**Media Advocacy Group (MAG)**

**Annual Report**

**FY- 2018/19**

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**Abbreviations:**

MAG: Media Advocacy Group

CSOs: Civil Society Organizations

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

INGOs: International Non- governmental Organizations

GESI: Gender and Social Inclusion

RTI: Right to Information

UNSCR: United Nations Security Council Resolution

NAP: National Action Plan

UCPN: United Communist Party of Nepal

CPN UML: Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist)

RPP: RastriyaParajatantrik Party

ToT: Training of Trainers

FES: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

SAWF: South Asian Women's Fund

UNDP: United Nation Development Program

SPCBN: Supporting Parliamentarians on Constitution Building Process

PSP: Parliament Support Program

FHI 360: Family Health International 360

SMJT Nepal: Samjhauta Nepal

HC: Haruwa- Charuwa

LP: Legislature Parliaments

CS: MAP: Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project

MP: Member of Parliament

NFN: NGO Federation Nepal

FNJ: Federation of Nepalese Journalists

PSA: Public Service Announcement

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

EU: European Union

FCA: Finn Church Aid

NNDSWO: Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization

# Organization Background:

**M**AG is a Not-for-Profit Organization established in 2008 by a group of experts in the domain of media, advocacy and management. It has been particularly established to help support the endeavors to maintain democracy and freedom to exercise the rights of all the people. It has been extensively working for the rights of the women and the people from the socially excluded groups. Besides, it has been reviewing the existing laws and policies through the gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) perspectives and makes lobby to the concerned policymakers for the policy change. In addition, it also works to improve the confidence of the CSOs and Media towards each other and also works for the promotion of Safer Migration and Right to Information. After the Massive Earthquake of April 2015 in Nepal, it has been working in the Disaster and Post-Disaster period as a member of WFDM, a loose network of Women led Non-profit organizations that lobby for the incorporation of GEEW agenda in the DRR and Disaster Preparedness Effort of Nepal.

The target groups of MAG are the Parliamentarians and the policy makers related to women; information and communication, media persons, grass root communities with focus to marginalized group such as women, and socially excluded groups.

To meet its mission and vision, MAG organizes policy dialogue and interactions with the Honorable Parliamentarians, Policymakers, CSO leaders and media persons; review the existing laws and policies through gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) perspectives for the policy gap and recommend for the policy change. It organizes workshops, seminars, capacity enhancement training ,orientations and for the capacity building of journalist and target audience on contemporary issues such as Gender Equality and Social Inclusion; Gender based violence, Adolescent issues, Civic education, right to information, safer migration, UN security council resolution 1325, 1820 etc. Above than this, MAG has been organizing media campaigns on above issues for broader dissemination and awareness creation from grass root level to policy makers.

Most importantly, MAG was involved as core consulting member for finalization of Five years strategic plan of National Information Commission, which is related to implementation of right to information. MAG also conducts research and study wherever relevant and publishes the findings for dissemination. The organization promotes publications on various issues related to women and gives priority to women's articles through newsletters, feature publications, books, etc. It has a strong network of journalists in all the strategic locations of the country.

**Legal Status:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Status of NGO | National NGO  |
| Legal Status | Registered as Non-profit social welfare organization according to Nepalese act 1977. |
| District Administration Office (Kathmandu district) Registered No. | 997 (2008 A.D) |
| Social Welfare Council Registered No. | 25010 |
| Permanent Account Number (PAN): | 303094184 |
| Organization’s financial auditing system | MAG carries out its financial audit annually through registered auditor and report submits to Tax office and District Administrative Office.  |
| Contact | P.O.Box: 897, Anamnagar-KathmanduTel:+977-01-5535070Fax:+977-01-5535070Email:maggroup08@gmail.com |
| Website: | [www.mag.org.np](http://www.mag.org.np) |

**Vision:**

A well-informed and empowered society where every individual can take equal benefit of democracy and can feel proud to be a citizen

# Mission:

Advocate on prominent issues related to Gender, Media, Women, Migration, Democracy, Peace & security through Right to Information (RTI)

# Goal:

Create well informed, peaceful and gender equal society

# Objective of the Organization:

* To advocate issues related to Gender, Media and Access to Information
* To advocate on issues of women and marginalize group through the media.
* To advocate on right to information (RTI) and international instruments in relation to women issues such as Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), CEDAW, UNSCR 1325 & 1820 for strengthening democracy.
* To advocate and lobby for effective implementation of national laws policies and action plans related to women
* To advocate for safe migration
* To bridge the gap between media and civil society
* Provide management services to development program implementation

# Organizational Structure:

The organization consists of a seven-member Executive Committee comprising professionals from media and development sector. MAG is led by woman having expertise in media, mass communication, gender development and right to information. The organization has also a three member Advisory Committee to provide necessary guidance to achieve organization’s Vision, Mission, Goal and longer term strategic plan.

