

NEWSLETTER

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TARANGINI MAHILA ADHIKAR PRASHIKSHEN KENDRA
SHAPING A FUTURE WHERE RECOGNITION
OF ALL FORMS OF WORK IS THE NORM

Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our most recent newsletter, in which we discuss the idea of bringing gender equality closer to becoming a practical reality rather than just a pipe dream, where woman's every work is respected, recognized and valued. As we celebrate the progress accomplished thus far, it is critical to recognize that there is still work to be done in order to attain full equality for all genders even. Let's imagine and work together to achieve a community where recognition of all forms of work is the norm that benefits both individuals and society as a whole.

Work encompasses much more than traditional employment. It extends beyond the boundaries of paid jobs and includes unpaid care work, domestic work, entertainment sector work, construction work, sex work, volunteerism and many other forms of contribution that shape our societies. Unfortunately, not all forms of work have received the recognition and value they deserve.

According to Article 34 of the Nepalese Constitution, any worker or laborer who does physical or mental work for an employer in exchange for payment has the right to decent working conditions. The same article also specifies that every worker has the right to reasonable pay, facilities, and social security that is

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based on contributions. Nepal has ratified 1996 International Convention on economic, social and cultural rights. According to its articles 6 and 7, the right to work and the right to a place of work includes the right of every citizen to choose employment, the right to recognize labor, equal pay in the workplace during employment, women's reproductive rights, and the right to food. Similarly, the convention indicates towards formulating legal provisions to ensure workers' right to social security, form and organize unions, promotion of sustainable livelihood options based on principles of equality and non-discrimination. In presence of all the existing laws, the women workers from unpaid care work are still not recognized.

Unpaid care work, predominantly carried out by women, plays a critical role in sustaining families, communities, and societies. From caregiving to household chores, this invaluable work often goes unnoticed and undervalued. It is crucial to recognize the significance of unpaid care work and strive for a fair distribution of responsibilities within households and communities. The workers from informal sector often face precarious working conditions, lack of social protections, and limited access to opportunities as these sectors are not given attention by the government as well as the community and family. As the care giving work is often linked with women's 'responsibility' that is led by patriarchal mindset, harmful traditional values and unequal power relation between men and women, it is merely recognized as work as the result of which most of the violence take place in this work area. By acknowledging their contributions and forming an environment where they feel empowered and can advocate for their rights, we can contribute in the formation of a more inclusive and just society.

For such future, it is essential to advocate for existing policies and practices in order to identify the gaps to support all forms of work which includes fair wages, decent working conditions, social protection systems, and policies that enable work-life balance. Tarangini Foundation commits to work in coordination with other civil society organizations, employers and government to work together to create environment where all women workers can thrive, demand their rights, talk about their issues and find fulfillment in their chosen forms of work.

In Solidarity,
Tarangini Foundation

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day is a global celebration of women's achievements and a call for gender equality. It is a day to honor the social, economic, cultural, and political accomplishments of women throughout history and in contemporary society. International Women's Day has become an important platform to raise awareness about gender inequality and discrimination faced by women worldwide. It serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for women's rights and an opportunity to take action towards achieving gender parity. The day is marked by various activities, including rallies, conferences, cultural events, and campaigns focused on empowering women and promoting gender equality around the country.

In order to acknowledge and honor the accomplishments of women in various fields, Tarangini Foundation like every year celebrated womanhood through rally which led to visibility enhancement along with solidarity and campaign building process. Tarangini believes such togetherness highlights the contributions women have made to society and emphasizes their invaluable role in shaping history and the present. Furthermore, it signifies the importance of women's work to be recognized, respected and valued from family level, personal level, community



level and national level.

There still exists a huge gap in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, political representation, and basic human rights for which this day serves as a platform to raise awareness about gender inequality, discrimination, and the challenges women face globally and to bring attention to existing gaps. Bringing people together from different backgrounds, cultures and communities to stand in solidarity with women workers and to respect their courage, bravery and determination and to foster a sense of unity and collective action towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society, this day was celebrated with laughter, feeling of proud for being a woman and faith upon one another to bring about change. As we believe individuals and organizations that is, joint force can have a greater impact on advancing women's rights and gender equality, together this day was celebrated. Along with it, this day can be marked as an opportunity to inspire and empower the next generation of girls and young women, to develop intergenerational feminist core values by showcasing and talking about the achievements and stories of remarkable women which was done on this day.

