



NEWS LETTER

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असल छिमेकी नेपाल
Asal Chhimekee Nepal

THE SOCIAL INITIATIVE OF POKHARA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY



COVID-19 SECOND WAVE APPEAL

The second wave of COVID-19 in Nepal has had a devastating impact.

Earlier this year, people were beginning to recover from the effects of the first wave in 2020 which resulted in 120 days of nationwide lockdown in Nepal. Vaccination began, covering 2% of the population. For a few months, new daily cases were relatively low. Then, in mid-April 2021, Nepal entered the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic. This wave has been much more severe, more infectious, affecting more younger people, causing more serious illness and death. Rapidly increasing cases with sudden high demand for oxygen, hospital beds, ICU and ventilators put Nepal's fragile health system under pressure. Due to shortage of medical supplies, limited staff, hospitals and rural health system ill-equipped to cope with a major pandemic, the second wave of COVID-19 has had a devastating impact in Nepal.



Nepal is experiencing the highest COVID-19 infection rate in the world and almost all Nepal's districts are again under full lockdown to contain the spread of infection. So far, the confirmed nationwide death toll has reached 7,898 (Source- MoHP: 6 June 2021).

This second wave of pandemic and repeated lockdown has increased the risk of extreme poverty for the most vulnerable people who are already living in difficult conditions and struggling to recover from the impact of the first wave. 93% of COVID-19 positive cases are being cared for at home, often in overcrowded conditions and the risk of transmission is high. In this fight with COVID-19, we are coming alongside the most vulnerable people to sustain them with essential food supplies, health advice, counselling, safety material packages and other urgent needs. In addition, we are supporting our local government with essential medical supplies.

We would like to appeal to our supporters around the world to join us in this challenge to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people affected by this crisis.

FOOD SUPPORT

We are for the poor and marginalized community people. In this midst of COVID-19 second wave, we have provided essential food supplies to 521 HHS in Kaski, and Nawalparasi districts. These families are from very low-income background and people living with disabilities. These families lost their means of livelihood due to the COVID second-wave induced lockdown. Each family received 25 kg of rice, 5 kg of flour, 3 kg of lentil, 2 liters of cooking oil, 1 kg of salt, 1 kg of sugar, 1 kg of beans, 1 kg of beaten rice, 1 package of tea leaf and 2 pcs of washing soap and 2 pcs of handwashing soap. Our relief packages will be enough for a month to family of four-member. Selection of these families and distribution of food relief packages was done in coordination with the local government.





When Cooking gas finished in Santa Bahadur Kitchen

This is 35 years old Santa Bahadur Pariyar with his wife and two children. He has a visual impairment disability since his birth. His wife also has low vision. He lives in Pokhara-15 in a rented house with his family and works as a street seller (door to door seller). He sells incense, camphor, pen, and pencil, etc. It has been more than a month of COVID-19 second wave and lockdown that restricted him from selling things on the street. He lost his means of livelihood. He has already finished his little saving he had saved before the lockdown. The second wave lockdown is extending with continue rise of infection rate.

In the midst of pandemic, in his kitchen, cooking gas finished. However, he had food materials but his wife is unable to cook food for the family. Then he requested his neighbors for help and his neighbor provided some firewood. Little firewood what he had was enough for few days only. So he was worried for cooking gas cylinder.

ACN came to know his situation from the local FM station then reached his doorsteps with a filled cooking gas cylinder. One filled cooking gas cylinder will be enough for three months says by Santa bahadur.

Santa bahadur story represent the current situation many poor and people living with disabilities families in Nepal!

MEDICAL SUPPLIES SUPPORT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO MANAGE ISOLATION CENTERS

In response to the second wave of COVID-19, we have supported the local governments with medical supplies to manage the isolation center in Kaski, Gorkha and Nawalparasi districts.

KASKI DISTRICT

We have provided 50 boxes of surgical mask, 5 boxes of surgical gloves, 25 liters of sanitizer, 8 PPE sets, 20 pcs of face shields, 3 pcs of pulse oximeters, 2 pcs of BP set (Sphygmomanometer), 5 pcs of digital thermometers, 20 bottles of liquid hand wash, 1000 paracetamol tablets, 500 vitamin C tablets and 500 Zink tablets to Health department of Pokhara Metropolitan in Pokhara, Kaski district.

GORKHA DISTRICT

We have provided 200 boxes of surgical mask, 20 boxes of surgical gloves, 100 liters of sanitizer, 32 PPE sets, 80 pcs of face shields, 17 pcs of pulse oximeters, 12 pcs of BP set (Sphygmomanometer), 20 pcs of digital thermometers, 80 bottles of liquid hand wash, 600 paracetamol tablets, 2000 vitamin C tablets and 2000 Zink tablets to four local governments in Gorkha district (Siranchowk RM, Bhimsen Thapa RM, Sahid Lakhani RM, Gandaki RM).

