

2020 Virtual WITSA Global ICT Excellence Awards

Public/Private Partnership Award

Award #1: Private sector/corporations

COVID Response Initiative in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) and UNICEF

Nominee: Ncell Axiata Limited

About Ncell

Ncell Axiata Limited (Previously Ncell Private Limited) is the first private mobile service provider operating in Nepal for the past 17 years. The company is committed to building the best-in-class mobile network experience, connecting some of the remotest areas of Nepal with digital communication offerings.

Ncell was first incorporated as 'Mero Mobile' in 2004. Four years later, it was acquired by Telia Company (previously known as TeliaSonera Group of Sweden) and rebranded as 'Ncell' in 2010. On 12 April 2016, Ncell became part of Axiata Group Berhad, one of leading telecommunications groups in Asia in pursuit of its vision to be The Next Generation Digital Champion by 2024.

Ncell converted into a public limited company, and also changed its name to 'Ncell Axiata Limited' on 3 August 2020. As a subsidiary of Axiata Group, and a long-term investor in Nepal, Ncell is constantly working towards its goals of connecting every Nepali through its network, providing high quality modern services to consistently create better value for its customers and partners.

Contributing to the vision of Digital Nepal and development of the country's economy and infrastructure, Ncell is contributing in building best in class networks and communication services to people living across Nepal, and operates the widest 4G network in the country fulfilling the national need of high-speed mobile broadband and creating new opportunities for the people of Nepal taking the country towards a brighter digital future.

As one of the country's largest taxpayers, Ncell have contributed NPR 242 billion in taxes as of FY 2019/20 since inception. The company has also invested more than NPR 1.42 billion under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives including in focus area—education, environment and health, supporting the government in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

REASONS FOR NOMINATION:

Ncell has continuously been supporting communities and the government in responding to COVID crisis leveraging on its technological expertise. Since the first wave of COVID in March 2020, Ncell has been working with the government and its various authorities collaboratively in COVID response best utilizing its technology and network and infrastructure. In collaboration with the COVID-19 Crisis Management Centre (CCMC), Ncell worked for migration tracking, contract tracing and conducted self-assessment survey for identifying COVID patients. We have been continuously working closely with the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) and UNICEF in raising awareness among the general public to be safe from the COVID.

A study conducted to measure impact of awareness campaign revealed that 46% of the respondent said that the message conveyed to them was to 'stay healthy to be safe from COVID', 22.6% received the message to 'washing your hand, wear mask & sanitize regularly', 19% received the message to 'take necessary precaution to stay safe from COVID and ask others to do the same', while 10.9% and 5.1% received the message to 'keep social/physical distances' and 'wear mask and use sanitizer regularly'.

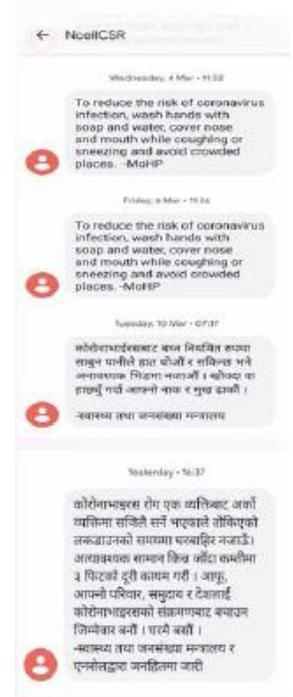
Below is list of COVID response activities in association with government authorities:

- **NPR 100 million contribution:** In-line with call from the government to support the government in fight against the pandemic, Ncell on the first day of first lockdown contributed NPR 100 million in the **COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment Fund** established by the government.
- **Free browsing to government portals:** Provided free browsing of government portals for **easy access to apply for e-passes and access to credible information on COVID**
- **Mobile Class Data Pack:** Launched Mobile Class Data Pack **in collaboration with Tribhuvan University** (10GB of Microsoft Teams data for attending online classes, 4GB of All-time data and 2GB data for videos, YouTube, and Google services)
- **Multiple relief offers:** In-line with call from the regulatory body **Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA)**, we brought multiple offers **for customers to ensure easy access to telecommunications services. 120% bonus balance worth Rs 9.70 billion** was provided to customers and **mobile data price was provided with 25% discount rate.**
- **Migration Tracking and Contact Tracing**
 - Support to CCMC with analytics for Migration Tracking and Contact Tracing to help mitigate the spread of the virus.
- **Self COVID Assessment via USSD**
 - Collaboration with the CCMC for COVID self-assessment survey and identifying COVID infected people. Conducted COVID self-assessment survey via USSD among our subscribers, supporting to identify infected people.
 - On the grounds of innovation and optimum use of technology, we supported with self-assessment survey through USSD medium in identifying COVID infected people. This contributed people to self-isolate if they are infected simply answering basic questions on symptoms of COVID.

