

## **NCELL the latest organisation to offer income generating opportunities to women in remote areas of Mid and Far West Nepal**

KATHMANDU, 13 December 2018

NCELL has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UKaid funded RAP3 CONNECT to offer over 400 women the opportunity to become retailers of NCELL re-charge cards.

“We are pleased to partner with RAP3 CONNECT to offer income generating opportunities to women starting in remote areas of Province 6 and 7 of Nepal. The partnership is in line with our commitment to create sustainable business opportunities to the communities we operate in, contributing in small ways we can to improve lives of people this initiative brings,” said Andy Chong, Chief Commercial Officer of Ncell.

The MoU will benefit 400 women micro-entrepreneurs associated with RAP3 CONNECT by adding Ncell recharge cards in their sales basket, enabling them to function as retailers of the company. NCELL hopes this will support the women to secure sustainable incomes, and also enable some of them to build their business to sell e-charge and SIM cards in the future.

With the MoU, NCELL joins an existing partnership between RAP3 CONNECT, Unilever Nepal Limited (UNL), Bottlers Nepal Limited (BNL) and Prabhu Bank Limited (PBL) that is working to enable women in remote areas of Province 6 and 7 to establish small businesses.

UNL, the architect of the Hamri Didi initiative, is supporting women micro-entrepreneurs through its rural direct-to-consumer network aimed at empowering underprivileged women as change agents within their communities. To date, 474 women in six districts have been appointed as Hamri Didis, in partnership with RAP3 CONNECT.



Women like Dhana (pictured), a single mother who has become an active Hamri Didi, doing steady business and using the profits she makes to educate herself and her child. She is currently studying for Bachelors of Education.

Earlier this year, BNL (authorised bottler of the Coca-Cola Company) joined the partnership to sell their products through this vibrant network of women micro-entrepreneurs.

PBL is offering loans to high performing Hamri Didis for scale-up capital.

Together this partnership, bringing together the development, private and banking sectors, is offering income generation opportunities and providing skills training. Hamri Didis have received UNL and BNL product and sales training, BNL 5by20 training, financial literacy training and guidance on business registration.

5by20 is The Coca-Cola Company's global commitment to enable the economic empowerment of 5 million women entrepreneurs across the company's value chain by 2020.

Notes to editors:

- RAP3 CONNECT is funded by UKaid and delivered by IMC Worldwide.
- RAP3 is a comprehensive poverty alleviation programme, which uses the construction of transport infrastructure as an entry point for delivering development through access to the poorest and most marginalized in remote parts of Nepal.
- RAP's economic development component, CONNECT, aims to boost the economy in the remote Mid and Far West of Nepal by building partnerships between divergent interest groups including banks, multinationals, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- Ncell is a part of Axiata Group Berhad, one of the largest Asian telecommunication companies. Today, Axiata is present in eleven countries, servicing approximately 350 million subscribers. With a diverse portfolio in mobile network operations, communications infrastructure services and digital services, Axiata pieces together the best in connectivity, technology and people in its vision of Advancing Asia.
- Unilever Nepal Limited is one of Nepal's largest businesses and their mission includes promoting access to health and sanitation solutions for Nepalese people.
- Bottlers Nepal Limited is one of Nepal's largest businesses and their mission includes supporting the economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs. Under their 5by20 program, The Coca-Cola Company is committed to the economic empowerment of five million women globally by 2020, and as a part of the commitment in Nepal, Bottlers Nepal Limited has been imparting the 'Shopkeepers Training And Resources (STAR)' training to the women retailers since 2013.
- Prabhu Bank Limited is one of the fastest growing private sector banks in Nepal with deep rural market penetration, extensive direct and subsidiary products and services portfolios, entrepreneurial spirit and a commitment to improving Access to Finance for the poor, especially farmers and women.

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