NAWALPARASI DISTRICT

We have provided 2 oxygen concentrators, 250 boxes of surgical mask, 30 boxes of surgical gloves, 125 liters of sanitizer, 40 PPE sets, 100 pcs of face shields, 10 pcs of pulse oximeters, 10 pcs of BP set (Sphygmomanometer), 28 pcs of digital thermometers, 50 bottles of liquid hand wash, 4 pcs of nebulizers, 6000 paracetamol tablets, 2000 vitamin C tablets and 5000 Zink tablets to four local governments in Nawalparasi district (Kawasoti Municipality, Madhyabindu Municipality and Palhinandan RM and Sarawal RM).



RUNNING COVID AWARENESS JINGLE AND WEEKLY PROGRAM THROUGH LOCAL RADIO FM STATIONS



We are running COVID-19 Awareness Jingle through local radio FM stations with a message not to discriminate covid infected people in the neighborhood but how to support them by following the safety measures in Kaski, Gorkha, and Nawalparasi district. In addition, we are also running a weekly program through local radio FM stations to create awareness and provide information on COVID-19 in Pokhara kaski district.

ACN 'KHOJI' TOLE FREE HELPLINE NUMBER

We are running a tole-free helpline number 'KHOJI' in response to the second wave. KHOJI- It means, we help people who are looking for help to find solutions in the midst of pandemic. Currently we are running this tole-free help line number among our Self-Help Groups as a trial phase. Soon we will open for all. We are running this toll-free helpline number to provide psychosocial counseling and support, COVID-19 related health advice, arrangement or linkage to ambulance service, and advocacy for social issues or discrimination related to COVID. For these services, we have created subgroups for each part and we do also have a referral system for experts if needed. In addition, we also support by praying if someone request prayer and we are also planning for physical support (food supplies, medicine, safety gear materials).

For this we have coordination with local government, INF Nepal, INF Nepal Green pasture hospital, central and community hospitals, Metropolitan health unit, local government health units, isolation centers, Bethesda International, Kopila Nepal, Nawa Adarsa community development society, Nepal Red cross society, Himalayan Life, Sagol Kaski, 3 Angels, Pokhara and local churches.

COVID-19 AWARENESS AND SUPPORT INITIATIVE



This program was intended to create awareness of vaccination against COVID-19, to provide safety gear and food nutrition, and medical support, and to provide counseling and psychosocial support to COVID-19 affected as a part of post-recovery of COVID first wave. As the crisis due to the COVID-19 second wave is growing excessively, we are receiving quite many requests and calls from both of our working areas and non-working areas for supports for instance, medical supplies, food supplies and counseling services. We work hard to reach most needy people with support.

TOP: While conducting awareness session in Pokhara, kaski

Under this program, we were able to provide safety gear material packages (mask, sanitizer, and other hygiene supplies) to 381 families, counselling support to 266 families, and nutrition and food supplies packages to 79 families of COVID-19 infected and affected in kaski and Nawalparasi districts.

In addition providing support for emergency needs, we are working to create awareness to stay safe from getting infected with coronavirus and encourage public to take vaccination against COVID-19 and knock the door of the local authorities who are responsible for it. For this, we have conducted 59 awareness events among Self-Help Groups (SHGs), old age home and community in coordination with the SHGs, local development committees, local leaders and churches both in Kaski and Nawalparasi.

TOP: While delivering nutrition and food packages.

BOTTOM: While counselling COVID recovered person and giving safety gear materials.



PROVIDING ROOF TO ROLPA FIRE AFFECTED



In April 2021, there was a wildfire in Triveni Rural Municipality of Rolpa district. A wildfire raged from a community forest then entered the nearby settlements which destroyed 36 houses completely. Meanwhile, the country was going through the second wave of pandemic. In the midst of the pandemic, together with INF Nepal, we were able to provide tin sheets to 37 fire-affected families for roofing. The local government and affected families were thankful for the earliest support even in the midst of the pandemic.

TOP: fire-affected families receiving tin sheets in Rolpa.

