

**Media Advocacy Group (MAG)
Annual Report
FY 079/080
(2022/2023)**



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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

FES: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

SAWF: South Asian Women's Fund

UNDP: United Nation Development Program

PSP: Parliament Support Program

FHI 360: Family Health International 360

CS: MAP: Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project

MPCC: Multipurpose Community Center

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

GESI: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

DRRM: Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

WFDM: Women Friendly Disaster Management

PWDs: People with Disability/ Disabilities

Organization Background:

MAG 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, Thapathali Height-Kathmandu Tel:+977-01-4229440 Fax:+977-01-4229440 Email: maggroup08@gmail.com
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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:

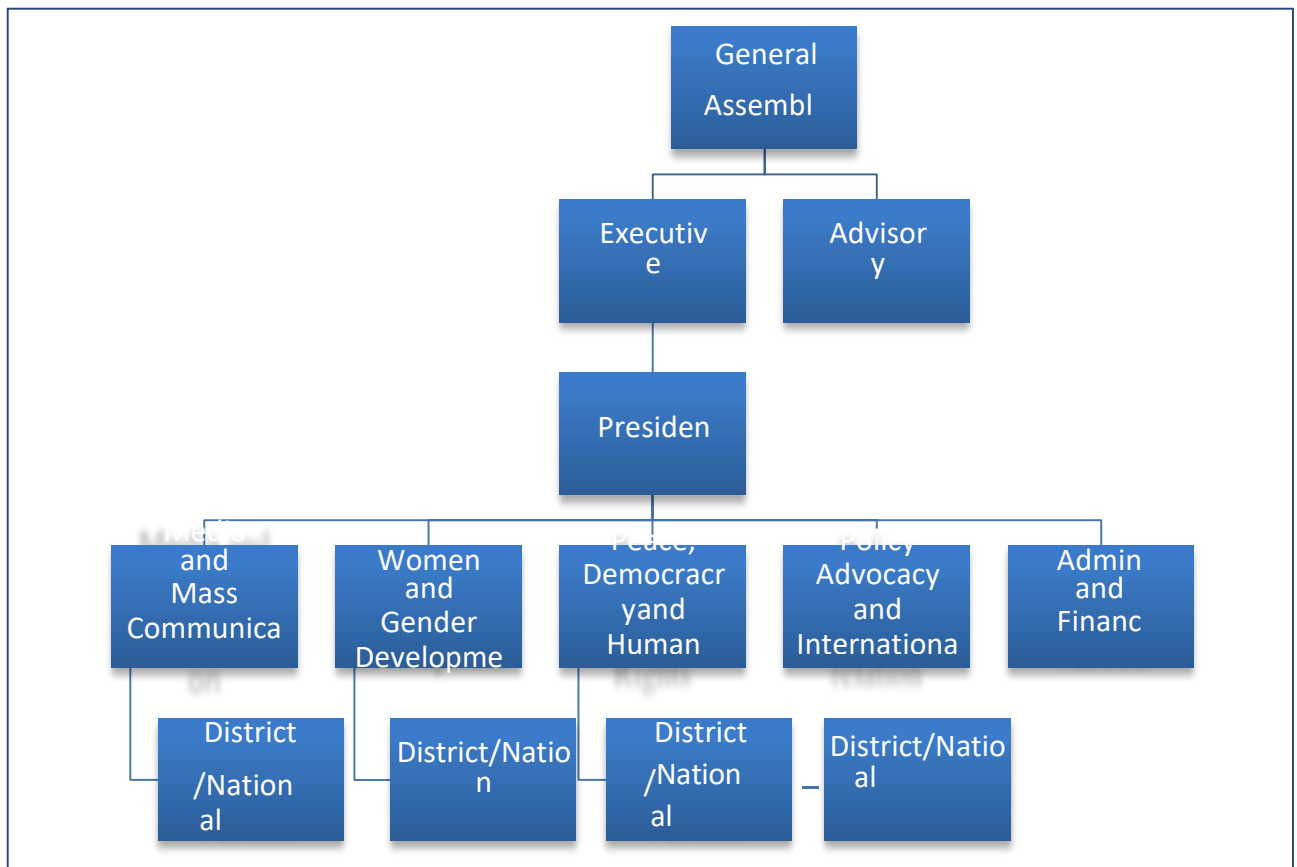
Create well informed, peaceful and gender equal society

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, and 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)

- UNFPA
- USAID
- FHI360
- European Union
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)
- Geneva Global
- South Asian Women's Fund (SAWF)
- Article 19
- Centre for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL)
- US Embassy
- VSO
- Centre for International Studies (CECI)
- HELVITAS Swiss Intercooperation Nepal
- NDI (National Democratic Institute)
- WWF Nepal

National Partners

- Samjhauta Nepal
- Forum for Women Law and Development (FWLD)
- TEWA 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. **United States (US) Embassy Supported Program**

Project Title: Sustainable Pathways for Women Journalists

Project duration: 1st October 2022- 20th September 2023

The International Women in Media Foundation surveyed more than 500 companies in nearly 60 countries for its global report on the status of women working in the news media. The report claims that in most countries, men occupy most managerial and reporting positions. Women reporters face unique risks and pressures, from discrimination and harassment to familial and financial pressures. According to the Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ), there are only 2408 women journalists in Nepal as of August 2022, and the majority of them are assigned to so-called soft beats. There are currently less than a handful of Nepali women writing about foreign policy issues.