**Networking and Partners**

MAG has good relationship with various national and regional/international networks working in the area of women and gender equality, information and media.

**Networking**

* Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ)
* Online Journalists Association Nepal (OJAN)
* Global Network of Women Peace Builders (GNWP)
* Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG)
* Working Committee of the Shadow Report Preparation of CEDAW in Nepal
* National Network for Beijing Review in Nepal
* National Network on Gender and Climate Change
* National Network Against Domestic Violence
* National Network for Safe Migration(NNSM)
* 1325/1820 Action Group
* Sancharika Samuha

**International/UN Partner Organizations:**

* UN Women
* UNESCO
* UNDP/ (PSP)
* USAID FHI360
* EU
* Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)
* Geneva Global
* South Asian Women's Fund (SAWF)
* Centre for International Studies (CECI)
* HELVITAS Swiss Intercooperation Nepal
* NDI (National Democratic Institute)
* WWF Nepal

**Government Alliances:**

* Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
* Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
* Ministry of Labor and Foreign Employment
* Ministry of Information and Communication
* Information Department
* Social Welfare Council
* Controller Office of Certification
* National Women Commission
* National Information Commission
* District Coordination Committee

**3. Program Details**

# A. FHI 360 supported Program

# Title: Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP)

**Duration:** Jan 2016- Dec 2019 (3 years)

**Project Background:**

CSOs’ movement in Nepal has been successful in defeating several rules and regulations restricting CSO activities in Nepal. NGOs, one of the key CSOs that appear in the forefront of democratic movements, have been defamed and portrayed as corrupt and as less transparent. They are also charged for not being gender sensitive and inclusive in their approach. Change in the attitude needs to be targeted along within the legal framework of CSOs including media which will increase respect for women and marginalized population and decrease the gap in between CSOs/media and the public.

Existing laws and legal frameworks are restricting CSOs in many ways and hence, CSOs’ governance standards are always in question and misinterpreted when it comes to bring women on board in the decision-making process or give the share of development. Meaningful participation/analysis/discussion and making changes in the current legal framework are the responsibilities of CSOs/media including policy makers, parliamentarians, media /CSOs coalitions to create a doable self-regulatory mechanism agreed by CSOs and policy makers ensuring full representation of women and marginalized population. This is important to create an environment of confidence among all- CSOs/policy makers and the public- which is at the top.

The Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP) is a five year project (April 2016-April 2021) supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by FHI 360. CS:MAP’s **goal** is to foster a more legitimate, accountable, and resilient Nepali civil society that is capable of advancing the public interest.

To this end, Samjhauta Nepal will serve as a platform for CSO collaborative action while MAG for media’s collaborative action through Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) perspective to achieve the following three key objectives:

**Objective 1**: Improved legal and policy framework, based on international standards, to create an enabling environment for civil society and media

**Objective2**: Improved public understanding and confidence in the role of media

**Objective 3**: Improved self-regulation of the sector and internal governance of CSOs and media

**Activity 1.Role of CSO and Media in Protecting and Promoting Civil Rights**

The CSOs and Media have always played a greater role in defending the rights of the people during the difficult moments in the country and help in every bigger transformation. Their support and the role they have played in re-establishing the democracy in the country deserves a more enabling legal environment and a supportive government for them in the country. However, the present context suggests the contrary and against the Right to Freedom of Expression (FOE) and Right to Association (FOA). The policies tabled from the government in the parliament regarding the CSOs and Media also suggests the same. In such a context, MAG and Samjhauta Nepal organized an interface between the CSOs and Media. The Program was organized on April 24, 2019 at Lalitpur. Mr. Krishna Man Pradhan, General Secretary of Nepal Law Society presented his views on CSOs and Media engagement on law making process and what is creating hindrances in this process. Mr. Prateek Pradhan, Edior in Chief, 12khari online news portal highlighted the role of media in the civil right movement in every phase. Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha, freelance gender expert urged the CSOs and Media to revisit their roles and move towards the critical collaboration to protect the rights of the people. There were 27 participants in the program from both CSOs and Media.

