



# Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO)

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## Covid-19 Update and Appeal

Date: 30 March 2020

The infection of COVID-19 started from Wuhan province of China since December 2019 and expanded across the world. It was started from two hundred people in Wuhan province of China at the beginning. A total numbers of infected people are 903,826 and 45,335 deaths reported across the world to date. Nepal is also not separated from the invisible threat of this pandemic. In order to control the outbreak of COVID-19 (corona virus), the government of Nepal has declared the country lockdown from 24 March to 7 April 2020 so that infected people will not increase in the nation and the government welcomes and appeals to citizen for implementation it at all level like individual, family, community and country.

**In Nepal**, there are five people identified as an infected from Covid-19 and other people has been going to search who are in contact with the infected people. Due to the lockdown, the transport, private sector, industry and all government offices are closed. The all people have been stay at home and work from home. As a result, the poor and marginalized people will have been affected and suffered more in their daily life. The people survived with daily labor wages are facing difficulty to solve the problem of hand to mouth in their daily lives.

Dalit community is historically excluded group and more suffered from this pandemic. The exclusion, deprivation and discrimination of Dalit women are still chronic and multi-dimensional. Extreme poverty, illiteracy, landlessness, restricted livelihood options, poor access to resources and poor participation in decision making processes are key problems of Dalit women. Most of the people from Dalit community depend on the wages of daily labour work. Due to discriminatory practices, lack of awareness and access to resources and services; Dalit women cannot maintain personal hygiene, thereby contributing to their high health risk. As a whole, Dalit community is not aware and well informed to the preventive measures of corona virus. In this connection, Dalit community specifically needs more help from government and civil society to be saved from outbreak of COVID-19.

As we are well aware, our country is facing a health crisis at the current situation. Though the behaviours of COVID-19 are not fully known, what we do know makes it a global threat to our physical and economic health. We all have every confidence that we will come together to overcome this invisible threat. The corona virus and its impact must be addressed at every level of government and society. FEDO is gratified at the work of social activists and volunteers that have quickly mobilized to help the people in needs. Safeguarding the safety and welfare of our Dalit community, and of all communities in which FEDO works to reduce the spread of virus respecting expert advice on social distancing and avoiding mass gathering as the best means. Our



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commitment is to address the needs of our family, friends, neighbours, and all in our community. This commitment will help stop the spread of the virus. It is in this spirit that FEDO wants to appeal to Nepal government and national and international stakeholders for giving special attention to the people who are at more risk at community level. Therefore, FEDO would like to request to humanitarian organizations and donors to provide immediate support and emergency response to address the immediate need of Dalit women, marginalized groups in this pandemic situation. Therefore, FEDO would like to appeal all relevant stakeholders paying special attention as follows:

- 1) We urge the Government of Nepal to emphasize increasing public awareness on the preventive measures on the local languages to control and combat with the outbreak of COVID-19 through effective means of media.
- 2) We recommend the Government of Nepal to timely provide and mobilize the fund required to control the effects of corona virus and immediate relief support to the most affected and vulnerable people. Transparency and accountability are equally important for proper use and mobilization of fund. We also urge multilateral and bilateral development partners, national and international non-government organizations, private sector and other interested individuals to come up with a relief support package to mobilize through appropriate mechanism.
- 3) It is urged to take special care and treatment to the dalit and other vulnerable as they often do not have access to clean water or sanitation facilities in their homes.
- 4) We urge all to provide support on logistic and hygiene kits (Bedding, mosquito nets, Hygiene kits, hand sanitizers and masks) at municipal quarantine center in close coordination with local government and concerned stakeholders.
- 5) We urge all for the distribution of hygiene kits (Soaps and Mask) to Dalit and Marginalized community who are the high risk of corona virus and food stuffs to low income most vulnerable people (Pregnant women, lactating mother and people with chronic diseases etc).

FEDO is very ready to work closely with concerned stakeholders and individuals to address the current issues at community level. Finally, we request everyone to fully obey the country lockdown, do not follow fake news and rumors, stay safe at home, and be patient and alert.

Renu Sijapati  
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