Through this proposed project, Media Advocacy Group (MAG) aims to build the capacity of women journalists in Nepal through mentorship and year-long fellowships. It also seeks to holistically address the gender disparity issue through polling and provide diversity and inclusion training to male-dominated newsrooms.

Objectives:

- To conduct research to find the root causes of the gender disparity in Nepali news media.
- To encourage a younger generation of women to join the vocation through school speaking events.
- To enhance the capacity of women journalists on reporting of foreign affairs through real-world fellowships and mentorships.
- To sensitize media personnel on the importance of women journalists in foreign affairs.

Activity 1: Conduct research on status of women journalists in reporting of foreign affairs

The online survey was conducted among 500 women journalists. Among the surveyed women journalists, only 13.3% were engaged in political beats and 6.6% were engaged in foreign affairs and security affairs reporting. Regarding the status of participation of women journalists in foreign affairs reporting, only 2.9% of respondents considered that women journalists have high status in foreign affairs and security reporting, while 24.3% claimed it to be moderate, and a huge majority of respondents, i.e., 72.8%, shared that women journalists have less status in foreign and security affairs reporting.

Regarding the reason for the low representation of women journalists in foreign affairs reporting, 23.6% of surveyed respondents shared that gender stereotypes and gender biases in the media are the main reasons for the underrepresentation of women in foreign affairs reporting and diplomacy. 19.8% of respondents claimed it was the lack of interest and knowledge in foreign affairs reporting and diplomacy. 16% considered foreign affairs reporting to be more challenging than other beats and cited this as the main reason for the low number of women in foreign affairs reporting. 15.1% of respondents shared that women are underrepresented in Nepali media, which leads to fewer women in foreign affairs reporting. 13.2% claimed that senior management does not trust women reporters in foreign affairs reporting, and 6.6% claimed that foreign affairs reporting requires tremendous effort, time, and dedication with the same payment as in other beat reporting. 2.8% believed proficiency in English language also affected the interest to cover foreign affairs.

Launch and National Sharing of the Research Report: The report of the research “Status of Nepali Women Journalists in Foreign Affairs Reporting” was officially made public during the National Report Sharing event organized by MAG in Pulchowk on May 8, 2023. Ms. Anita Bindu, President of MAG, chaired the ceremony, and Honorable Minister Rekha Sharma, Ministry of Communication & Information Technology, was the Chief Guest. As the event's special guest, MAG welcomed His Excellency Ambassador Dean R. Thompson of the United States Embassy in Nepal. Mr. Bipul Pokhrel, President of the Federation of Nepali Journalists, Prof. Kunda Dixit, Founder and Editor of Nepali Times, and Dr. Mahendra Bista, Former President of the Federation of Nepali Journalists were the speakers, and Ms. Babita Basnet, Executive Director of MAG, presented the research findings. Overall, the findings of this study shed light on the need to address challenges faced by women journalists in foreign affairs reporting and to take concrete steps to support and empower women in this field. By promoting greater diversity and inclusion in foreign affairs reporting, we can help to ensure that a wider range of perspectives and voices are represented in the global conversation on important issues.

The research report can be accessed with the following link: <http://mag.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/A-Study-on-The-Status-of-Nepali-Women-Journalists-Covering-Foreign-Affairs.pdf>

Media Coverage:

The research report was able to grasp ample media attention. It was covered in mainstream Television network such as Nepal Television (NTV), Image Channel, Kantipur, AP1 HD and so on. In addition the launch event was covered by various newspaper and online news portal. The links of some news pieces are as below:

- ✓ https://nepaltonline.com/2023/05/69894/?fbclid=IwAR3OUUY-N2kN6_zs3M4df62zoDMQnIHDdBMG_Cg9fYgiHjImi_7TS57V8E
- ✓ https://www.setokhari.com/detail/12819?fbclid=IwAR3ODSS6RxsLbw_WwKzSu5dB388za_eHPiL5q6QttqrB17Ne04fI9X4Z6Ngo
- ✓ <https://www.ratopati.com/story/361676/journalist-woman?fbclid=IwAR02Fy5pN03Ejh3GLeKmEmb8QQpVYnTj-V-2E-jnCjLHNZw7HXYdQI7JtzM>
- ✓ <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/participation-of-women-journalists-in-foreign-affairs-and-security-reporting-dismal-in-nepali-media-study->

[report/?fbclid=IwAR044rcFyfenTdT2kNyHB1HASur9qNnS2rGFcGcMd25Pm9oqZR1SPfHCIMw](https://nagariknews.nagariknetwork.com/social-affairs/1168741-1683633017.html?fbclid=IwAR1kPdxTPdFM0OtDd1zqC1t2jgkZCIRTt25lif8_x-MOUsDrOz359A7aq_Q)