International Women Workers day was celebrated with the theme “DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality” as a catalyst for change, promoting inclusivity and highlighting the importance of achieving gender equality for the benefit of all individuals and society as a whole.



ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICAL LEADERS: Taking care of oneself to be able to care for others

Women in politics frequently deal with a lot of stress, accountability, and grueling work schedules. In a patriarchal society like ours, women political leaders have a double load of expectations. In one sense, a new challenge awaits them in which every move must be made carefully lest you receive criticism, and in another sense, the 'anticipated' responsibility she must fulfill after coming home, which includes cooking, cleaning, and taking care of family members, remains.

In such situations, it is important to emphasize self-care and acquire stress-reduction skills. In keeping with the adage that you cannot pour from an empty cup, it is imperative that female political leaders do not lose sight of themselves on this path of personal growth and change-making. Political leadership can be emotionally draining since women leaders frequently deal



with scrutiny, criticism, and difficult circumstances. Emotional resilience can be improved by self-care practices like mindfulness training, meditation, and engaging in interests and hobbies. These techniques support female leaders in managing stress, maintaining a positive outlook, and building the emotional fortitude required to deal with challenging situations.

Keeping that on mind, Tarangini Foundation had organized three days training on self-care and stress management to women political leaders of local level representing 17 districts

in order to balance personal and professional life and to enable the leaders to prioritize their well-being, set boundaries and allocate time for themselves, their families, and their personal interests as Maintaining a healthy work-life balance helps to prevent burnout and promotes overall satisfaction and fulfillment in both areas of life.



As women political leaders serve as role models for other women and girls aspiring to leadership positions, by prioritizing self-care,

they set an example of the importance of taking care of oneself amidst demanding responsibilities. A powerful message is sent saying that self-care is not selfish but necessary for personal and professional success. A crucial component; self-care and stress management to women political leaders allows for the maintenance of their overall well-being, enhance their effectiveness, and sustain their leadership journey. To thrive personally and professionally and to set an example for others, fostering a healthier and more balanced approach to leadership, self-care and stress management is a must!

BUILDING FORUMS AND LEADING CAMPAIGN ON DOMESTIC WORK

In the context of Nepal, domestic work and the entertainment industry are the two most common informal employment sectors for women, the majority of which are unpaid (2020 Nepal Jobs Diagnostic). In Nepal, women make up 37.2% of the labor force that is employed, but only 33.5% of them work in the official economy, while 66.5% are employed in the unorganized sector. According



to a survey, women only make up fewer than 3.5% of employees in the formal sector (FWLD, 2006, 2014, and NFLS, 2008).

This indicates that a significant number of women are employed in the unorganized sector of the economy. The informal economy is characterized by sporadic employment, erratic pay rates, meager earnings, lengthy and unpredictable workweeks, a lack of written contracts, and little to no legal protection; this exposes workers to risks.

Patriarchal assumptions are highly common in Nepali communities. Due to entrenched patriarchal system in the society, status of women has remained unchanged. The economic and political rights of women living across Nepal remain curtailed. Their standing in society is mostly contingent on their husband's and parents' socio-economic position. Women's lives remain centered on their traditional roles - taking care of the house hold works, i.e., fetching water and animal fodder, nurturing children, and undertaking farm work. Furthermore, a woman, despite of her education, and economic empowerment, is subjected to socio-political oppression induced by patriarchy. Women's work is very conveniently associated with the care giving work and not linked with income generating source which is neither respected nor valued by both society and nation.

Tarangini Foundation has been supporting in the formation of forums and groups of women domestic workers leading to mass conscientization followed by regular orientation programs, social dialogue exchange in wards of Kathmandu Metropolitan City (ward 7, 8 and 9) along with Tokha



municipality, Tarkeshwor, Manohara and Budhalinkantha municipality through which the issues of women domestic workers can be visible and it can turn into an agenda in front of the government. As Tarangini Foundation believes in evidence based advocacy, through the research that has been ongoing in ward 8, 9 and 7 of Kathmandu metropolitan city, we believe the workers will be able to advocate for their rights and demand changes for themselves through constant support and solidarity.



