



Cities in Solidarity

UNOSSC Cities Project Newsletter | February 2019 | Special edition for COVID-2019 Outbreak

UNOSSC in Action for Responses to COVID-19

The Government of China and its people have taken extraordinary measures to treat and contain the COVID-19 Outbreak.

* Since the onset of the outbreak, UNOSSC has been closely following the situation. On 5 February, UNOSSC formally expressed to the Permanent Mission of China to the UN its solidarity and willingness to support the government and people of China's efforts in responding to the outbreak.

* UNOSSC colleagues, at both global and regional levels, have been actively exploring and sourcing medical personal protective equipment (PPE) suppliers information through partners networks.

* On 6 February, UNOSSC published a [call](#) for donations of PPE items to China, jointly with the Finance Center for South-South Cooperation (FC-SSC) on [South-South Galaxy](#).

* On 24 February, UNOSSC's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific released a [video](#) with encouraging messages from UN colleagues based in Bangkok.

* On 22 and 24 February, UNOSSC donated medical respirators and protective suits reached Wuhan and Yuxi.

Moving forward, UNOSSC stands ready to join hands with all developing countries and partners in response to global public health emergencies.



UNOSSC donated respirators being offloaded in Wuhan. Image by UNOSSC



UNOSSC donated respirators reached Wuhan. Image by UNOSSC

Urgently Needed Medical Supplies Donated by UNOSSC Arrive in Wuhan and Yuxi

24 February 2020, New York – Urgently needed medical respirators and protective suits worth \$100,000 donated by the UNOSSC reached the cities of Wuhan on 22 February and Yuxi on 24 February to support local efforts responding to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Since the onset of the outbreak, UNOSSC has been closely following the situation and stands firm in demonstrating solidarity and enhancing cooperation with all partners in response to this “public health emergency of international concern”.

After receiving the urgent request for medical supplies from a project partner in China on 6 February, following consultations with the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, UNOSSC reached out to the United Nations Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) in China, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in China, and the World Food Programme (WFP) Centre of Excellence in China for advice on applicable procurement channels.

15 urgently needed non-invasive respirators and 1000 medical protective suits worth \$100,000 were procured through UNDP China and reached the city of Wuhan on 22 February and the city of Yuxi, a project partner, on 24 February.

Respirators are crucial to the treatment of patients whose conditions are severe, and medical protective suits remain the most difficult items to source. All the respirators have arrived in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province and the epicentre of the outbreak, thanks to the Government's fast-track logistic channels. On 24 February, 150 protective suits also reached the city of Yuxi; the remaining suits will be dispatched in March.

Yuxi has been a partner of UNOSSC through “South-South and Triangular Cooperation among Maritime-Continental Silk Road Cities for Sustainable Development” (UNOSSC Silk Road Cities Project). It has hosted a study visit on agricultural value-chain development and solar-power-driven irrigation schemes for city partners from Nepal.

Cities' action in solidarity matter in pandemic preparedness and response

WHO declared Covid-19 outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern” on 30 January. As of 24 February, there have been more than 75,000 cases confirmed and approximately 2500 deaths reported.

The outbreak serves as a stark reminder that the effects of disease today are more widespread than ever before, as we travel more widely moving between countries and living in urban environments, where people are in closer contact which escalates the risk of viruses spreading very fast.

The leadership shown by city governments, by engaging urban planners and health professionals, can accelerate the successes in areas such as urban pandemic preparedness, emergency response, clinic research capacities. It is essential for cities from the global South to raise awareness in pandemic preparedness and response and act in solidarity when addressing relevant challenges.

In the past few weeks, many city and institution partners of the UNOSSC Silk Road Cities Project, have extended compassionate and supportive words.

*“We must
stand together
in solidarity
and
compassion”*

“At this time of heightened anxiety, we must avoid stigma and discrimination and stand together in solidarity and compassion.”

António Guterres, Secretary-General of the UN



Photo © United Nations

“UNDP and the United Nations system stand firmly with the Government and the people of China during this critical time.”

Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator



Photo © United Nations

“When a new virus emerges, there are always uncertainties about how it spreads, the disease it causes, and the impact it will have. If we act now, following evidence and in solidarity, we can defeat the new coronavirus.”

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO



Photo © United Nations

“Our fight should be to find a cure, to avoid contagion, and to help those that are sick. We should be careful not to allow this sickness and the ignorance about it to become a source of prejudice. With our solidarity and our confidence, the people of China, who are bearing the brunt of this outbreak, will be able to defeat it.” Jorge Chediek, UNOSSC Director and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation



Photo © United Nations



Members of a farmers' cooperative for vegetable plantation in Khajura. Image by UNOSSC

“Let’s join hands together for the people of China and victims around the world”

Khajura sits in the west of Nepal (28.1319, 81.5),

occupying an area of 101.9 km², with a

population of approx. 50,000.