- ✓ https://nagariknews.nagariknetwork.com/social-affairs/1168741-1683633017.html?fbclid=IwAR1kPdxTPdFM0OtDd1zqC1t2jgkZCIRTt25lif8_x-MOUsDrOz359A7aq_Q
- ✓ <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/media-advocacy-group-unveils-research-report-on-women-journalists-covering-foreign-affairs>
- ✓ <https://www.nepalnews.com/s/nation/nepali-women-journalists-cover-foreign-affairs>

"The Status of Nepali Women Journalists Covering Foreign Affairs" was also featured in the IFJ's monthly media bulletin for SAMSN:

- ✓ <https://mailchi.mp/ifj/ifj-south-asia-media-bulletin-may-2023?e=94b25f8142>

The training program in Bagmati Province, was covered in national daily newspaper, Gorkhapatra:

- ✓ https://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/65455?fbclid=IwAR2_4zwQouYbO-Vzb7u_UrksVcePdACGQj89rrLoX5DB86tdQxTc3ajADfk

Activity 2: Capacity Building Workshop for Women Journalists in Foreign Affairs Reporting:

MAG conducted three comprehensive capacity building workshops focused on foreign affairs reporting. The participating women journalists received an orientation on Foreign Affairs arena with valuable insights and experiences of former diplomats. A session was held to offer them with contextual knowledge, as well as an in-depth grasp of foreign affairs reporting in Nepal at both the national and provincial levels. Participants obtained knowledge of the experiences, existing procedures, tools, recommendations, and best practices involved with foreign affairs reporting.

For a more theoretical understanding, the participants were then oriented on the "Fundamentals of Foreign Affairs Reporting." This lesson covered common terminologies used in foreign affairs reporting and touched upon specific issues such as bilateral relations, foreign employment, cross-border issues, citizenship matters, human and goods smuggling, national security, and border issues. The training also included a broader overview of policies and institutions related to foreign affairs, as well as an exploration of the role played by international organizations.

Ethical practices in foreign affairs reporting were also highlighted, with participants learning about basic etiquettes and diplomatic protocols relevant to this field. Potential sources of news, information, and contacts were identified and the participants were guided on network building for their professional development.

Finally, the training sessions addressed the critical issue of misinformation and disinformation in foreign policy reporting. Participants learned how to identify and combat misinformation and disinformation, as well as the importance of fact checking in assuring reporting accuracy.

Overall, the participants obtained comprehensive knowledge necessary for effective foreign affairs reporting, which combined contextual insights and theoretical foundations. All together 60 women journalists were capacitated in foreign affairs reporting.

Summary of all three workshops:

S. N	Date	Location	Province	No. of participating women journalists
1.	25 th May, 2023	Yak Palace, Pulchowk	Bagmati	15
2.	1 st June, 2023	Welcome Hotel, Janakpur	Madhesh	20
3.	4 th June, 2023	Hotel the Kantipur, Pokhara	Gandaki	25
Total no. of participating women journalists				60

Resource persons and topics of discussion:

- **Mr. Kosh Raj Koirala, Editor-in-chief, myRepublica**
 - ✓ Fundamentals of Foreign Affairs Reporting
 - ✓ Journalism tools and techniques/ Debunking Mis/dis information
- **Mr. Anil Giri, Chief-Sub-Editor, Kathmandu Post**
 - ✓ Foreign Affairs Reporting Context in Nepal, experience, existing practices, tools, tips and best practices
- **Ms. Babita Basnet, Senior Journalist**
 - ✓ Networking and Professional Development for Foreign Affairs Reporting

Activity 3: Fellowship/Mentorship Program

MAG kick started a Fellowship Program in July and three months of report that three months of the fellowship have been successfully completed. During this period, the fellows made significant contributions by publishing a total of 25 well-researched articles, all centered on matters related to foreign affairs. The fellows' dedication to producing high-quality contents in the field of foreign affairs and mentor's continuous guidance has been commendable and contributed to make the fellowship program successful.

Final List of Fellows:

1. Sunita Lohani, Bagmati Province
2. Chandani Hamal, Bagmati Province
3. Sajira Shrestha, Bagmati Province
4. Durga Rana Magar, Gandaki Province
5. Laxmi Chaudhary, Madhesh Province

List of Mentors:

1. Koshraj Koirala, Editor in chief, myrepublica
2. Saraswatee Karmacharya, News Editor, Nepal Samacharpatra

Activity 3: Youth Outreach Program for Aspiring Journalists

- Date: On September 8, 2023,
- Location: Grahmin Adarsha Multiple Campus, Tarkeshwore
- Number of Participants: 80 students enrolled in Journalism

- Resource Person:
 - **Ms. Babita Basnet, Senior Journalists**- shared her valuable experiences in the field of journalism.
 - **Ms. Chandani Hamal, Journalist and Fellow of this project**- Shared experiences, accolades received, and the fellowship program's role in supporting her exploration of the foreign affairs beat.

The program proved to be highly successful in achieving its objectives of inspiring and guiding the next generation of journalists.

Challenges and Mitigation Measures

Coordination of schedules and ensuring that all important stakeholders, guest speakers, and attendees are available on the given date and time can be difficult when organizing a high-profile event such as the study report launch with Ministers and Ambassadors as special guests and other renowned dignitaries. The efficient facilitation handled unexpected delays and time management.