Ncell launches survey

KATHMANDU: Ncell Pvt Ltd, in collaboration with the COVID-19 Crisis Management Centre (CCMC), on Wednesday launched a self-assessment survey through USSD (unstructured supplementary service data) medium to support the Nepal government in identifying COVID infected people. In this survey, respondents or Ncell customers can answer five questions related to coronavirus by dialling USSD code *17100#. Upon answering the questions, respondents will immediately receive a message with a suitable health advice followed by government defined helpline numbers and Ncell hotline number: 9801575005 in which they can consult with doctors for free of charge, as per a media release. If any of them fall under the suspected categories, they will be recommended to seek immediate health consultation. The details of the suspected customers will be shared with CCMC of the government. All respondents will be pre-informed that the objective of the survey is to support the government initiative to contain the global pandemic. --RBS

- Mass COVID Awareness Drive leveraging on technical platform**
 - Ncell is the first telecom operator to start COVID awareness drive via **SMS broadcast**. Leveraging on internal technical platform, Ncell broadcasted over 45 million SMSs to general public cautioning general public to be alert of Coronavirus and adopt safety measures to avoid spread of virus in community. **The awareness message was approved by MoHP with technical support from UNICEF** and Ncell as an awareness partner of the government broadcasted multiple COVID awareness messages to its subscribers.
 - Ncell is the only telecom operator to do mass COVID awareness via **Out Bound Dialing (OBD)** calls service. OBD call is a mechanism wherein Ncell leveraging on its technical expertise gives a personalized call to its subscribers and upon answering the calls by the respective subscribers, an auto recorded message is played to the customer. We have used this service for communicating the safety measures to general public. We have made over 20 million OBD (Outbound Dialer) calls.
 - We have renamed our **network name as Stayhome@Ncell** and it continues from March 2020. Apart from this, to ensure consistent COVID awareness to public and endorsing the three safety measures from COVID, we changed our default call tone with COVID awareness messaging. The messaging content is guided by MoHP for mass communication. <https://thehimalayantimes.com/business/ncell-promotes-social-distancing/>, <https://ictframe.com/ncell-promotes-social-distancing-by-showing-network-name-as-stayhome/>



- Ncell COVID Hotline Service**

- Considering need during pandemic, leveraging on technical expertise Ncell initiated Hotline Service that ensured free consultation with doctors to address COVID customer queries. Ncell was the first operator to bring in this service in March 2020 to support the public in connecting to the doctors digitally and free of cost. Under this service, via our platform we in collaboration with our partner ensured free access of general public to seek general health and wellbeing related consultations with the doctors.
 - We operated video call with doctor--**Ncell Call to Doctor Service** in collaboration with Hamro Patro and Nepal Medical Association for free consultation on COVID-19.
 - We also ensured **free access to government defined hotline numbers 1115, 1133**
 - During the second wave, Ncell has collaborated with **Dhulikhel Hospital**, one of the biggest community hospitals in Nepal and set up **Ncell COVID-19 Hotline Service**, a 24/7 hotline service that ensures free call and health consultation with medical doctors on-call to those staying in home isolation across Nepal. This hotline is zero rated within Ncell network during crisis.



