

Generation Equality: National Youth Conference successfully held

Generation Equality: National Youth Conference in Nepal was successfully held from 21-22 January in Lalitpur. This conference was jointly organized by GSEF member Jagriti Child and Youth Concern Nepal (JCYCN), SAATHI, and the National Network for Beijing Review Nepal, under the coordination of Nepal Government National Youth Council, and gathered over 250 youth representatives from every one of the 77 districts of the country for a two-day discussion around the theme of generation equality.

It was held in the framework of the implementation of various national and international provisions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) endorsed by Nepal, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, Sustainable Development Goals; United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security; United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; the constitution of Nepal 2015; and, the National Youth Policy and Youth Vision 2025. This conference was also the celebration of the completion of a significant era marked by the adoption of various international commitments towards gender equality (ICPD+25, Beijing+25, UNSCR1325 +20 and SDG +5, 75 years of United Nations and 40 years of CEDAW).

The conference was convened by Ms. Bandana Rana, Vice Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee. Ms. Muskan Khatun, an acid attack survivor, was invited as Guest of Honor as a way to commend her willpower through which she has converted her pain into action.

The conference began with the inauguration ceremony where the chief guest watered seven potted plants representing all the seven provinces. Uma Sha, president of SAATHI shared the welcome remarks to all the participants. Following that, Intergenerational panel discussion entitled "Then and Now" was conducted with the presence of Hon. Shashi Shrestha, Chair, Parliamentary Committee on State Affairs and Good Governance, Durga Ghimire, Women Rights Activist, Laxmi Nepal, Young Feminist, and Fura Gelzen Sherpa, National Coordinator, Y-Peer Nepal as panelists. Letting out frustration session was organized by YashodaTimsina, Outgoing Commissioner of National Information Commission.

Similarly, the panel discussion entitled "2020 Global Agenda for Gender Equality", was conducted with Madhav Dhungel, Executive vice Chair, National Youth Council, Roshana Pradhan, Women Rights Advocate, FWLD, Medha Sharma, CEO, Visible Impact, and Geeta Chaudhary, Indigenous Youth Activist as panelists and Kripa Basnyat, Feminist Activist as moderator. Likewise, the panel titled "Changing Mindset and Addressing Stereotype" featured Anushka Shrestha, Miss Nepal 2019, Hassina Bano, Youth Activist, Sarita Sah, Youth Activist, and Sanjog Thakuri, President, Hami Daju Bhai as panelists. It was moderated by Amuda Mishra, Executive Director, Founder, Ujyaalo Foundation.

Panel Discussion on Ending Gender Based Violence was organized between Ms. Shiwa Karmacharya, independent researcher, Sarita KC from Mitini Nepal, Binu Subedi, Media Person and Sahil Ansari, child rights Activist, Ujjwal Bikram Thapa, Social Activist and moderated by Samikshya Adhikari, TV Journalist. The closing panel was entitled "Youth, Peace, and Security", and moderated by Pradip Pariyar, Executive Chair, Samata Foundation in which Dhruba Raj Poudel, Information Officer, National Youth Council, Nagma Mali Conflict Victims National Alliance, Suresh Yadav, Dialogue Coordinator and Tripani Magar, Dialogue Coordinator were present as panelists. Practicing self-care session was held in between by Meekha Mathema and the group.

With the completion of the panel, Ms. Suvекchya Rana from Saathi moderated a session on movement Building through Joint Youth. At the end of the conference, Mr. Tilottam Paudel, president of Jagriti Child and Youth Concern Nepal, and facilitator of various sessions on the conference, concluded the conference with vote of thanks.

With a profound, participatory and in-depth discussion for two days on the topics like Intergeneration, gender equality, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, reaction on the existing structure, provisions, policies and campaigns in the country, changing mindset, addressing the stereotypical notion of the society, youth peace, security, social protection and so on, the youths have gained inspiration and empowerment to work for rigorously for creating youth, child and girl's friendly environment. With the completion of the conference, the participating youths successfully adopted a declaration paper composed of call for action (10 points) as well as resolution (7 points).

