



Nepal Health Sector Support Programme III (NHSSP – III)

05 June 2020



PD R13: of Provincial-level Health Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance Guidelines with Plan of Action

The management of maintenance activities in the health sector of Nepal needs to give priority to achieving acceptable performance and sustainability of Health Infrastructure. To date maintenance is done on 'an as and when required' basis, which is one of the major reasons for the large number of buildings that become unusable after some time or require major investment for reconstruction. It has become increasingly evident that maintenance can no longer be ignored; it must be institutionalised, engineered and implemented as part of the health system. Quality health care service delivery can be expected only from a well-maintained health facility.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted that the country is not prepared to deliver critical services due to the lack of well-maintained infrastructure and adequately sterilised environments. In many health facilities, water supply systems and sanitary systems are in a state of disrepair and very few ICUs can operate due to negligence in repair and maintenance. Appropriate waste handling systems either are missing, not working properly or not functioning at all in many health facilities. The Covid-19 situation has made the issue very urgent, highlighting the need for proper hygiene and sanitation to be maintained and provide Covid-19 related services, which is only possible with well-maintained facilities.

Appreciating the importance of management of physical assets in the delivery of health care services to the population, the Government in the past had also at different occasions expressed its commitments and need for regular repair and maintenance as highlighted by a number of documents and policies produced. The past efforts for regular repair and maintenance were largely in vain and despite government spending large amounts of money on repair and maintenance no concrete improvements could be achieved.

Analysis was carried out to identify the gaps in the past as to why regular repair and maintenance efforts in the past have failed. The major gaps identified are:

- 1) absence of an accountable decentralised system for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- 2) Lack of a structured documentation system and lack of proper implementation guidelines and a mechanism for implementing;
- 3) Lack of standard designs and guidelines in compliance with health infrastructure standards;
- 4) Lack of a decentralised health infrastructure information system and use for repair and maintenance
- 5) Health facilities are not categorised by functions for upgrading as per the standard designs;
- 6) Absence of a funding and implementation mechanism for emergency repair and maintenance and
- 7) Absence of a budgeting mechanism for preventive maintenance. The budget for repair and maintenance for any damages in infrastructure must wait until the approval of

the annual work plan and budget each year. By this time, in many instances the building condition deteriorates further.

For the purpose of establishing and institutionalising the regular repair and maintenance of health facilities at the provincial level, and with the objective of providing quality health services and ensuring safety of both the service providers and service seekers and reduce overall capital costs required in health infrastructure, this document for repair and maintenance guidelines with action plan has been prepared by NHSSP in collaboration with officials from provincial Ministry of Social Development, officials from MoHP and Management Division, DoHS.

