DigiNar-III: Challenges at the outbreak of COVID19 and the initiatives taken by NRENs

BHUSHAN RAJ SHRESTHA, PHD
APR 7, 2020

Challenges

- Start of Covid-19 December, 2019 from Wuhan, China
- Lock down March 24, 2020

- Cancellation of APAN-49 (Mar 02-06, Kathmandu)
- Continuation of lobbying activities of NREN with UGC, Universities, Government and World Bank
- Continuation of collaborative activities with other partner NRENs
- Continuation of project on feasibility of expanding TEIN connection in seven Provinces of Nepal
- Lack of Human Resources in providing support for highly demanded online meeting services and and Surveillance system deployed to fight against Covid-19
- Providing service for students with poor or no Internet access or expensive

Mitigating Steps taken

- Providing necessary support on-line
- Mobilization of Volunteers for support
- Partnering with other like minded and interested organizations for synergic effect to fight against Covid-19

Visible Outcomes

- On-demand support in conducting video conference and Webinar services
- Providing Zoom license for NREN member institutions and Educational Institutes
- Development and Deployment of Nepal Covid-19 Surveillance System to support Government & Local bodies to fight against Covid-19

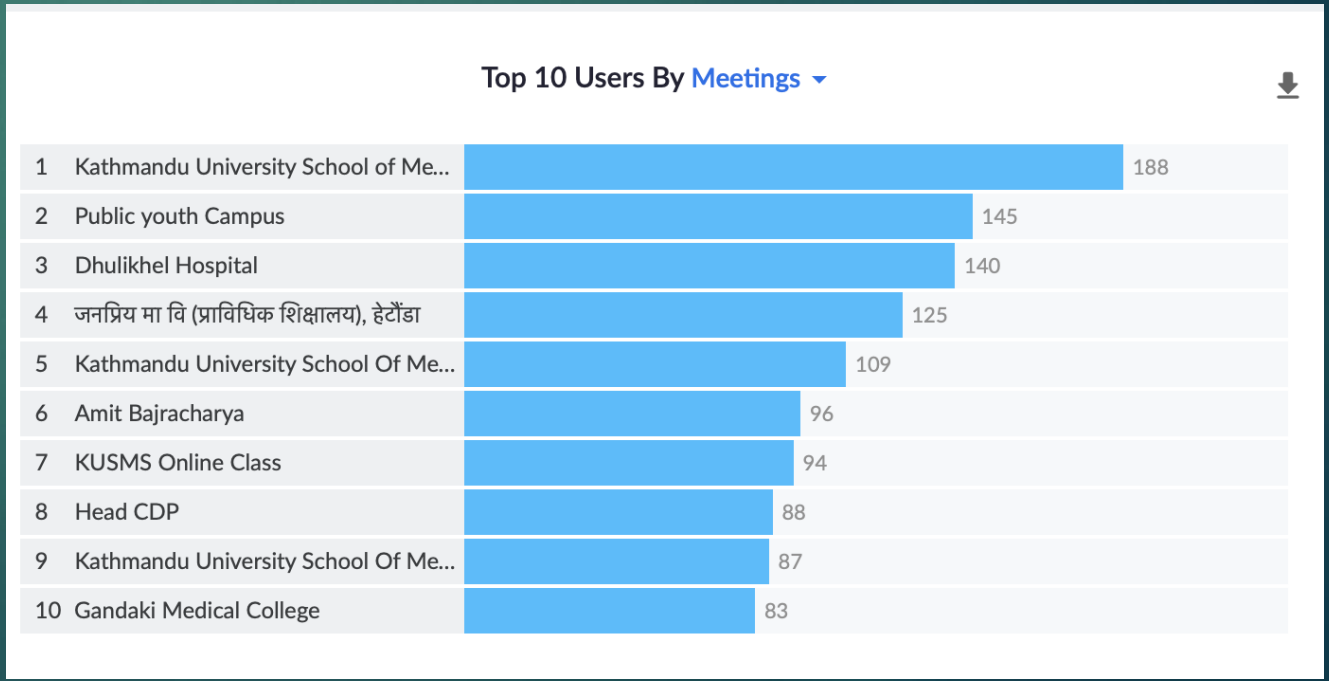
Use of Zoom

Users – 263

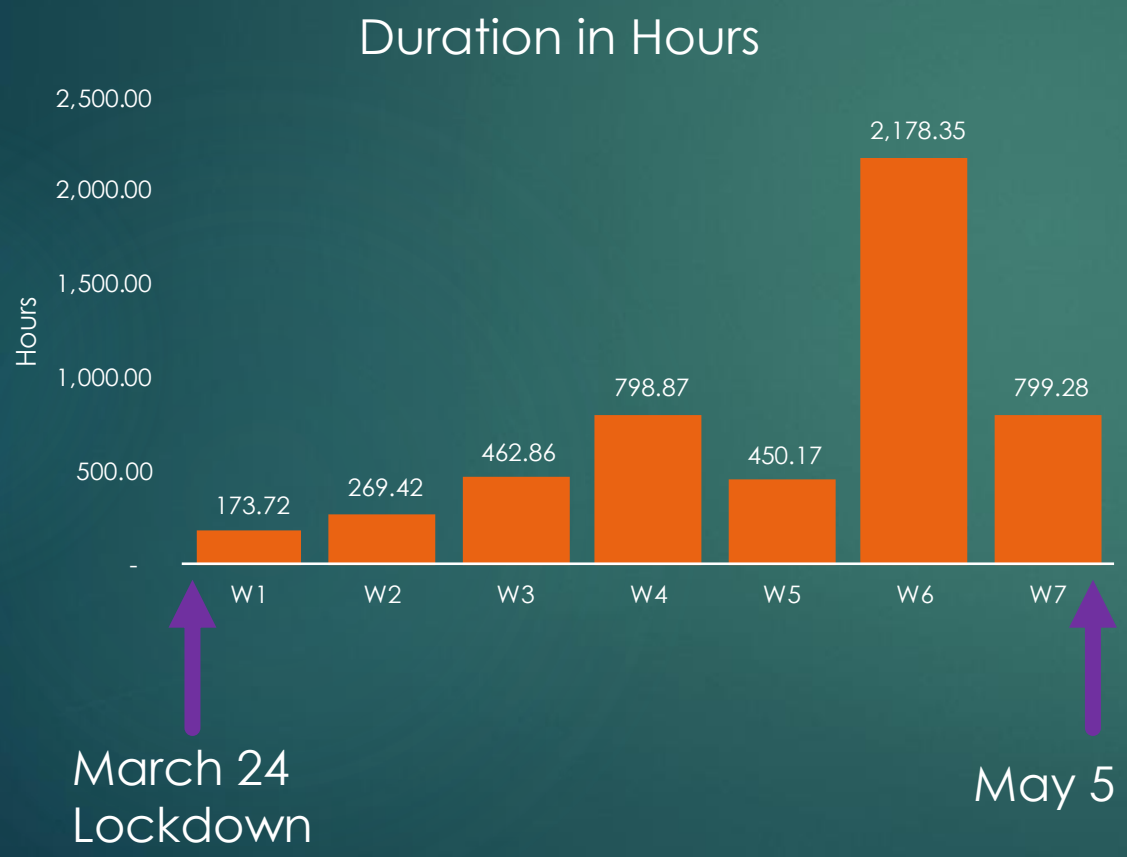
New Requests – 600+

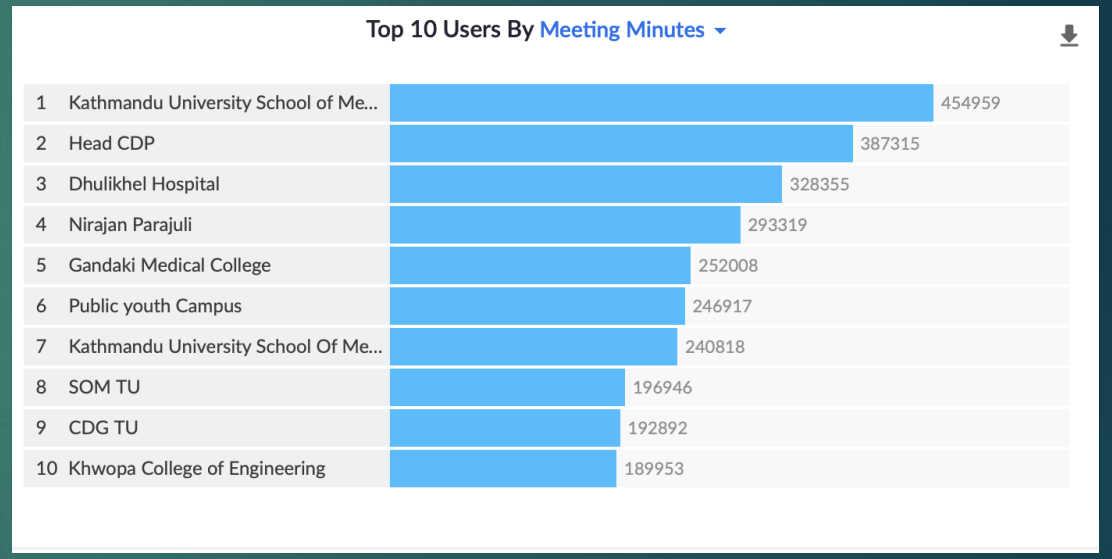
Total Meetings – 4,115

- Tribhuvan University
- Kathmandu University
- Far Western University
- Hospitals & Medical Institutes
- Nepal Academy of Science & Tech.
- Research Institutes