**Program Objectives:**

* The main objective of the program was to identify the role of CSOs and Media and their complementary roles towards each other to protect and promote the civil rights to increase the public confidence towards them and their role.

## Activity 2.Interface between CSO Leaders and Parliamentarians on CSOs' concern over Registration, Renewal and Operation

The government of Nepal had been developing a lot of bills/acts to implement the Constitution of Nepal 2072 after it promulgation. The concerned ministries were busy developing and tabling the bill in the parliament. Nepal Law Commission, in the meantime, brought a draft bill related to the registration, renewal and operation of CSOs and requested them for the suggestion. The CSOs claimed that the draft bill had not covered a lot of concerns that the CSOs have been raising since a long time. The government was likely to pass the bill in the winter session of the parliament. So, MAG in partnership with Samjhauta Nepal organized the 'Interface between CSO Leaders and Parliamentarians on CSOs' concern over Registration, Renewal and Operation. The event was organized on January 25, 2019 at Kathmandu. Honorable M.Ps Anita Devkota, Hira Gurung, Nawaraj Silwal, Ekbal Miya, Dharma Regmi, Rekha Kumari Jha, Pramod Shah, Minakshi Jha participated in the interface. Mr. Jit Ram Lama, President of NGO Federation of Nepal shared the concerns from CSOs side while Mr. Madan Joshi, representive of Association of International NGOs (AIN) shared the concerns of International NGOs in the draft bill. There were 49 participants in the interface including the honorable parliamentarians, CSOs leaders, and media persons.

**Objectives:**

* The main objective of the interface was to let the parliamentarians (policy/law makers) know about the concerns of CSOs over the registration, renewal and operation as proposed in the draft bill.

## Activity 3. #MaBolchu

The world marked the month of November for the campaign against Gender based Violence. 16 days of activism against GBV is being celebrated from 24th November to 10th December every year. MAG has been celebrating the 16 days of activism against GBV every year with its signature program #MaBolchhu. The slogan for the 16 days of activism against GBV for the year 2018 was 'HearMeToo'. MAG in partnership with Samjhauta Nepal organized the #MaBolchu Campaign on the occasion of 108th international Women Day on November 23, 2018 at Lalitpur. 8 Key speakers from different sector shared their stories of opportunities and challenges faced in their personal and professional life. Famous Nepali Actress Ms. Karishma Manandher, Honorable M.P Ms. Bimala BK, the activist and therapist for the disabled people Ms. Dev Kumari Parajuli, President of Sancharika Samuha Ms. Nitu Pandit, the member of Nepal Planning Commission Ms. Usha Jha, local elected member Ms. Sashikala Subedi, worker from the informal entertainment sector Ms. Sharmila Kandel and the Photojournalist Mr. Bikash Rauniyar were the key speakers in the program. There were 95 participants from different sectors to celebrate the #MaBolchu Campaign.

**Objectives:**

* The main objective of the program was to celebrate the 16 Days of Activism against GBV by creating the platform for the persons from different sectors to share their stories of opportunities and challenges from their personal and professional life.

## Activity 4: GESI Recommendation on Umbrella Act for National Mass Communication: From Media and CSOs Coalition

MAG in partnership with Samjhauta Nepal, developed a GESI envision document for media sector taking support from the GESI expert as a consultant. The document was developed by reviewing and analyzing the provisions of GESI as guaranteed by the constitution of Nepal 2072; National Mass Communication Policy 2073; and previous media laws and international standards. The consultation was also made with the media and GESI experts and those working in media sectors. The appropriate recommendations were also incorporated in the final document. The Envision document was shared with the media and CSOs coalition on September 4, 2018at Lalitpur. There were participants from media and CSO coalitions and the networks. The representative from NGO federation Nepal; Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ); Community Information Network (CIN), Sancharika Samuha, Broadcasting Association of Nepal (BAN); and other journalists from print media and online media including the CSOs. They provided the recommendations on the GESI Envision document which were incorporated in the final document. There were 25 participants from different media and CSOs

**Major Objective:**

The main objective of the program was to collect the recommendations from the CSOs and Media coalitions, networks and persons for the Umbrella Act for National Mass Communication which was to be handed over to the policy makers.