Messages from Khajura, Nepal

“Namaste. Today, I am really sad about knowing what’s going in China and the rest part of the world. It started in Wuhan city then all over china and now in different parts of the world. I want to convey my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family who lost their loved ones and pray to almighty to strengthen them so that they soon could come out from the hard time.

It is a very difficult time for China. Every day, heartbroken stories are forwarded in the global news presenting how severe, fearful, and painful situations it is.

Let us join hands together for the people of China and victims around the world to fight against this novel coronavirus. On behalf of the people of Khajura, I am with the people of China to help them by any means of support. I do hope soon the brighter morning will glow with better today and future.”

Mr. Kismat Kakshapati, Mayor of Khajura Rural Municipality, Banke District, No.5 Province, Nepal

Khajura Rural Municipality of Nepal expressed its demands in developing green agriculture in March 2019. Subsequently, a five-day needs assessment mission to Khajura in June 2019 was organized jointly with the China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture (CISSCA) with local support from UNDP Country Office in Nepal. To find out more, please see our [news article](#) and [video](#) on Khajura activities.



Mr. Kakshapati (L) and city council officials welcoming UNOSSC mission group. Image by UNOSSC



Children in Koidu greeting the UNOSSC mission group during lunch break. Image by UNOSSC

*“We did
remember **what**
China and the
world did for us
when Sierra
Leone was
going through
the Ebola
epidemic”*

Koidu (8.6290, -10.9612) is a major business

and diamond trade center in the east of

SL, with a population of around 128,000.

Messages from Koidu, Sierra Leone

“On behalf of the people of Koidu New-Sembehun City, I would like to extend our sincere sympathy and solidarity to the People's Republic China and other parts of the world that are currently going through a hard time in the hands of the deadly disease called coronavirus. We will continue to pray for you and campaign against discrimination. We did remember when Sierra Leone was going through the Ebola epidemic, what China and other countries all over the world did for us. At this time of grieve, we stand by you to see the end of the epidemic. God bless China and the people of China.”

Mr. Sam Komba, Lord Mayor of Koidu New-Sembehun City, Kono District, Sierra Leone

Koidu New-Sembehun City was severely by the Ebola epidemic in West Africa in 2014. As the capital of the Kono District, Koidu provided patients with early medical care through its Ebola treatment centre, which was considered critical to the full recovery of many patients. Upon the requests of Koidu, a one-week mission was organized in November 2019 for needs assessment on agriculture, mining, waste management, and road infrastructures, by experts from four UN agencies and city governments. To find out more, please see our news [article](#) about Koidu needs assessment.



Mr. Komba (M) and experts in need assessment activities. Image by UNOSSC



Member of a cooperative for flower production in Yuxi processing fresh flowers. Image by UNOSSC

万众一心，抗击疫情，
武汉必胜！中国必胜！
United as one, we fight
against the epidemic.
Wuhan is surely to win!
China is surely to win!

"Although Yuxi is not the most affected, it has been extremely difficult for us to obtain the needed medical supplies to halt the spread of the virus and treat patients infected, as the city is relatively small and resources limited. UNOSSC's supplies came at an opportune time and cheered everyone up in the city. We genuinely appreciate it" - Mr. Yao Xiaoyan, Director of The Foreign Affairs of Yuxi

Yuxi is located in the southwest of China

(24,321,102.557) with a population of 2.4

million, 51% of which live in the urban area.

Messages from Yuxi, China

Yuxi is also affected by the outbreak with 14 cases confirmed as of 17 February 2020.

In the past two months, Yuxi has been actively mobilizing resources for treating affected persons as well as containing the virus from spreading, and integrating its efforts into the coordinated action plan of the country.

Mr. Yao Xiaoyan, Director of Foreign Affairs Office of Yuxi Government, on behalf of the people of Yuxi, sent us a message, in handwriting, expressing Yuxi's strong support to Wuhan and the rest of the country in defeating the coronavirus outbreak. Yuxi believes that as we united as one to respond to the outbreak, we will for sure, succeed.

Following the needs assessment of Khajura, with the support of the World Food Programme (WFP) Center of Excellence in China and China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture (CISSCA), the Cities Project identified the good practices in solar-power-driven irrigation and the value chain development of Yuxi city.



Yuxi government officials introducing photovoltaic irrigation schemes to representatives of two Nepalese cities and UNDP Nepal country office. Image by UNOSSC

About the SSTC Silk Road Cities Project

In 2017, UNOSSC initiated the “South-South and Triangular Cooperation among Maritime-Continental Silk Road Cities for Sustainable Development”, jointly with China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE) under the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) of China, to promote South-South and triangular cooperation at the city level, taking advantage of the strategic opportunities offered by the "Belt and Road Initiative" in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

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