physical violence and harassment.

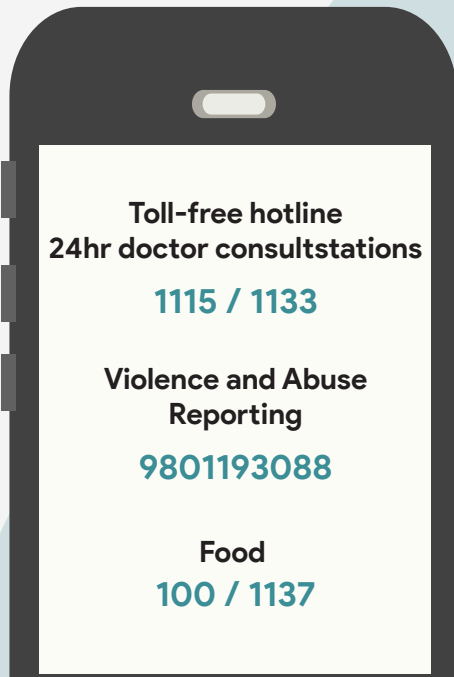
You can make a difference:

- Watch your words: While talking about disease do talk about COVID 19. Please do not associate any names like Wuhan virus, Chinese Virus, Asian virus, etc.
- Speak up if you hear, see, or read stigmatizing or harassing comments or misinformation.
- Show compassion and support for individuals and communities more closely impacted.
- Avoid stigmatizing people who are in quarantine. They are making the right choice for their communities.
- Do not make assumptions about someone's health status based on their ethnicity, race or national origin.
- Similarly, do not use words like COVID cases or COVID suspects instead use people who may have COVID -19 or people who are for presumptive COVID-19.
- Do talk about early screening and testing. Fight the virus, not the people.
- Spread facts and challenge myths and stereotypes.
- Use social influencers and social media to combat stigma, fake news and rumors.

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What if I contract **coronavirus**?

COVID-19 HOTLINE



Where can I get a coronavirus test?

The National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) Teku, Kathmandu, Bharatpur, Dhulikhel, Bhairahawa as well as all provincial hospitals are conducting tests. As the person suspected to have the virus needs to be isolated, the sample is collected by hospitals and sent to the NPHL.

Is the sick person allowed to go to the lab to get tested? How much does it cost?

The sick person is not allowed to go to the lab directly. The local hospitals will refer to the NPHL to test if suspected. There is no cost for the test.

How long does it take to see the results of the test?

The test report is provided between 24-48 hours after the sample is submitted to the lab. If the report is positive, the concerned hospital or the doctor is informed.

The sources of rumors, information and issues presented here are collected from a variety of organizations and individuals including the Ministry of Health and Population, the World Health Organization (WHO), social media and the CivActs team based on their conversations with over 2000 people in April 2020. The issues highlighted are chosen based on prevalence, relevance and potential impact. The information presented here is correct at the time of issue.

Coronavirus CivActs Campaign is brought to you by
Accountability Lab Nepal.