## Activity 5: Recommendation on GESI Envision in Umbrella Act for National Mass Communication-from CSOs and Media Coalition

MAG in partnership with Samjhauta Nepal, developed a GESI envision document for media sector taking support from the GESI expert as a consultant. The document was developed by reviewing and analyzing the provisions of GESI as guaranteed by the constitution of Nepal 2072; National Mass Communication Policy 2073; and previous media laws and international standards. The consultation was also made with the media and GESI experts and those working in media sectors. The appropriate recommendations were also incorporated in the final document. As an lobby document, the 'GESI Envision Document for Media Sector' was shared and handed over to the law-makers in an event organized on September 30, 2018 at Lalitpur. Honorable M.P Bimala BK; Member of the Task Force to study on the impact of Criminal Code Act 2074 on the Press and Freedom of Expression Mr. Dev Prakash Tripathi; Representative of Press Council Mr. Ishwori Prasad; Representative of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology Mr. Dipendra Maharjan and Representative of Federation of Nepalese Journalists Ms. Meera Rajbhandari were participated from the law-makers side. There were 34 participants from CSOs and Media to participate in the program.

**Objectives:**

The main objective of the program was to share and handover the GESI Envision for the Umbrella Act for National Mass Communication to the law makers

**Activity 6: Submission of GESI Checklist to the Secretary of National Women's Commission**

MAG in partnership with Samjhauta Nepal had developed a GESI checklist. The Checklist describes the steps to be considered while developing the new policies/laws or analyzing the existing policies/laws from the GESI perspective. Mainly it is targeted to facilitate for the GESI friendly policies in the context when the government has been developing a lot of bills and acts. The checklist had already been shared with the local representative and the parliamentarians. National Women Commission, being responsible for gender equality, women empowerment and carry out research on any women related legal provisions and strengthen the rules and regulations to minimize social malpractices against women and promote women rights, MAG and Samjhauta Nepal handed over the 'GESI Checklist' to the secretary of National Women Commission Mr. Anil Kumar Thakur on August 8, 2018 at the Premise of National Women Commission.

**Major Objective:**

The submission of GESI Checklist to National Women Commission was made as an act of advocacy for the review of existing legal framework through GESI perspectives and for the formulation of GESI friendly laws and policies which will later be led by National Women Commission itself.

# B. UN Women Supported Program

# 1. Title: Leveraging Right to Information against Trafficking and Unsafe Migration during Post Disaster Reconstruction.

**Duration:** September 2017-September 2018

**Target District:** Sindhupalchowk, Dhading&Kathamndu

**Project Background:**

Natural disasters, for it, creates the loss of existing structures and disrupt the mechanism including the control over assets, mass displacement and poor living conditions, law enforcement and justice systems including social protection mechanisms and loss of family protection.

The massive earthquake destroyed many houses making millions of people dead, homeless, widowed and orphaned. As a consequence, a large number of men has left for employment elsewhere, leaving behind female-headed households at the economic and social disadvantage and limited protection. The pressure to migrate increased and many migrants who didn’t get the chance to leave the country in a formal, registered way left unsafe. With low education, limited livelihood options most of them are forced to choose unsafe migration without proper information which may drag them to trafficking. As various tools are applied to address the web of adversities facing women but the insufficient focus has been paid to the power that information can play in confronting these challenges.  Paradoxically, it is arguable that while women are the least likely to demand and receive access to information, they are perhaps the most in need of this potent tool.

Under the overall framework of The Future We Want (FWW) project and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Information Commission (NIC), UN Women is partnering with Media Advocacy Group (MAG) to implement this program in Sindhupalhowk, Dhading and Kathmandu. The overall goal of this assignment is to support the Government of Nepal, specifically the NIC to ensure women’s Right to Information (RTI) specifically related to labor migration and human trafficking in the post-disaster context.

**The main objectives of the project are:**

* To enhance synergy between institutions and policies on issues of unsafe migration and human trafficking through improved evidence-based awareness raising, advocacy, information dissemination, capacity development and coordination support.
* To contribute to women’s RTI in the post-disaster context through information sharing mechanisms in partnership with NIC to carry out extensive information dissemination.
* To empower women to seek information from government entities to make a well informed and responsive government structure.

## Activity 1: Orientation to Government Officials on RTI

MAG organized follow-up 'Orientation on RTI to Government Officials' in the target districts Sindhupalchowk, Dhading and Kathmandu on the following dates. The orientation was the follow-up program of the previously given orientation to the information officers of government offices (Rural Municipality, District Health Centre and District Police Office) and the local representatives (chairpersons and the members) with the aim of strengthening their knowledge and understanding on the RTI in the first phase. The orientation was conducted by the honorable Information Commissioner Yasodha Timsina, RTI expert Babita Basnet and the media expert Mr. Rajesh Ahiraj.