Joint call for action

1. Assure the proper execution of the existing laws, policies, rules, directives by mainstreaming the gender issues, ensuring Youth Mobilization as well as 50/50 participation as per the

provision of Sustainable Development Goals, 2030 and meeting existing gap in gender equality and commitments made in Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

2. Impart necessary counseling and service to the youths living with poverty, unemployment, inequalities, deprived from opportunities and formal education, confused on setting goal for their life, raised in the patriarchal society with stereotypical notion and facing other varied difficulties. Promote youth entrepreneurship in the country, and discourage brain drain, unskilled and semiskilled youths towards foreign employment by creating opportunities compatible with their desires as well as beneficial to the society with adequate investment at the local level. Similarly, ensure safe and respected provisions of migration for the youths who are already working at the foreign country.
3. Place specific provisions for ensuring the Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Women by establishing a separate law on safe abortion and adhering to the Nepal government's decision to deliver free safe abortion services. Make youth friendly health services accessible at all levels by compulsorily incorporating the components of sexual and reproductive health education that also helps in eradicating the existing harmful practices and cultures of the society in the curriculum of the secondary and higher secondary education.
4. Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security by maintaining meaningful, proportional and inclusive participation of youths at all level, agencies and structure and fulfilling the provision of 30 percent youth participation at the policy making and program delivery at all levels of the Nepal Government.
5. Concentrate on the need for quality, technical and skill based education of young people and secure a provision of free education to the economically, socially and academically disadvantaged youths at all the technical and skill based educational institutions. Strengthen the capacity of Youth Employment Fund established with the motive of encouraging employment and entrepreneurship among youths and make it accessible to the youths throughout the country by expanding its structure at the province level.
6. Recognition of the sexual and gender minorities by also securing their right to marriage and live like a respectable citizen.

7. Legally abolish all the practices hindering and violating the human rights of the physically challenged people and guarantee proper employment opportunities for them.
8. Develop easy, accessible, scientific and transparent services as well as benefits related to social security by also building organized, reputable and effective social security programs. Ensure child, adolescents and youth friendly program, policy and structure at all the three levels of the government.
9. Urgent adaptation of the policies for the capacity building of the vulnerable and poor community impacted heavily by the negative consequences of the climate change and their effective implementation with the mobilization of the youths by being focused on the protective strategizes.
10. Ascertain appropriate legal provisions at all levels for ending Child Marriage, acid attack, sexual violence, rape, labor abuse, trafficking, *chaupdai*, online violence and other forms of exploitation and ensure their effective implementation.

We make following commitments to yield solutions for the problems we have been facing and create efforts towards creating a respected and organized society:

Commitments:

1. We will work with complete determination at our respective levels for proper execution of the International commitments made for Youths, Women and Children and the campaigns for gender equality and women as well as girls empowerment.
2. We will ensure our meaningful participation for the implementation of the necessary plans and policies to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, 2030 and 15th Periodic Plan by also playing positive roles at the programs and campaigns of the government and civil society organizations.
3. We will promote entrepreneurship by utilizing the resources within the country, and advocate for the best interest of all the citizens of the country by promoting positive thoughts, lifestyle and culture at home, family and society and rising above the social division factors like caste, class, religion, language, gender and so on.
4. We will focus on our personality development and the progress of the entire nation by making the best use of the information and technology, utilizing all the opportunities designed for our capacity building and embracing the advice of the adults.

5. We will play prime role in maintaining peace, security and good governance at our respective local level and intervene for social development as future leaders by withholding from the personal benefits.
6. Utilizing Nepal government's declaration to celebrate this fiscal year as Youth Mobilization year and the year against gender based violence; we are committed to successfully organize the related programs and campaigns at all local level.
7. We will immediately report the incidents of gender based violence, exploitations, child marriage, trafficking or any other injustice activities to the concerned authority and lobby as well as coordinate for the proper management of such cases, and also commit never to be a part of such activities at any conditions.