PROVIDING ROOF TO MYAGDI LANDSLIDE AFFECTED FAMILIES

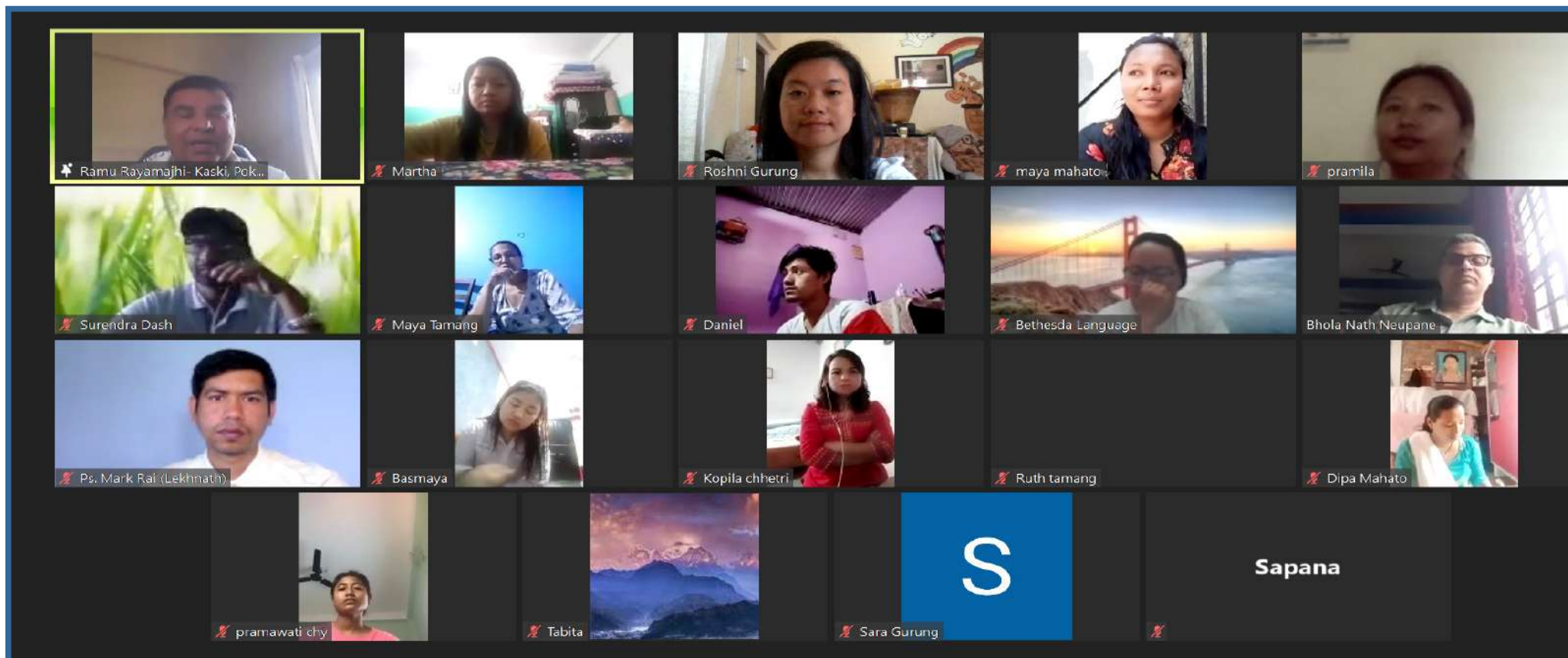


On 14 April 2021, ACN has supported landslide-affected families with Corrugated Galvanized Iron (CGI) sheets (tin sheet for roofing) in Dhawalagiri Rural Municipality-7, Myagdi District, despite many challenges caused by COVID-19. There were 42 families who received CGI sheets as support to reconstruct their home. Each family received 3 bundles of CGI sheets and 3 kg of needles for roofing purposes. Before this, ACN had distributed food relief packages to 85 landslide affected families as requested by the local government in Dhawalagiri Rural Municipality-7, Myagdi District. After the food relief packages distribution, we have seen some families in need of support for the reconstruction of the house. We had wanted to support homeless people who were struggling to manage the roof over their head. Therefore, as per the observed need and request of the local government, we planned for CGI sheets distribution program which went well in the participation of local ward Chairman, Mr. Kalanidhi Sharma, local representatives and ACN team including ACN's treasurer, Mr. Purna Lal Kayestha.

Thanks to our funding partners and Dhawalagiri Rural Municipality-7, Myagdi District, for their cooperation and support.

TOP: While unloading tin sheets to give landslide affected families in Myagdi.