CHANGING THE NARRATIVE: from stigma and rejection to recognition and respect

A three day regional consultation with returnee women migrant workers and CSOs working on women's rights and migrant rights was conducted in Dhaka, where ten representatives from Nepal had participated including representatives from returnee migrant women workers, women activists, journalists and a former member of parliament. It was a learning opportunity for returnee migrant women workers who were able to have their say, experience the changes one can bring through constant determination and campaign building movement and acknowledge the fact of possibility of 'victim to change makers'.

Most of the times, returnee migrant women workers are seen as someone who lack knowledge and essential ideas regarding several aspects of life. However, this platform was an opportunity that allowed the returnee migrant women workers to share their experiences, their struggles, how they overcame such scenarios, their ideas on what should happen from community and national level for the wellbeing of the women workers and their dream; how they view themselves in the future, what they aspire to become and what would have been different if certain thing would have happened in their life in a retrospective manner.

"I now aspire to become a change maker in my community and contribute to create such environment where women workers feel safe to migrate abroad for income generation. I had to go through a lot of struggles but I dream of such future where no any other women have to go through such kind of rejection just because she went to a foreign land for employment opportunities."- One of the Nepali returnee migrant woman worker

This kind of inter- generational feminist building process, teaching and



learning environment is essential for continuous movement building and to bring about change in community as well as policy level for which Tarangini Foundation will always play a crucial role through relentless support, commitment and solidarity.

FROM DIALOGUES TO DOING: Returning Migrant Women Workers in Action!

With the help of returning migrant women workers, Tarangini Foundation established Shram Jivi Mahila Sanjaal in Kavre in 2022, and ever since then, it has dedicated itself to working and helping to build an atmosphere that will bring the issues of returning migrant workers to the forefront. This campaign building movement has been running with the initiative of Shram Jivi Mahila Sanjaal that is enthusiast for change making process. In a continuous manner, the forum has been widening their reach through interactive sessions at wards, discussions with other returnee migrant women workers with the support of Tarangini Foundation.

The transformative journey of migrant women workers who have faced various challenges and adversities is listened, shared and documented which allows the women workers to emerge as empowered agents of change in their communities. This journey of victim to change makers represents the empowerment and resilience of returnee migrant women workers. Through their actions and initiatives, they strive to create a more just, equitable, and supportive environment for migrant workers, contributing to sustainable development and social change. Their experiences and transformation serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for others, further strengthening the collective efforts towards a more inclusive and dignified future.



Readdressing the Challenges and Opportunities of Migration For Women: Reflection on Working Women

Migration is an ongoing process. At different points, it affects men and women differently. According to a research by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), nearly half of all migrant workers worldwide are women. With the objective of establishing an environment in which women's work is acknowledged as legitimate work, all stakeholders collaborate to create a stigma-free environment for women enabling them to work and live with their families without facing discrimination or social stigmatization a two days national consultation was conducted in Kathmandu where 2 position papers were presented. One of the guest attendees was Honorable Sharat Singh Bhandari, Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Security, who acknowledged the fact that there is a gap in the needs of the returnee migrant workers and the understanding of policy makers.

The first panel discussion focused on the gaps in existing policies and challenges for working women within and outside the country of origin while the second panel discussion was focused more on the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders at individual and group level and come up with a support mechanism for working women with and outside the country. Likewise, the second day of the program included an interaction program with working women where they came up with strategies and action plan based on the panel discussion from the first day. For migrant women going for foreign employment, both the country of origin and the country of destination are challenging. Because women's labor is not properly respected and they are in a vulnerable position on both sides. The main challenge migrant women is the devaluation of their work, whether it is inside the country or outside the country.



Before we talk about reintegration when women return to their place of origin, we need to recognize and respect women's work as work and integrate women into society. Women who migrate internationally face problems with their

right to mobility and employment in addition to issues with reintegration. The state should prioritize issuing separate reintegration directions for female migrant workers and their kids. The reintegration of migrant workers who have returned home is also greatly aided by elected local officials and local governmental entities. To ensure the rights of all migrant workers and prospective migrant workers, a coordinated effort from all levels of government is essential for safe movement and reintegration for returns.



PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELLING TRAINING WITH FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

In psychosocial counseling, a feminist perspective acknowledges the influence of patriarchal systems, gender norms, and societal expectations on mental health. It seeks to topple these repressive structures and promotes empowerment, agency, and autonomy for everyone, regardless of gender. Traditional psychosocial counselling approaches have often neglected to address the complex ways in which gender intersects with mental health. However, by incorporating a feminist perspective, counselors can better understand and respond to the unique experiences, challenges, and power dynamics that individuals face due to their gender identity.