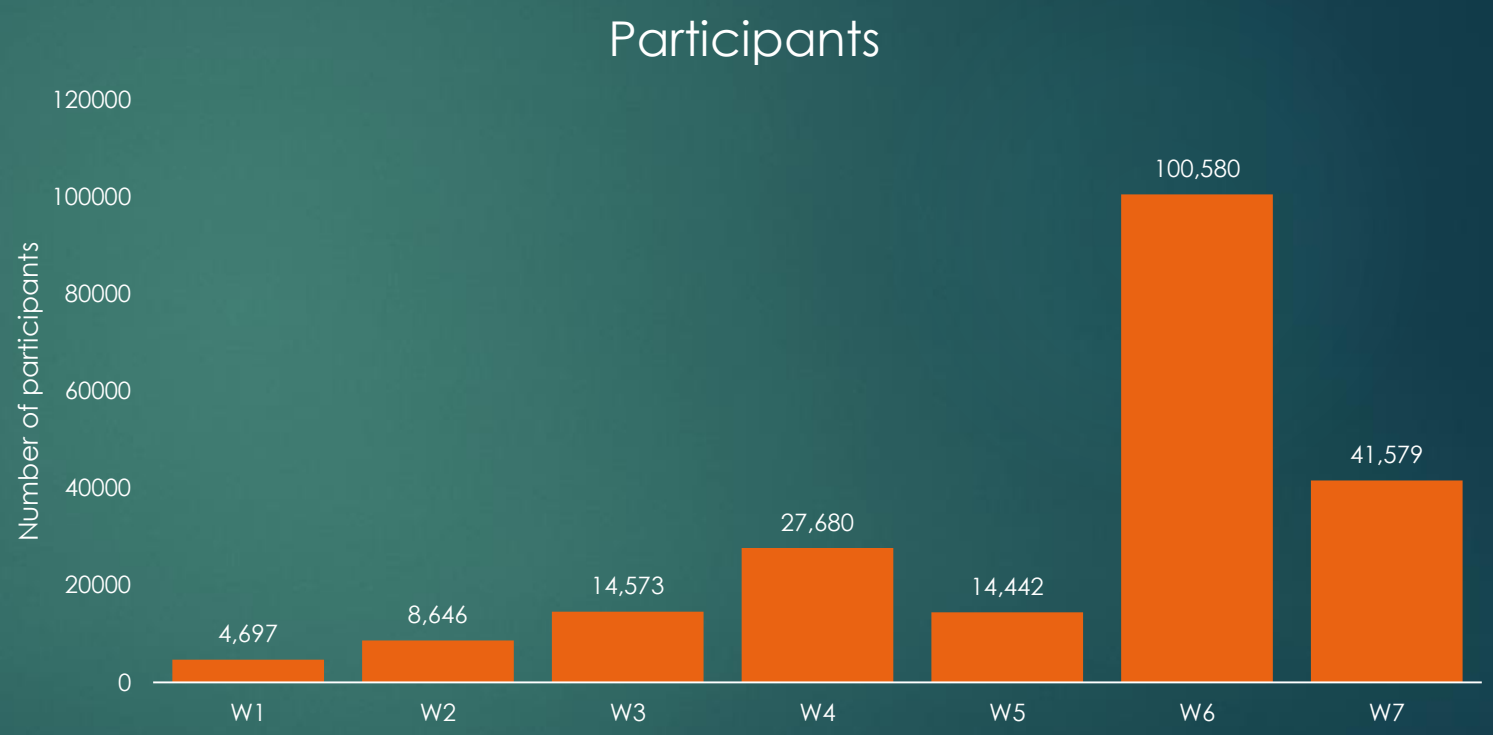
Meeting Hours (5,132.67)





Meeting Participants 212,197 (Beneficiaries)

- Students
- Researchers
- Local Governments
- Federal & Provincial Government
- Federal & Provincial Parliamentarians
- Institutions & People fighting against Covid-19



Webinars

Number of Webinars **52** Participants **11,861**

- Air Quality of Kathmandu Valley - 27th April 2020
- The impact of COVID-19 on Energy Sector of Nepal & Way forward
- Quantum-Espresso and Data Visualization
- Future of Digitalization: Bridging the Digital Divide
- Cyber Security: Its Importance in the era of Technology
- Economy impact of COVID-19 by Delta Law
- Free Technical Webinar Series for Practicing Engineers
- Proposed Electricity Bill, 2076 & Energy Sector, by NEA

Nepal Covid-19 Surveillance System

- Self-assessment of possible infection of corona virus and keep a person in surveillance, if he/she has its symptom or has visited abroad or in contact with corona infected people.
- Mobile App-based self-assessment tool based on “Emergency Healthcare Covid-19 Triage Scale” designed on the basis of data of “25 International Expert WHO Team Finding of Covid-19 Symptoms in China”.
- The health status of the person in surveillance will keep monitor for 28 days by doctors on-line through its Dashboard.
- The full-fledged surveillance system is currently available for 34 municipalities within Kathmandu Valley and Kavre Valley. Self assessment tool is available for all over the Globe.

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.iclick.covidnew&hl=en

http://covid19.nren.net.np https://www.facebook.com/nepalcovid19surveillance/

Recommendation

- Extension of Zoom License
- Promotion of Learning Management System and Infrastructure for Distance Learning Facilities
- Continue lobbying after Covid to gov and other stakeholders for online education and Distance Learning
- Explore technology for optimization of using zoom
- NREN network extension and policy to use of Internet with REN
- Take Covid-19 Pandemic as opportunities for promoting and collaboration for NREN