- We are the **only operator that has made dedicated hotline service available for consumers ensuring free teleconsultation with doctors** and have expanded this service this year making the service available 24/7 for free health teleconsultation to people staying in home isolation across the country with the hotline made zero rated. Over 1,800 people call the hotline services daily.
- To ensure that the frontline workers (doctors, nurses, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force, Nepal Army etc) are not deprived from service during time of health emergency, Ncell also brought a **scheme for frontline workers under which they were provided SIM connection loaded with free voice and data resources.**

- **Mass COVID Awareness via Digital platforms**

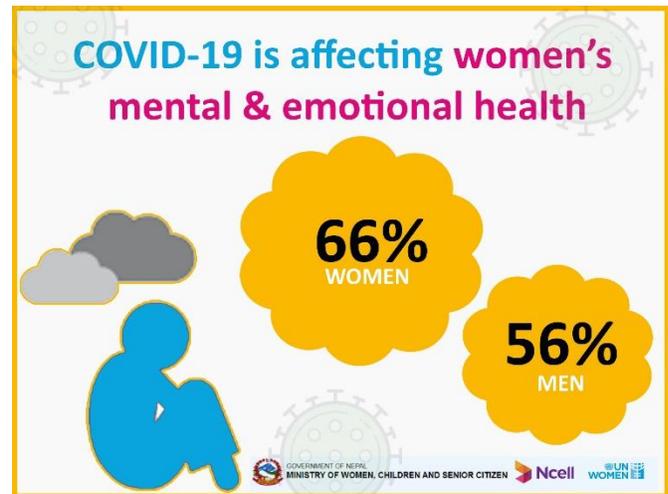
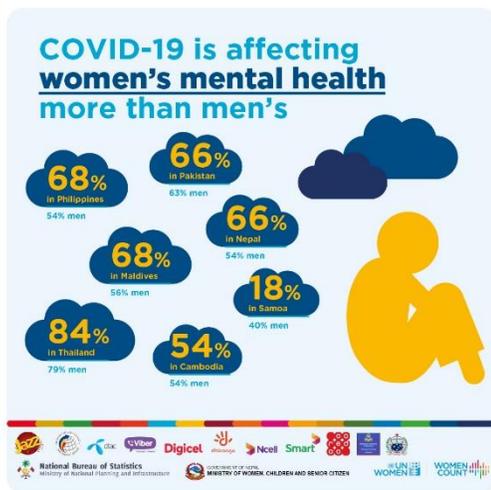
- We have been continuously sensitizing general public to encourage raising awareness to follow SMS (S- Sanitization, M- Proper use of Mask and S- Social Distancing) usage of mask, hand sanitization, social distancing, as awareness partner with technical support from UNICEF. **Developed Public Service Announcement (PSA) that focused on three key elements mainly SMS—S- Sanitization, M- Proper use of Mask and S- Social Distancing to raise public awareness via mass media.** We have been focusing on digital platforms to communicate the message to larger public for reiterating the COVID safety protocols.



- We have been using the **digital engagement in social media via series of posts and campaigns that reiterates the core messaging** ie social distancing, proper use of mask and hand sanitization. We also did a series of myth buster session during the first wave that helped the public to be clear on identifying the COVID signs and symptoms and do's and dont's.

- **Rapid Assessment Survey**

- Leveraging on the technical expertise, Ncell also supported in conducting **Rapid Assessment Survey** to measure impact of COVID on people across the country in collaboration with the **Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens and UNWOMEN** through our network. The survey was rolled out via Ncell network and responses of over 9K people across the country was analysed to measure the impact of COVID and nationwide lockdown on women and children.
- The collaboration with UNWOMEN and Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens was a **significant step to analyse the impact of COVID on national** as well as in Asia Pacific regions. The survey revealed that the pandemic is greatly affecting in participation of women in labour market and they are facing issues of mental and emotional health. Appreciated by the MoHP and UNICEF.



SUPPORTING INFORMATION: Please send any supporting information to the address above, including information from candidate (i.e. excerpt from program description, web site print-out, press release, etc.)

1. Ncell Sustainability Report

https://webapi.ncell.axiata.com/upload/SustainabilityReport/Sustainability_and_National_Contribution_Report_for_FY_2019_2020.pdf

2. Ncell COVID Hotline Service

3. Self COVID Assessment via USSD

<https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/ncell-launches-self-assessment-survey-to-help-govt-identify-covid-19-infected/>

<https://english.aarthiknews.com/ncell-supports-government-in-identifying-covid-infected-through-a-survey>

4. Mass COVID Awareness via Digital platforms

Ncell collaborates with MoHP & UNICEF to raise awareness on COVID | Fiscal Nepal

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=341358140307797>

<https://www.facebook.com/118424324855375/videos/2852252861529585>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1079872949136348>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1025994291146887>

Ncell collaborates with Health Ministry and UNICEF to raise awareness on COVID-19 - Khabarhub Khabarhub