Tarangini Foundation has begun to provide psycho- social counselling training to the ninth batch of counsellors in which the transformative power of psycho- social counselling is approached through feminist lens. Tarangini believes to develop a more empowering, inclusive, and gender-equitable approach to providing mental health care by incorporating feminist ideals and viewpoints into the counseling process. Counselors can offer a safe environment for people to examine and talk about their experiences of gender-based trauma, inequity, and oppression by adopting a



feminist perspective. This method promotes an inclusive and cooperative therapeutic partnership in which the therapist and the client together seek

out and confront oppressive ideas and practices.

A feminist perspective also emphasizes the significance of social and systemic transformation. It motivates women to take an active role in promoting gender equality, destroying gender stereotypes, and opposing oppressive structures. Counselors can address the distinctive experiences of people from marginalized populations by using an intersectional lens, which recognizes how race, class, sexuality, and other characteristics intersect with gender. Let's acknowledge the significance of adding a feminist



perspective into psychosocial counseling as we strive to create a more equal and just society. Adopting this strategy enables us to build environments that empower people, confront oppressive structures, and advance our common fight for gender equality.

LAUNCHING DROP IN CENTER AND BUILDING SOLIDARITY

Tarangini Foundation has rigorously begun to strengthen the movement building process of domestic women workers. For the establishment of sisterhood, feeling of mutual respect, togetherness and enhancing solidarity, Tarangini Foundation launched Drop in center which is located in the head office of Tarangini Foundation in which women domestic workers can come, build network, talk and discuss about their personal and professional things.

Our drop in center serves as safe haven, offering support, guidance, and a listening ear to those grappling with mental health challenges, emotional distress, and



various life difficulties in the process of working and living in general. One of the primary benefits of our drop-in center is the provision of psycho-social counselling. A trained counsellor is available to offer support and guidance to individuals facing a range of challenges. Whether someone is dealing with anxiety, depression, relationship issues, grief, or simply needs someone to talk

to, our center offers a compassionate space for healing, growth, and resilience-building.

Furthermore, drop in center has been playing the role of community hub, fostering a sense of belonging and social support. It has been bringing women workers together who may be facing similar difficulties, providing opportunities for shared experiences, empathy, and peer support. This sense of cohort can significantly women workers' mental health, combating feelings of isolation and reinforcing the understanding that no one is alone in their struggles. By offering accessible, inclusive, and stigma-free space, our drop in center is believed to form an area where the women workers can find solace, gain guidance, and develop essential life skills. The drop in center not only assist individuals in navigating their personal challenges but also contributes to building stronger and more resilient community of sisterhood.



HER SAYINGS:

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Not all of us women who have returned from foreign employment have earned a lot of money. We also have problems after coming to Nepal. By understanding such things, the government of Nepal should come up with an employment policy to include us, an inclusive policy with a system of giving loans without collateral at a concessional rate to those who want to be self-employed and implement it effectively by distributing it equitably to the target group.

-Sangita Pariyar, Returnee Migrant Women Worker- Banepa

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We should be organized to reduce the stigma attached to us and we have to raise our voice saying that we have come from foreign land by doing hardships and we have not done any bad works. We should also be strong from within. When our voice starts to reach the society, the point of view on us changes.

-Shanti Shrestha, Returnee Migrant Women Worker- Banepa

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Tarangini Foundation has given us training and one of the results is the creation of our Working Women's Network. Over the years I have understood that unity is power. Many of us thought that if all the women who have returned after working in foreign countries can join together, we can take our issues to the government.

-Tara Ghalan, Returnee Migrant Women Worker- Sarlahi

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OTHER EVENTS:

DISASTER RESPONSE AT DOTI!



Celebrating International Day of Action for women's health



Fifth National Women Human Rights Day

Celebrating Tarangini's sixth Anniversary!



ABOUT US

Tarangini Mahila Adhikar Prashikshyen Kendra (Tarangini Foundation), established in 2017, is a non-profitable organization working on an initiative for integrated security and feminist documentation. The Sanskrit word 'tarangini' means tranquility in English. This term was chosen for the institute because it better represents the harmonious relationship among the women who have been engaging in the feminist movement of Nepal for a long. The reciprocity and exchange among the women activists and their organizations which has been continuing for more than 25 years are counted as an important asset to take the feminist movement to new heights.



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