Obtaining adequate media coverage, particularly in print media, and publicity for the research report launch was challenging. To provide appropriate information to journalists and other media workers, a convincing press release was created.

In addition to that, a full day of training with substantial subject matter linked to foreign affairs can be taxing. It can be challenging to keep participants engaged throughout the training program. Interactive interactions, particularly over extended sessions, were an effective way of keeping their interest and drive high.

Lesson Learned

A key lesson learned in this quarter is to create a detailed plan that identifies the key media channels and devoted journalists who craft the story to enable effective media outreach for. Creating a compelling press release that highlights the report's important findings can aid in increasing media coverage.

Another key takeaway is the importance of designing a training program that is concise and does not overwhelm trainees while providing contextual relevant material, particularly in the Madhesh and Gandaki provinces.

B. United Nations Development Program- Parliament Support Project (UNDP/PSP) Supported Program

Project Title: Consultancy for delivering GESI training to all 7 provincial assemblies secretariat's staffs

Project duration: 5th August- 30th September 2022

UNDP's Parliament Support Project (PSP), 2018-2022 Nepal provides technical assistance to the Federal Parliament (FP) and seven Provincial Assemblies (PAs), as well as their Secretariats, for the effective and institutionalization of parliamentary functions. In the same vein, PSP identified the need for sensitizing Secretariat Staffs on GESI issues in its need assessment of the Secretariat's staff in early 2022. It was also clear that GESI-specific initiation was not prioritized in their plans and programs.

Understanding GESI has been identified as one of the first critical steps in GESI mainstreaming, with the goal of improving understanding of the various needs, concerns, and issues of men and women, people with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities, and other excluded groups, as well as power dynamics and relationships between them. Because the Provincial Assembly has not yet undertaken any GESI capacity building initiatives, it is critical to train Secretariat Staff from all seven provinces on GESI in order to raise gender awareness. The goal of this training is to make a significant contribution to the development of a gender-sensitive PA Secretariat and to promote gender equality through their policies and programs.

The overall objective of the program is:

- To increase awareness level of PA Secretariat Staff on GESI

The specific objectives are as follows:

- To raise their knowledge and skills on mainstreaming GESI within their organization
- To create gender sensitive working environment at PA

Activity 1 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Gandaki Province

- **Date:** September 2, 2022
- **Location:** Pokhara
- **Venue:** The Kantipur

Activity 2 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Madhesh Pradesh

- **Date:** 13th September, 2022
- **Location:** Janakpur
- **Venue:** PA Secretariat office, Janakpur

Activity 3 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Province 1

- **Date:** 18th September
- **Location:** Biratnagar
- **Venue:** Hotel Eastern Star, Biratnagar

Activity 4 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Lumbini Province

- **Date:** 20th September
- **Location:** Butwal
- **Venue:** Asian Party Venue, Butwal

Activity 5 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Bagmati Province

- **Date:** 25th September, 2022
- **Location:** Hetauda
- **Venue:** PA Secretariat office, Bagmati Pradesh

Activity 6 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Karnali Province

- **Date:** 27th September, 2022
- **Location:** Surkhet
- **Venue:** Hotel De Namaste, Surkhet

Activity 7 One day Gender Equality and Social Inclusion training to Provincial Secretariat staffs of Sudurpaschim Province

- **Date:** 29th September, 2022
- **Location:** Dhangadhi
- **Venue:** Hotel Sunlight, Dhangadhi

Data Disaggregation for narratives (List the participation for each activity narrated above)

Activity Title	Gender			Total =M + F +O	Segregation of the participation based on Caste and Ethnicity				
	M	F	OTHE RS		Brahmin/Chh etri	Janajati	Dalit	Madhesh	Muslim
Activity 1	13	7	0	20	18	2	0	0	0
Activity 2	22	4	0	26	6	1	0	19	0
Activity 3	16	7	0	23	19	3	0	1	0
Activity 4	10	10	0	20	16	3	1	0	0
Activity 5	16	10	0	26	21	3	0	2	0
Activity 6	18	11	0	29	24	2	3	0	0
Activity 7	12	15	1	28	18	6	3	1	0

Expected Outcome

- Enhanced understanding of GESI among PA Secretariat Staffs
- Improved PA Secretariat staffs knowledge on violence and harassment at workplace

Achieved Outcome

- The PA secretariat staffs had greater insight on GESI and its importance
- The participants gained perspective on importance of representation of all gender, minorities and socially neglected population in all governmental programs.

- Concrete recommendations were gathered in order to make the PA Secretariat office GESI friendly, the majority of which are within the capacity of the PA Secretariat office itself.
- Enhanced knowledge of PA Secretariat staffs on violence and harassment at workplace.

Challenges and Mitigation Measures

The program was framed for a period of one month. The time window for planning, coordinating and organizing the workshops was tight and physically travelling to all 7 provinces was challenging. However, the challenge was alleviated by the MAG team's effective coordination abilities and regular follow-ups with PA secretaries and through continued support of UNDP/PSP team.