5. Rapid Assessment Survey

https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/COVID19/Unlocking_the_lockdown_UNWomen_2020.pdf

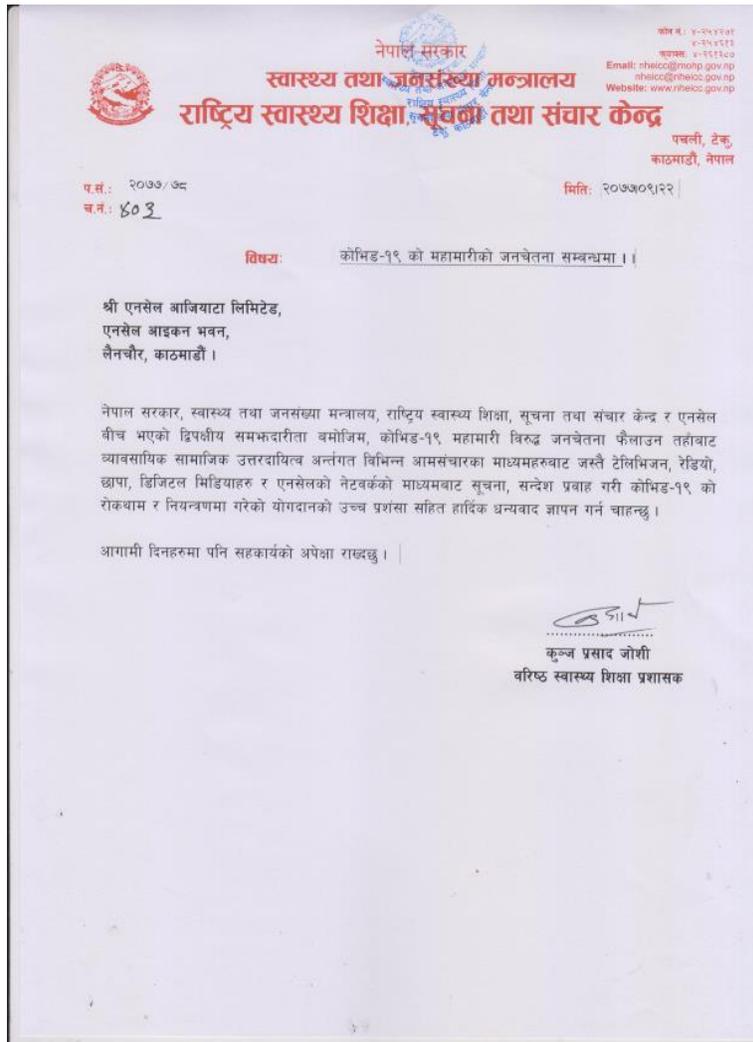
6. **NPR 100 million contribution**

[Ncell donates Rs 100 million to govt's Covid-19 fund – OnlineKhabar English News](#)
[Ncell contributes Rs 100 million - The Himalayan Times - Nepal's No.1 English Daily Newspaper | Nepal News, Latest Politics, Business, World, Sports, Entertainment, Travel, Life Style News](#)

7. **Multiple Relief offers ensuring continued communication of customers**

<https://ictframe.com/ncell-increases-recharge-on-bonus-balance-to-120-percent/>
<https://www.nepalitelecom.com/2020/03/ncell-corona-virus-staysafe-offer.html>

8. **Appreciation Letters from Government Authorities**



Appreciation letter from Ministry of Health and Population for contribution towards fighting against COVID

December 30, 2020
Ncell Axiata Ltd.,
Lainchour- 28, Kathmandu

Reg: Appreciation for your valuable support to UNICEF through 'in-kind emergency contribution'

Dear Ncell family,

We would like to thank you for your valuable support to UNICEF Nepal's efforts in relation to addressing Covid-19 and for your spirit of collaboration.

Ncell's contribution to the "SMS campaign" in support of reinforcing public health safety practices has been an important aspect of our overall campaign and helped us to successfully generate awareness around key protective measures on COVID-19. With the help of your contribution, more than 15 million people have been reached with COVID-19 preventive messages.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration in 2021 and positively impacting the lives of many more children and communities in Nepal.

Yours sincerely,



Tania Dhakhwa
Chief of Communication

SIM Cards with free resources distributed to frontliners



NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION (for award follow up and coordination)

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