**Objective:**

* To build the capacity of government officials so that they can support and impart complete and correct information to those seeking information
* To follow up and receive updates from the participants after the first orientation phase
* To discuss on the use of RTI in the changing context of Nepal in terms of laws and policies.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S.N** | **District** | **Event Date** | **Participants** |
| 1 | Sindhupalchowk | 5th September, 2018 | 27 |
| 2 | Kathmandu | 22nd August, 2018 | 20 |
| 3 | Dhading | 2nd September 2018 | 31 |

## Activity 2: Orientation to CSOs on RTI

MAG organized follow-up 'Orientation on RTI to CSOs' in the target districts Sindhupalchowk, Dhading and Kathmandu on the following dates. The orientation was the follow-up program of the previously given orientation to the civil society organizations (CSO) members including media specially those focusing on women's rights and gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), women's groups, community members, youths, men and boys, among others so that they will contribute in raising awareness of RTI and Support those seeking information in their communities. The orientation was conducted by the honorable Information Commissioner Yasodha Timsina, RTI expert Babita Basnet and the media expert Mr. Rajesh Ahiraj.

**Objectives:**

* To Orient CSOs on what the RTI act has envisioned for them and how it can be exercised within them.
* Contribute for the sustainability of RTI by raising awareness among CSOs as they are the key agents working in public's interest

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S.N** | **District** | **Event Date** | **Participants** |
| 1 | Sindhupalchowk | 6th September, 2018 | 34 |
| 2 | Kathmandu | 23rd August, 2018 | 36 |
| 3 | Dhading | 3rd September, 2018 | 37 |

## Activity 3: Orientation to Women Beneficiaries on RTI

MAG organized follow-up 'Orientation to Women Beneficiaries on RTI' in the three target districts on the following dates. The orientation was the follow-up program of the previously given orientation to the women beneficiaries. The orientation was provided by the RTI champions. It was provided based on RTI guideline published by MAG. It was provided to the possible female migrant workers, migrant returnee women and the beneficiaries of the project FWW. The orientation was specially concentrated on filing application for the entitlements of women guaranteed by the constitution. Additionally, it was focused on the procedures of applying RTI application in the government offices and public bodies.

**Objective:**

* To promote the culture of seeking information among the target beneficiaries espically people from professional background.
* To aim at building linkages between women beneficiaries with the RTI champions who can aid them in accessing the Right to Information.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S.N** | **District** | **Event Date** | **Participants** |
| 1 | Sindhupalchowk | 17th September, 2018 | 38 |
| 2 | Dhading | 9th September, 2018 | 50 |

## Activity 4: Public Hearing

MAG organized 'Public Hearing' in Sindhupalchowk & Dhading districts on the following dates. The program was conducted among the related stakeholders of the project including the returnee women migrants, RTI champions, political parties, government entities, CSOs, Media persons. In the public hearing, MAG shared the activities implemented in the target districts and its progress and findings. The program also served as a platform for information seekers and receivers to share their experiences related to RTI and solve differences among them.

**Objective:**

* To update the participants about the project activities and its accomplishments.
* To facilitate in the process of social audit by measuring the project results against its goals and show the budgetary expenses under each activity.
* To create a platform for sharing experiences among information seekers and providers and solve their differences
* To create interaction between the participants and the information commissioner of NIC

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S.N** | **District** | **Event Date** | **Participants** |
| 1 | Sindhupalchowk | 18th September, 2018 | 37 |
| 2 | Dhading | 10th September, 2018 | 42 |

## Activity 5: Award Ceremony to RTI Champions

MAG organized 'Award Ceremony to RTI Champions' at Kathandu on 26th September 2018. The chief guest of the program was the honorable Minister of Communication and Information Technology Mr. Gokul Prasad Baskota and special guest was Chief Information Commisioner Mr. Krishnaharu Baskota and the guest was the Information Commisioner Ms. Yasodha Timsina. The ceremony was conducted t felicitate the RTI champions in recognition of their highest contribution in promoting Right to Information among the local women in their respective districts. One RTI champions was selected for award from each district based on their performance and the role they have played to file the highest number of RTI applications. The awardee RTI Champions were awarded with the appreciation certificate and cash prize. The name list of the awardee is given below.