It was challenging to ensure participant's involvement for a lengthier period of time. Effective time management was beneficial.

Moreover, as the program was in the month of September, right before Dashain, blocking the time of secretariat staffs for a whole day was challenging. It was difficult to fix the date for the workshop before Dashain. This challenge was alleviated with effective rapport building with the Secretary of all province by MAG.

Lessons Learned

The program's main takeaway was to devote more time to discussion sessions, as employees in the PA secretariat office had serious concerns about gender issues. The group sessions yielded very fruitful and need-based recommendations in order to make the office GESI friendly.

Furthermore, organizing the program outside of the PA secretariat office is more effective because the officers are constantly distracted by official duties if it is organized within their office premises. They can concentrate better if the program is set up outside of their work area.

The presence of secretary in the program is found to be more effective as the employees can directly put forward their issues and concerns. Also, involving a member of LGBTIQ community as a resource person to share their side of the story and hearing about importance of GESI from their perspective can make the participants more empathetic towards the community.

Way Forward

The outcomes of this workshop indicate that programs are critical for a fundamental understanding of GESI and its purpose. It is recommended that the implementing organization monitor and follow up on the project for evaluation and sustainability, particularly on the progress of the GESI focal point and the Child Care Center. Also, keep an eye on the progress of the breastfeeding room and changing room in the office. It is suggested that similar programs be organized in the future. When planning an upcoming program, at least two days of curriculum should be planned to allow for adequate time for in-depth discussion

C. **Article 19 Supported Program**

Project Title: Internet Freedom Initiative (IFI)Project
Duration: 20212023

About Project

Media Advocacy Group (MAG) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 2008 by a group of media, advocacy, and management experts. MAG is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and supports efforts to promote and protect democracy and freedom.

Nepal Working Group (Nepal WG) is a group of experts assembled by the Media Advocacy Group with the support of A19 to enhance internet freedom in Nepal through the Internet Freedom Initiative – IFI.

MAG is serving as the Secretariat of the Nepal WG. It provides regular support and coordination when necessary and undertakes internal and external communications on behalf of the Nepal WG.

Context

Nepal Working group is assembled with an aim to oversee the digital freedom situation in Nepal. It works to increase CSOs coordination and ability by launching high impact advocacy campaigns aimed at shaping laws and policies to promote internet freedom in Nepal. Overall, the WG targets for promoting internet freedom in Nepal by taking collective actions and exchanging knowledge. In the same context, the group of Nepal plans to generate the National Action Plan (NAP) to be effective for 2022. It has identified the action areas integral for internet freedom in Nepal.

Overall Objective of Nepal Working Group

The overall objectives of Nepal Working Group are to:

- Develop and implement a strategy and a national action plan for advocating with different stakeholders and engaging them, in prioritized issue
- Organize discussion and coordination between Working Group (WG) members, authorities and other relevant stakeholders

Action Areas

S.N	Action Plan	Tentative Time Frame
1.	Regular meet-ups with the group members Brainstorming, Priority area identification	Regular activity throughout the year

2.	Key stakeholders identification Reach out to different stakeholders (Policy makers, court, civil society, media, private companies)	Regular activity throughout the year
3.	Review of laws, policies and regulatory instruments	Need based and based on the availability of budget
4.	Analysis of Draft of Cyber Security Policy 2021 released for public consultation and IT bill submitted to the Parliament by the Nepal Government by hiring a consultant	After signing the contract between MAG and A19
5.	Series of consultation workshops for capacity enhancement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy makers and Regulators • Law enforcement agencies • civil society • Media • Private sector • ICT service providers • on Draft of Cyber Security Policy 2021 and IT Bill 	After receiving the report from the consultant
6.	Press release by the Nepal WG on Internet Freedom issues	Regular activity throughout the year-as and when required basis

Activity 1: Analysis of Laws and Policies

- Analysis of Draft of Cyber Security Policy 2021 released for public consultation
- Analysis of IT bill submitted to the Parliament by the Nepal Government

Activity 2: Consultation Program on Issues of Internet Freedom

Media Advocacy Group (MAG) in collaboration with Article 19 organized a stakeholder consultation program, an activity as mentioned in the national action plan, on the 24th of November at Yak Palace, Pulchowk. The program was attended by different policymakers, regulators, lawyers, civil society, media, private sector, and ICT service providers and it was organized with an aim to strengthen their capacity and generate discussion about issues of internet freedom and gather recommendations to address them.

Objectives of the event:

- To increase awareness about the growing prevalence of cyber security threats and cybercrime targeting women professionals.
- To enhance knowledge about cyber security best practices, tools, and techniques.
- To empower women professionals to effectively respond to cyber security challenges.
- To equip participants with the necessary skills to use social media platforms in a secure manner.

Event Details:

- Date: 24th November 2022
- Venue: Yak Palace , Lalitpur

Resource Person:

1. Anand Raj Khanal, ICT Expert
2. Tanka Aryal, Digital Rights Activist

Key Achievements:

- 25 key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders working in the fields of information, technology, communication, and internet issues were gathered in one room to openly discuss internet freedom issues in Nepal.
- The participants expressed their joy and gratitude to the organizers for holding such an important consultation for the time, which is very contextual and practical given the various challenges and threats in the digital world.
- The participants shared their expertise and expressed their commitment to putting their knowledge and skills to use in making key recommendations to the government to pass laws and policies that address internet freedom issues.

