

## Fear of hunger is bigger than the fear of COVID



Reshma, a 21-year-old mother of two children arrived at Nepalgunj border with her children and husband on July 1, 2020. When she crossed into the borders of Nepal, she had a newly born child on her arms, a four year old daughter holding her hands and her father carrying their belongings. Just two weeks after giving birth to her second child, she is hoping to reach her home in Jajarkot soon where she can get rest, care and food.

Reshma's husband worked as a labour at Simla, in Himachal, India. The family of four decided to return home after he lost his job due to the lockdown imposed to control COVID-19. Along with the risk of COVID-19, they had a fear of hunger in their eyes. This fear increased when the only source of income they had was lost.

She shared, "Every year, I travel to Simla in Himachal with my husband. He works as a labor and I help him as a housekeeper. He makes some money to feed the family."

She further lamented, "The lockdown didn't let us earn sufficient money this year. Therefore, we had to return to Nepal." The pandemic has ceased the earning opportunities for families and individual workers whose only option was to migrate to India for their livelihoods. Reshma Continues, "We are already in deep financial

problems. If this situation continues , my family and other families like mine will suffer a lot.”



Reshma suggested the government to find a solution to the COVID-19 situation as soon as possible. “The fear of hunger is getting bigger than the fear of COVID. People may die of COVID but people will surely die of hunger, if this situation

continues,” she shared.

Unlike many people who had to make a troublesome journey to Nepal, Reshma and her family had an easier border entry. When her family arrived in Nepalgunj, she was happy with the services and facilities at quarantine site provided by the government and non-government organizations. She found it considerate when CARE Nepal handed her a kit including hygiene materials for women .

“Women face additional problems in times like these, especially while travelling. I am happy this organization understood our issues and distributed hygiene materials for women,” she expressed satisfaction.