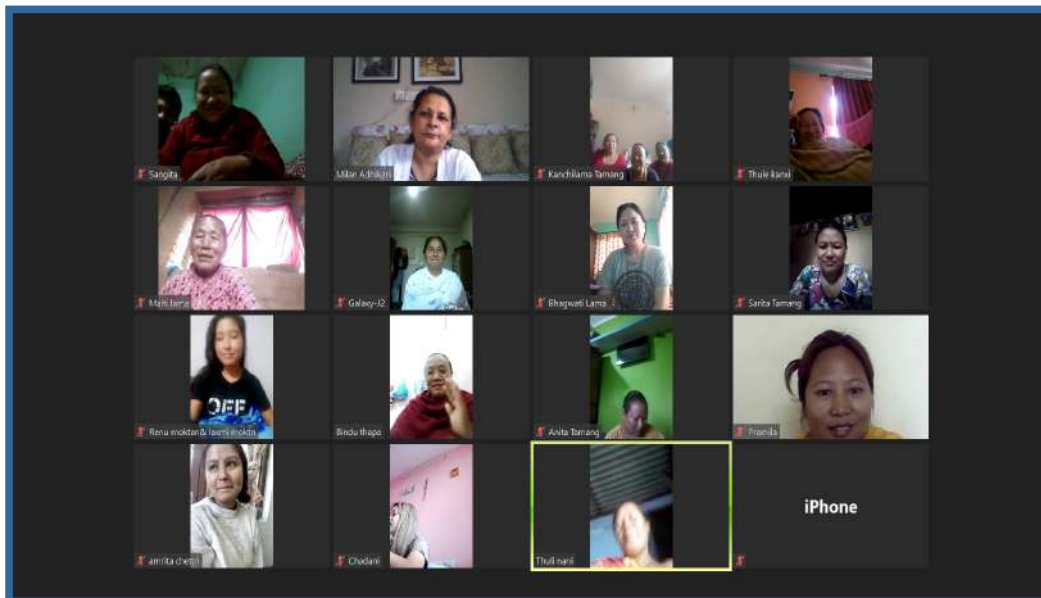
BASIC COUNSELLING TRAINING



Eight ACN staff and nine church leaders both from Pokhara and Nawalparasi participated in the online 'Basic Counselling Training'. The training was facilitated by the Bethesda Language Training Center. Training was continued for six days with three hours each day.

We feel that the content was very appropriate and timing of the training was very perfect as the people have growing crisis due to the current condition of COVID 2nd wave. They were very happy to participate in the training as they were also benefited and found the training very useful in their ministries as well. This training had focus on how to console people according to the nature of the problems like suicidal tendency, abuse, divorce, and COVID-19 pandemic, etc. This training has provided knowledge and basic skills for counselling to our team members as well as the church leaders who always come across the people with problems. The participants having basic knowledge and skills will be able to support people in the churches and in communities.

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE AWARENESS



Nepal government launched National Health Insurance scheme in 2015 and now it has been implementing in all 77 districts with objective to provide basic health care facilities for all. In this scheme, a family up to five members has to pay Rs 3,500 to get medical treatment of worth Rs 100,000. If family with more than five then has to add Rs 700 per member to enroll in National Health Insurance which cover medical treatment from Rs 20,000 upto Rs 200,000. The service is available at the health facilities assign by the government.

Due to lack of information about this scheme, still many people are not enrolled in this scheme. Therefore ACN conducts awareness sessions to share information about this scheme in the communities and encourage them to enroll in the scheme. Even in the midst of the second wave, we have conducted the online national health insurance awareness session among the SHGs in Kaski district and have encouraged them to share this with their neighbors also.

In the Nepali fiscal year of 2077/78 (2020/21), 411 people participated in the awareness sessions. In addition insurance, information, and awareness on preventive measures of COVID-19 are also included in the content. There is a high risk of people to getting sick, this scheme will be a great relief to particularly poor and vulnerable people.

RIGHT: Before 2nd wave lockdown, while conducting awareness session.

LEFT: During 2nd wave lockdown, while conducting online awareness session.

ONE MONTH BARISTA TRAINING COMPLETED

Under the Inclusive and equitable quality education program, ACN provides vocational training to adults. One month Barista training completed well in Kaski. Total 13 young adults including four female and 9 male participated in the training. In addition of Barsita course, they also learned to prepare fast food like pizza, burger etc. Among them some are planning to open a small café and some are trying to get job in café and restaurant. We hope they will do better in future. This training had done in coordination with the Kantipur Hotel Training Centre, Chipledhunga Pokhara.



Due to the ongoing COVID-19 second wave, all the field-based activities are under halt since the lock-down enforced and will resume when situation gets better and further notice from the government on easing the lock-down.