Activity 3: Cyber Security Training for Professional Women

Media Advocacy Group (MAG) in collaboration with Article 19 organized a "Cyber Security Training for Women Professionals" on the 29th of June, 2023 at Yak Palace, Pulchowk, Lalitpur. The training aimed to empower women professionals with essential knowledge and skills in cyber security, equipping them to navigate the digital landscape securely. The training was hands-on and consisted of practical implementation and drills on safer use of social media platforms, Safe internet search, data protection etc.

Women professionals from diverse backgrounds, including law, journalism, teaching, politics, flight attendants, and representatives from various organizations, came together for a program. During the event, they engaged in discussions regarding the escalating prevalence of cyber security threats and cybercrime specifically targeting women, especially those in professional positions.

Objectives of the event:

- To discuss and identify key threats and challenges to digital rights
- To empower civil society to influence government policies and practices that support internet freedom at the national level.
- To promote multi-sectorial collaboration in support of internet freedom in Nepal.

Event Details:

- Date: 29th June, 2023
- Venue: Yak Palace, Lalitpur

Resource Person, Session

- Mr. Anand Raj Khanal, Expert, Multi stakeholders' advisory group (Member)/ Internet Governance Forum, "An Introduction to Cyber Security and Internet"

- Mr. Roshan Shrestha, Chief Engineer, AP1 Television, “Practical Implementation and drills on Safer Internet Use”

Key Achievements:

- Enhanced understanding of 32 women professionals about the prevalence of cyber security threats and cybercrime targeting women in professional roles.
- Equipped participants with practical skills to protect themselves and their organizations from cyber threats.
- Strengthened participants’ confidence and competence in handling cyber threats.

D. TEWA Supported Program

Project Title: Effective Collaboration with Media for Woman Politicians

Duration: June 2022-June 2023

Objectives

The objectives of the program are:

- To bridge the gap between the media and the women leaders and form healthy relationships
- Enhance women leader’s capacity to deal with the media
- Capacitate women candidates’ to deliver constructive message and views with clarity and precision during the mass gathering.

Activity 1 Interaction Program on Effective Collaboration with Media for Women Politicians

- Date: 12th February 2023
- Location: Alpha Complex, New Baneshwor
- Total number of participants: 42

Sessions:

- **How to collaborate with Mainstream Media:** Ms. Babita Basnet, Senior Journalist
- **Presentation: Social Media- Handling, Opportunities and Challenges:** Ms. Anita Bindu, NTV

(All sessions were followed by Q/A/ interaction session and practical sessions on public speaking and interview were organized towards the second half of the program.)

Key Achievements:

- Enhanced capacity of 30 women politicians on media dealing and social media handling
- Boosted self-confidence of women politicians to face media in an efficient manner.

Recommendations from the participants

The participants made the following key recommendations:

- There is a need for training on effective collaboration with media for women politicians at the provincial and local levels.
- Training on media and social media dealing for Deputy Mayors was suggested

- It appeared necessary to encourage the media to highlight the positive work of women leaders.

Activity 2 Panel discussion on Effective Collaboration with Media for Woman Politicians and Release of Media Monitoring Report

- Date: 12th February 2023
- Location: Alpha Complex, New Baneshwor

Sessions:

- **Presentation Media Monitoring Report Findings- Coverage on Women Politicians, Ms. Anita Bindu, NTV**
- **Panel Discussion on coverage of women journalists**

Panelists:

- ❖ Mr. Kosh Raj Koirala, Editor in Chief, myRepublica
- ❖ Ms. Ramkala Khadka, Senior Journalist, Annapurna Post
- ❖ Hon. Ramkumari Jhakri, Leader, CPN (Unified Socialist), Former Minister
- ❖ Hon. Amrita Thapa Magar, Leader, CPN (Maoist Center)
- ❖ Mr. Shiva Prasad Bhattarai, Editor in Chief, Gorkhapatra
- ❖ Hon. Pushpa Bhusal, Leader, Nepal Congress, Former Deputy Speaker

(All sessions were followed by Q/A/ interaction session and practical sessions on publicspeaking and interview were organized towards the second half of the program.)

Key Achievements:

- Dissemination of Media Monitoring Report on Political Coverage on Women Politicians (3 months – January to March 2023)
- Enhanced relationship between media and potential women leaders.
- Editor-in chiefs’ commitment of mainstream newspapers to prioritize women politicians in the news coverage.

Activity 3 Interaction Program on Effective Collaboration with Media for Women Politicians

- Date: 26th June, 2023
- Location: Yak Palace, Lalitpur
- Total number of participants: 22

Sessions:

- **How to collaborate with Mainstream Media:** Ms. Babita Basnet, Senior Journalist
- **Media Monitoring Report Findings- Coverage on Women Politicians :** Ms. Anita Bindu, NTV
- **Social Media- Handling, Opportunities and Challenges:** Ms. Anita Bindu, NTV

(All sessions were followed by Q/A/ interaction session and practical sessions on public speaking and interview were organized towards the second half of the program.)