1. Ms. Rina Shrestha - Sindhupalchowk
2. Ms. Goma Thapa - Dhading
3. Ms. Dev Kumari Parajuli - Kathmandu

# C. European Union supported Program

## Title: Supporting Collective Voice and action against Caste-Based Discrimination in Nepal-SAJHA AAWAJ

Consortium Partners: Fin Church Aid (FCA), Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization (NNDSWO)

Duration: November 2017-November 2020

Target District: Mahottari, Siraha, Surkhet, Jajarkot & Kalikot

**Project Background:**

Dalits in Nepal are a historically state victimized disadvantaged community who have been compelled to lag at the bottom of the social structure and excluded from national development mainstream due to the caste system and extreme Hinduism for centuries. According to the government’s figures, Dalits comprise 13.2 percent of Nepal’s total population. Caste Based Discrimination (CBD) is not only denial of equality and freedom but also isolation of basic human rights. CBD affected people have to face prohibition and discrimination in every aspect of their lives from labor to civic amenities. The physical and psychosocial violence is a major threat for their human rights and freedom. The limited support system at societal and institution level, makes their access to justice difficult and constitutes grounds for vulnerability, poverty and exclusion from public life.

The project is thus designed to combat CBD, a pressing human rights and governance challenge in Nepal. Under the overall funding support of European Commission, and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Nepal National Dalit Solidarity Welfare Organization (NNDSWO), Media Advocacy Group (MAG) is going to implement the project through media advocacy in the five districts; Surkhet, Kalikot and Jajarkot situated in province-6 represent the issues of Hill Dalits and Mahottari and siraha situated in province -2 represent the issues of Terai Dalits.

The overall objective of the action is to contribute to the elimination of caste-based discrimination (CBD) and promotion of human rights of all Dalits and non-Dalits people.

The specific objective of the project is:

* To strengthen implementation of legal frameworks related to equality and non-discrimination for enhancing effective participation and access to services and justice to persons affected by caste based discrimination(CBD) i.e, Dalits

**Role of MAG**

* Media is a powerful tool to change public perception and bring positive social transformation. More than a hundred year old media in Nepal, however, has not been able to trigger social change. Though media is believed to be neutral and unbiased, we often see and hear news or reports that are discriminatory and biased towards certain caste and groups, mostly minority groups, which in turn perpetuate social disparities. It is because media reflects the dominant ideology of the society and practices discrimination in the name of race, religion, sex, ethnicity, and regionalism. Hence, the representations of the minority groups and Dalits in media are often inadequate or non-existent and when they are portrayed, these portrayals are often stereotyped and demeaning.
* On the other hand, media strongly influence the society and can be used both as a tool and a medium in combating deep rooted caste based discrimination. Media promote public debate and surface hidden issues in context of CBD and untouchability from the society and create mass awareness to end the discrimination. Further, media holds government accountable and make necessary laws and policies for the change.
* As media advocacy is one of the important component in combating fight against CBD and untouchability, MAG during project period has initiated following activities:
* i) Strengthened the capacity of the journalists in explorative journalism related to CBD in order to cover news and articles that more accurate, in-depth and evidence based that are unbiased and grounded in reality.
* ii) Mobilize dthe local media including community radio, print, online and electronic media and social media to create enabling environment at grass root level among dalits and non-dalits, create awareness and contribute in bringing a positive social change.
* iii) Conducted media dialogue program with policy makers, Dalits and human rights activists to promote public debate on the current laws against CBD and to make necessary changes in laws and policies, thereby supporting in advocacy endeavours that facilitate in placing CBD issues in national agenda

**Activity 1: Development of TV PSAs and radio jingles**

MAG developed 5 TV PSAs and 10 radio jingles (5 in Nepali and 5 in Maithili language). For TV PSA development, MAG entered into partnership with Youth Vision Pvt. Ltd while for development of radio jingles, MAG partnered with Ujaylo Network.

**Activity 2: Media Dialogue Program on Caste-Based Discrimination**

MAG organized 'Media dialogue program' on 29th October in the presence of altogether 44 participants from Dalits Rights Organization, CSOs and media at Yak Party Palace, Pulchowk, Lalitpur. Ms. Babita Basnet facilitated the program and Mr. Subash Acharya, a legal advocate, presented a paper on analysis of Caste Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act 2075 (the 1st Amendment) from legal perspective. There was a panel session and the panelists were Hon. Ms. Anjana Bisankhe, Member of House of Representative; Hon. Mr. Sudip Pathak, National Human Commission Nepal; Former IGP Mr. Upendra Kant Aryal, Nepal Police; Mr. Rem Bishwokarma, Jagaran Media Center; and chaired by Ms. Anita Bindu, Nepal TV & MAG, followed by story sharing from 3 participants from CBD communities from Kalikot, Jajarkot. Recorded media dialogue was broadcasted through New24 Chanel on 27th January and re-broadcast on 28th January 2019. The recorded video was shared through SAJHA AAWAJ Facebook and youtube.