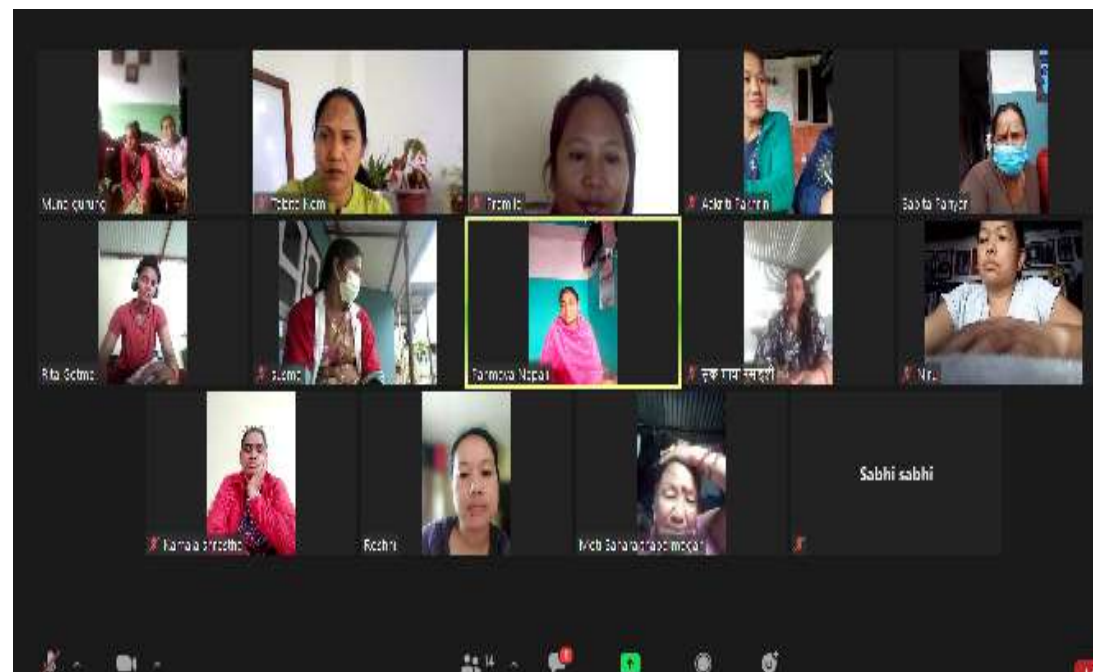
BEAUTICIAN TRAINING IS UNDER HALT DUE TO COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Beautician training is one of the vocational training targeted for young people. We had enrolled participants for a three- month beautician training and now due to the lock-down it had to be halted till the situation gets better and further any notice from the government.



REGULAR IN TOUCH WITH SELF-HELP GROUPS

Even in such challenging circumstance arose by second wave of covid pandemic, we are regularly staying in contact with Self-Help Groups in Kaski and Nawalparasi districts. There are around 40 Self-Help Groups with around 1000 mainly women in total are located in different communities. They also serve as a channel for communication helping us to be updated with what is happening in the communities. Through online connection, we are raising awareness among SHGs members regarding on COVID-19 pandemic and providing support to them, and encouraging them to help others, who are in problems. There are many cases coming to us with psychosocial issues and support has been provided with counseling and referral services.



NAWAJEEWAN TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

In the midst of second wave of COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, Nawajeewan treatment and rehabilitation is continuing its treatment and rehabilitation care to clients in the residential treatment and rehabilitation center in Pokhara. At this moment, six female drug and alcohol users are in the treatment and rehabilitation center. These are the clients who have nowhere to go. The second wave of the pandemic and lockdown has made it very difficult for our Nawajeewan's team to continue its service. Due to the lockdown team members are working more hours to reduce the exposure and they are providing necessary treatment and rehabilitation in accordance with the strict hygiene and safety measures recommended by the government.

RIGHT: During counselling of client in Nawajeewan treatment and rehabilitation center.

LEFT: During adult literacy class in Nawajeewan treatment and rehabilitation center.





PRAYER REQUEST:

- Please pray for Nepal as it is facing the second wave of COVID-19 and monsoon-related disasters (floods and landslides).
- Please pray for the availability of COVID vaccine for all.
- Please pray for ACN team for God's wisdom and protection in the midst of the pandemic to serve the most vulnerable and marginalized people.
- Please pray for our regular community work has not been moved forward due to the spread of COVID and lock-down.
- We have several COVID-19 emergency response projects, please pray that they all go well.
- Pray for the churches, as they were also highly affected. Many leaders have recently died and many are going through the serious condition in treatment.
- Pray that this pandemic will disappear soon and the world is released and healed.

Praise The Lord!

In this quarter our three staff who are working in Nawalparasi (near the India border) got infected with COVID-19 and recovered well and back to work again.



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TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!