Key Achievements:

- Enhanced capacity of 22 women politicians on media dealing and social media handling
- Boosted self-confidence of women politicians to face media in an efficient manner.
- Local women leaders oriented on the journalists code of conduct that empowered them with strategies to effectively address instances of misconduct, intrusion, and unprofessional or unethical behavior by media personnel

E. Centre for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL) Supported Program**Title: Responsive Reporting on Gender Based Violence in Nepal for Women Journalist****Duration: February 2023****Objectives:**

- ❖ To Orient and familiarize 25 journalists on the ‘Silence and Omissions: A Media Guide for Covering Gender-Based Violence developed by Centre for Women’s Global Leadership
- ❖ To identify the issues, challenges, risks and threats faced by women journalists while covering issues of GBV.

Activity 1: One-day Training for Women Journalists on Responsible Reporting on Gender Based Violence in Nepal**Event Details:**

- Venue: Alfa Complex, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu Nepal
- Date: 5th February 2023
- Number of participating women journalists: 25

Sessions:

- ❖ “Conceptual Clarity on GBV and existing media practices towards it”, Ms. Babita Basnet
- ❖ Responsible reporting on survivor-centered approach to reporting, and the human rights approach, Ms. Cathy Otten, Senior Program Lead, Journalism Initiative on Gender Based Violence, Institute for Women's Leadership
- ❖ Ethical Reporting based on: Silence and Omissions: A media guide for covering gender-based violence, CWGL, Ms. Maiya Matina

Expected Outcome:

- Enhanced understanding of participating journalists on the guidelines for sensitive and responsible reporting on GBV and dissemination of GBV issues.

Achieved Outcome:

The training provided the participating journalists with an enriched understanding of reporting GBV issues and equipped them with the tools to be more effective and responsible reporters along with other key achievements listed below:

- 25 participating women journalists were able to enhance their understanding of the critical criteria for covering and disseminating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) topics in a sensitive and responsible manner.
- Participants were introduced to solutions journalism and encouraged to pursue it, as well as to be change agents and change makers in the media field.
- Challenges faced by women journalists while reporting on GBV issues were identified, and actionable recommendations were discussed to address them.
- Participants gained a better perspective on their roles and activities as a result of the reflective exercises, and developed a clear vision for moving forward with improved reporting skills.
- The journalists were also able to share their professional and personal experiences with one another in a constructive manner.
- The participants expressed their commitments to implement the knowledge and skills learned from the training in their reporting and to share the information and knowledge to other fellow journalists.

F. FWLD Supported Program

Activity 1: Nepal Citizenship Bill: Political Party's Perspective" An Interaction Program with the chief whips of political parties

Event Details:

Venue: Alfa Complex, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu Nepal

Date: March 30, 2023

Sessions:

- ❖ Presentation: Nepal Citizenship Act Amendment Bill, Advocate Sabin Shrestha, Executive Director, FWLD
- ❖ Panel Discussion with Chief Whips of Political Parties regarding Citizenship Bill
 - Panelist:
 - Hon. Prakash Jwala, Chief Whip, CPN (Unified Socialist)
 - Honorable MP Ranju Jha, Janata Samajbadi Party, Nepal
 - Honorable Santosh Pariyar, Chief Whip, Rastriya Swatantra Party
 - Honorable Anita Shah, Chief Whip, Janmat Party
 - Honorable Hitraj Pandey, Chief Whip, CPN (Maoist Centre)
 - Honorable Ramesh Lekhak, Chief Whip, Nepali Congress
 - Honorable Rishikesh Pokharel, MP, CPN UML

Media Coverage

The event was covered by various newspapers and online portals. Some of the news features are as below:

- myRepublica: <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/major-political-parties-commit-to-pass-citizenship-bill-through-parliament-at-the->

[earliest/?fbclid=IwAR0VEOxfVBwMzcS1qnDFI62NRbYr9Dt_2HOwy8R5mOwuhvW3e59qCEEQ6VY](https://www.facebook.com/earliest/?fbclid=IwAR0VEOxfVBwMzcS1qnDFI62NRbYr9Dt_2HOwy8R5mOwuhvW3e59qCEEQ6VY)

- The Himalayan Times: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/ruling-alliance-vows-to-pass-new-citizenship-bill>

Key Achievements

- Five Chief Whips and two prominent leaders expressed strong commitments towards passing citizenship bills in front of media personnel covering parliamentary issues.
- The participants were encouraged to become change makers and agents to discuss, review, and make efforts towards passing the citizenship bill.

Challenges, Mitigation measures and lesson learned

The event was conducted smoothly, but there were a few challenges and lessons learned:

- Because prominent leaders from political parties were involved, managing their time effectively was a challenge. Effective facilitation time management strategies were discovered to be beneficial.
- Coordination is critical to the program's success. The selection of participants and speakers was critical to achieving the program's goals. Active coordination was discovered to be critical for project success at every stage.
- More time dedicated to discussion sessions could better serve the project's purpose and make it more interactive and interesting.