**Activity 3: TV PSA and Radio Jingles Airing**

Radio jingles were aired through local radio partners in the project implementing districts since January 2019. The names of the local radio partners broadcasting the Radio Jingle are Radio Jajarkot- Jajarkot, Radio Nepali Aawaj- Kalikot , Jagaran FM- Surkhet, Radio Samagra FM- Siraha and Radio Rudrakshya FM- Mahottari.

TV PSAs were broadcasted through national Television stations namely Nepal TV, Kantipur TV and News 24 since February 2019. Agreement was signed with Saujanya Media Pvt. Ltd to broadcast TV PSAs, and edit, record, and broadcast media dialogue programs.

**Activity 4: Radio Program**

MAG contracted 5 community radios for radio program development and airing across 5 districts. The names of the radio partners are as follows:

1. Radio Jajarkot- Jajarkot
2. Radio Malika FM- Kalikot
3. Jagaran FM- Surkhet
4. Radio Samagra FM- Siraha
5. Radio Rudrakshya FM- Mahottari

MAG in collaboration with the community radios have been airing 'SAJHA AAWAJ radio program' since February 2019 in 5 districts, namely Surkhet, Kalikot, Jajarkot, Siaraha and Mahottari.These local radio stations developed radio program in coordination with MAG and NNDSWO, and air radio program on issues related to Caste-Based Discrimination and Dalits. So far, radio programs on following themes have been developed and aired:

* Dalits' access to Information, Dalit women's representation at local level, Dalit women's access to services and facilities provided by government,
* Dalit issues in present situation and role of three states (Federal, Province & Local) for addressing Dalit issues,
* Important of Education for elimination of caste based discrimination, School enrollment program, opportunities and facilities for the Dalit student given by government,
* Dalit's participation in local level planning,
* Priorities of Dalit and excluded group in annual program and budget 2076-077 of Karnali provice government,
* problem of citizenship among Dalit community and the role of activist and stakeholders,
* role of religious priest and leader for Anti caste-based discrimination activities, access of CBD victim in police station or municipality,
* Effect of flood in dalit community and their access to relief materials and services, Support of government and stakeholder to Dalit community in flood at terai and so on.

**Activity 5: Support journalists to explore and publish analytical news articles**

MAG provided fellowship to 6 journalists from the target project districts. The fellowship was provided on April 2019. The fellows were selected from the journalists who had already taken explorative journalism conducted by MAG in 2018 in the target districts. The fellows have been exploring the issues related to the CBD in the community and published in the national daily newspapers. The fellows who have been receiving fellowship from MAG are:

1. Bishu Prasad Neupane
2. Jagatdal Janala BK
3. Sher Bahadur Thapa
4. Hemanta KC
5. Nagendra Kumar Karna
6. Ranjan Kumar Bhandari

## Activity 6: Social Media Campaign Using Facebook and Twitter

MAG has created SAJHA AAWAJ page in twitter and facebook to disseminate project activities and key issues faced by CBD affected communities linking with constitutional and legal provisions in order to develop solidarity of stakeholders. By the end of June 2019, the number of page likes and followers has reached 855 and 901 respectively.

## Activity 7: Coordination with local stakeholders:

As a result of project activities, coordination with local stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental organizations, human rights organizations, FNJ and media houses in 5 districts were initiated and improved. As of local government bodies, MAG coordinated with District Administrative Office, Barahtal Rural Municipality at Surkhet, Narahari Rural municipality at Kalikot; Shivalaya Rural Municipality at Jajarjot, Sakhuwanakarkatti rural municipality at Siraha, and Ekdara municipality at Mahottari. Likewise, MAG built relation with FNJ Surkhet, FNJ Kalikot, FNJ Jajarkot, FNJ Karnali, and media houses of 5 districts. The explorative training also facilitated in building a cordial relationship with local media. Moreover, MAG works in close coordination with NNDSWO district chapters, HRAA, and local CSOs to raise collective voices against CBD. Police office of Jajarkot. The purpose of these coordination meetings was to update the local stakeholders about project activities, to collect data on the status of CBD issues from police and local administrative offices, and to create awareness among local stakeholders.