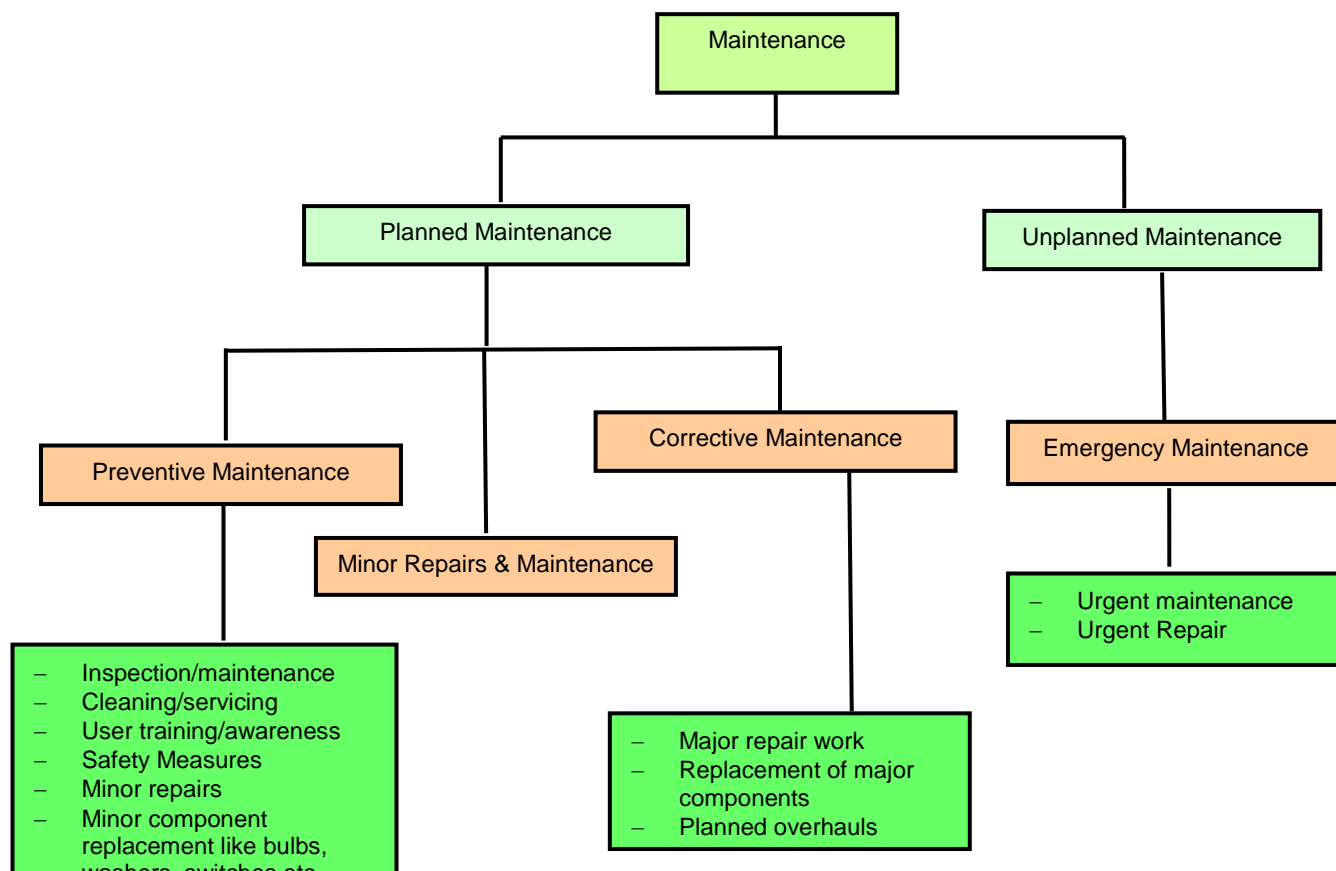
The guideline provides implementation guidelines for repair and maintenance of health facilities at the provincial level, defining the roles and responsibilities of different provincial institutions for planning and implementation of repair and maintenance activities including establishing and updating provincial Health Infrastructure Information System.

The guideline also emphasises the establishment of a Health Infrastructure Physical Asset Management Unit, defining its roles and responsibilities for record keeping, updating, planning and managing all health infrastructure development related activities under the provincial Ministry of Social Development.

The guideline also focuses on the need for emergency repair and maintenance work in the province, and further outlines the process of establishing and operation of repair and maintenance fund at the province level.

The document defines the process and types of maintenance as in the figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Process of Maintenance



The guidelines with action plan also summarise the process of implementation for different types of repair and maintenance work, identifying the budgeting needs and budgeting mechanism annually. The process of securing funds for emergency repair and maintenance from the repair and maintenance fund is described in the document. The implementation mechanism for all types of repair and maintenance with roles and responsibilities of different institutions, units and personnel have been outlined. Coordination between different levels of government, including institutions like the Project Implementation Unit of DUDBC in provinces, private sector consultants and other technical offices in the provinces is outlined.

The document also outlines the process of planning and implementation of repair and maintenance and infrastructure upgrading work considering the special circumstances arising from the current Covid-19 situation. The type of work such as disinfecting of the facility, partition walls and doors to create segregation of areas and to create sterilised spaces, anti-bacterial treatment on walls and floors, installation of HVAC systems in critical areas, installation of hand washing fixtures, oxygen supply installations may be required has been identified and the process of planning and implementation has been outlined. The budget considering the urgent situation will be utilised from the already allocated budget for the Covid-19 response by the Federal and Provincial Government for meeting the required level of infrastructure repair, maintenance and upgrading for Covid 19 treatment, as the emergency fund is yet to be established and annual work planning and budgeting has already been completed.

The draft guidelines and plan of action has been submitted to Provincial Health Directorate of Karnali Province, Province 5 and Ministry of Social Development, Bagmati Province for their review and feedback.