G. 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.

Program Title: Research on Online Violence and Harassment against Women Journalists in Nepal

Duration: August 2022-December 2022

Objectives:

The overall objective of the program is to analyze the impact of online violence and harassment on women journalists. In alignment with the major objective, other objectives of the program are as follows:

- To conduct an online survey and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to determine the impact of the online harassment and violence faced by women journalists.
- To compile and document the findings and publish a book on "the impact of online harassment

and violence faced by women journalists.

Activity 1: Research on Online Violence against Women Journalists'

Research Team:

1. Tanka Raj Aryal
2. Babita Basnet
3. Nishu Ratna Bastakoti

Activity 2: Online Violence against Women Journalists Report Launch Program

Event Details:

Date: 30th November, 2022

Venue: Yak Palace, Pulchowk

Sessions:

- Sharing of Research Findings "Online Violence against Women Journalists" Ms. Babita Basnet, Senior Journalists, Co-researcher
- Remarks by dignitaries

Speakers

- Mr. Jonathan Menge, Resident Representative, FES Nepal
- Mr. Bipul Pokharel, President, Federation of Nepali Journalists
- Ms. Bandana Rana, Member, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee
- Dr. Baikuntha Aryal, Secretary, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology

News coverage of the event:

- <https://www.newsofnepal.com/2022/11/30/540179/?fbclid=IwAR2ZA8d1L642KAKbN8UtELv9jFuNdlMh4sbmLjnNgXTRx4G7biu8WVGKv9Qo>
- <https://nepalnews.com/s/issues/88-percent-women-journalists-face-violence-says-study-report?fbclid=IwAR2SKMTKybvarOPvGptDy-4vMfbd9WmWYPRqf5R-J-2YKQwnx56vKN20Zrc>
- <https://www.eknepal.com/news/details?id=19511014>
- <https://www.dcnepal.com/2022/11/426622/>
- <https://onlineradionepal.gov.np/2022/11/30/348713.html>
- https://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/46548?fbclid=IwAR1n9Yacx9Sr3iUu_e5nY03XLEB6VjVl_p43MGGMMtsSFtS_3lwZ-2YwovN0
- https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/lack-of-law-leaves-women-journalists-vulnerable-to-online-violence/?fbclid=IwAR30XWNlhtZfCwa4rjz1edxaprdrTyMLHho_TdsI2F_hvdADwiUsg6XywM
- https://kathmandupost.com/national/2022/12/01/most-women-journalists-face-online-violence-study?fbclid=IwAR2R1Vy21_OSjt7Yp7HRKgd3jUyq6WcRrM-iQpd7pP9lkDIYOdcM4jqWDvI

- https://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/46567?fbclid=IwAR0sYkT2w1_HFJkTX9ueo6hIpbYHQG9WTYESuIlVVoebAcmw0wNDR0VZiQ
- https://shilapatra.com/detail/100761?fbclid=IwAR3xERBjaRo2o1qJG_xeg7Y_EJzXYelxvkiiL-h2qJ-8kDyxeC02aS24Ow

H. Individual Donor Supported Program

Program Title: Leadership Development in Women Politicians

Duration: January 2023- September 2023

Activity 1: Podcast with prominent and aspiring leaders and motivational speakers

Objectives:

- To enhance communication skills and visibility of women parliamentarians and bring their experiences and thoughts in the media sphere through podcast series

MAG launched a podcast series throughout featuring prominent leaders and aspiring women leaders. This platform provided a space for these leaders to share their insights, experiences, and perspectives on crucial issues, fostering meaningful dialogue and inspiring the next generation of women leaders. The podcast series will be accessible to a wide audience, contributing to the visibility and influence of women parliamentarians.

Activity 2: Media Monitoring on Coverage of Women Politicians in the Media

Duration: January 2023- March 2023

- To analyze the trend of news coverage of women politicians in national media
- To compare and analyze the difference in news coverage on male and women politicians among newspapers and online media.
- To use the media monitoring report as an advocacy tool and bring women politicians in mainstream reporting

Major Findings:

According to the report presented, women politicians only received 6.04% coverage in Nepal's mainstream media during the three-month period, with only 192 articles out of 3,176 published in the eight daily newspapers related to women politicians. The report highlighted that the media's priority was more towards women politicians in executive positions, while news related to male politicians was published even if they were not in important positions.

Ms. Bindu presented that among the monitored newspapers, Gorkhapatra gave the maximum coverage to women politicians, 25.5 percent during the period followed by The Rising Nepal 17.7 per cent. The coverage in The Kathmandu Post was 12 per cent, Kantipur 11.5 per cent, Annapurna Post 12.5 per cent, Naya Patrika 8.3 per cent, Nagarik 5.7 per cent, and The Himalayan Times 6.8 per cent. Of the 192 published news stories related to women politicians, 55 per cent was positive news, 42

per cent negative and three per cent were neutral. According to the research, pictures of former President Bidya Devi Bhandari, former Foreign Minister Bimala Rai Paudyal and Minister for Communication and Information Technology Rekha Sharma received more priority.