# D. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Nepal (FES) Supported Program

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), established in 1995, is working with partners such as trade unions, media, academia, political parties, and NGOs for capacity building on issues of social justice, human rights, rule of law, and inclusion. Furthermore, it holds discussions on current political and economic topics providing opportunities for cross-party dialogues and exchange between representatives of the government and civil society. It also provides civic education program/training to the people. FES Nepal, has been partnering with MAG in providing different training to the women journalists to enhance their capacities**.**

## Activity 1: Training on Livelihood for Women Journalists

There is a bigger challenge for women journalists to take journalism as their primary occupation for earning their livelihood. In so many cases it's hard to retain them in the journalism sector as well. There may have been a lot of aspects, however, a lot of women journalists opined the lack of sustainable livelihood is one of the main problems they face in this sector. Media Advocacy Group (MAG) has been conducting different trainings to the women journalists in support of FES Nepal since 2008 to enhance the capacities and professional capabilities of the women journalists. So taking into consideration the urge of livelihood security for the women journalists in the media sector, MAG in support of FES Nepal organized three-day trainings to the women journalists from 25th to 27th July, 2018 at Bhaktapur to develop their journalism in a way that can support for their sustainable livelihood options. The training was focused to explore the opportunities for livelihood for women journalists within the sector a apart from their regular job. Ms. Sharu Shrestha, Gender expert, Honorable Yasodha Timsina, Commissioner NIC, Ms. Binita Marahatta, Journalist and Ms. Chandani Hamal, Journalist shared their experiences and explore some opportunities in the journalism sector for the women journalists. International fellowship, work for media management and media consultant, book review, photography and videography, feature writing, online business, media coordination, movie/documentary making, modeling and program production were few of the options that were discussed in the training. There were altogether 24 women journalists participated in the training from different districts like Dhading. Birgunj, Kathmandu, Makwanpur, Tanahu, Itahari, Chitwan, Lalitpur, Pokhara, Sindupalchowk, Kavre, Nuwakot and Syangjya.

**Major Objectives:**

* To support the women journalists develop their livelihood options in media sector.
* To help the women journalists retain in media sector.

## Activity 2: Training on Photo/Video Journalism for Women Journalists

MAG in support of FES Nepal organized three day training on photo and video journalism for the women journalists from 29th to 31st October, 2018 at Kathmandu. The training was designed based on the recommendation from the earlier training on Livelihood for women journalists. The earlier training recommended for the need of photography and videography and the basic skills on editing photo and video. With the emergence of online media, youtube channels, even the social media the knowledge on photography and videography including the editing could have an advantage for the women journalists. The training was facilitated by Mr Bikash Rauniyar, photo journalists for photography and Mr. Arun Karki, multimedia expert on Mobile and Multimedia journalism. The training also focused on the Gender Based Violence and Harassment in journalism and how to protect oneself from such behaviors. There were altogether 25 women journalists from Dhading, Kathmandu, Makwanpur, Tanahu, Chitwan, Lalitpur, and Sindupalchowk. The participants were mainly repeated from the previous training for they had recommended this training on photo/video journalism for them.

**Major Objectives:**

* To support the women journalists develop their livelihood options in media sector.
* To help the women journalists retain in media sector.

## Activity 3: Training on Empowering Women Journalists through technology

MAG in support of FES Nepal organized three day training to provide practical and in-depth knowledge on photography and videography from 4th to 6th April, 2019 at Kathmandu. The training was focused to provide practical knowledge on photography and videography. The participants took the photo and video by themselves on visiting outdoor locations and presented them in the workshop. The trainers Mr. Bikash Rauniyar, photo journalists and Mr. Arun Karki, multimedia expert gave their technical inputs/feedbacks on the photos and videos taken by the participants. They also shared the challenges and obstacles they faced during photography and videography from their practical and professional life where the trainers answered their queries. There were altogether 19 participants from 9 districts: Dhading, Kaski, Nawalparasi, Makawanpur, Mahottari, Bajura, Bara, Kathmandu and Chitwan.

**Major Objectives:**

* To enhance the technical skills of the women journalists
* To share the experience and challenges faced while working in the technical field of journalism
* To develop professionalism of the women journalists.