



# Annual Report 2014

Action Works Nepal

Kabil Marga, House Number 37

Thapathali, Kathmandu

## Message from the Founder President

I am pleased to share our annual report 2014. The report includes highlights of our programme achievements, in terms of how our programs and campaigns were successful to improve the lives of poor, vulnerable and socially excluded women, men and children together with experience and lesson we learnt.

Though there were various challenges seen in the way while implementing programs and campaigns due to lack of financial resources, human resources, hardship in the program areas, and also the unstable political situations, we tried our best to translate our commitment into action through our projects, humanitarian supports and social movements. Major progresses were achieved in women empowerment, basic education, and access to health, peace building, research and networking areas.

Women empowerment program made some significant progress in Jumla and Kalikot districts where poor and marginalized women organized and mobilized in different groups and started claiming their rights and social justice. As women are gradually empowered to claim their rights they are also influencing and mobilising men and their societal constituency in their favour. As we initiated our campaigns against ill cultural practices such as "Chaupadi" there are many individuals and organizations becoming a part of anti *Chaupadi* campaign. As a result of this campaign, many women started living inside the house who used to live in the cow sheds during their menstrual cycle for generations. Our struggle against the ill practices and against all forms of violation against women is ongoing. We had completed a research to explore status of utilizing sexual health rights by women and local women participation in peace building process. Various capacity building initiatives were carried out to train local leaders, traditional healers, local CBOs, NGOs on gender, social inclusion and peace building.



**Radha Paudel**  
**Founder President, AWON**



Whatever we talk, we do is always guided by the peace culture. Working in one of the most remote and conflict affected areas we are always keen to learn about the peace culture across the globe. To honor the people who lost their lives in war and to create the peace building culture among all; we have initiated construction of a Miteri Peace Learning Center in Jumla. We are receiving supports in terms of financial resources, technical expertise and emotional support from local communities, as well as individuals and organizations at national and global levels.

Based on our learning in the last three years we are planning to revise our strategic plan. Likewise, we have a plan to carry out gender-equality assessment to further enhance our understanding and capacity to respond to the challenges. We will continue to run our 'Miteri Gaun: Let's live together' campaign to help the poor and marginalized communities in Karnali region.

On behalf of our team, I thank all of our MEETs, well wishers, supporters, volunteers and donors across the globe. Without your continuous generosity, we would not be able to continue to ensure that all women and children from Karnali region can exercise their rights and start dignified life to fulfill their ambitions.

## Acronyms

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ANRC   | Anti- Rape Campaign                              |
| AWON   | Action Works Nepal                               |
| CBO    | Community Based Organization                     |
| CDO    | Chief District Officer                           |
| DDC    | District Development Committee                   |
| DHO    | District Health Office                           |
| ANM    | Auxiliary Nurse Midwife                          |
| GBV    | Gender Based Violence                            |
| MBC    | Miteri Birthing Center                           |
| MPLC   | Miteri Peace Learning Center                     |
| MRC    | Miteri Recycle Center                            |
| NAWHRD | National Alliance for Women Human Right Defender |
| NGO    | Non Government Organization                      |
| SMC    | School Management Committee                      |
| VAW    | Violence against Women                           |
| VDC    | Village Development Committee                    |
| WHRD   | Women Human Rights Defenders                     |
| HH     | Household  |
| FGD    | Focus Group Discussion                           |
| KII    | Key Informant Interview                          |

## About Action Works Nepal

Action Works Nepal (AWON) is a non-profit, non-governmental and independent organization, which is dedicated for poor, excluded and vulnerable women and men, girls and boys for their social equality, human rights and result driven programs around political, economical, social, cultural, and environmental empowerment. It has been working voluntarily and informal basis since 2001; where as officially registered in 2010 under the government policy.

## Vision

A young, committed, dynamic, enthusiastic and multi- disciplined group of people are organized and seeking for peace, prosperous and just society in and beyond Nepal.

## Mission

AWON is determined to work with poor, excluded and vulnerable women and men, girls and boys for their socially equal, dignified and just lives through partnership, human rights and result driven programs around political, economic, social, cultural and environment empowerment that is why nations moving forward to peace, growth and sustainable development.

## Our Objectives

- To empower poor, excluded and vulnerable women and men, girls and boys ensuring establishment of their human rights especially focusing on education, health, employment and environment,
- To improve livelihoods of poor, excluded and vulnerable communities through vocational training, employment opportunities, economic empowerment, and climate change adaptation activities led by local communities,
- To mobilize civil society, media and other likeminded organizations and networks for policy advocacy and good governance.

## Our Program Areas

At present, Miteri programmes are in four districts—Jumla, Kalikot, Dailekh and Humla, focusing many pilot activities in the Jumla district. Centrally we work for policy advocacy and alliance building with various issue based organization and nationally and internationally.

## Program Approach

As a rights-based organization, AWON is working with poor, vulnerable and marginalized women and children for their empowerment and quality education. We focus our empowerment activities for the women in one of the isolated Karnali regions of Nepal. Though we work to fulfill the rights of the right holders in such deprived region we are working with the mixed model program strategy including those meet immediate needs, address rights and justice related issues, and support social business development. Our actions are guided by national and international human rights conventions and principles. We help women and children to claim their rights and encourage duty bearers to be accountable to deliver their obligations. We promote both gender equality and social inclusion and discourage discrimination, especially against women and girls and children from extremely poor families and marginalized communities. We ensure and advocate for the meaningful participation of women and children in decision making process which affect their life.

## Current Ongoing Programs

- Miteri Gaun: Lets live together campaign : Lead Program/Campaign
- Miteri women empowerment program
- Miteri Safe abortion and family planning program
- Miteri birthing center
- Miteri education support program
- Miteri peace learning center
- Miteri recycle center(a social business initiatives)

- Peace Building and Humanitarian support programs

## Current Partners

- Individual donors /volunteers globally (around 200 active volunteers)
- Siddaratha Nepali Samaj & NRN UK
- Safe Abortion Action Fund, UK (SAAF)
- Sunaulo Pariwar Nepal (SPN)
- Fondazione Un Raggio di Luce Onlus (FRL)- Italian Foundation Nepal
- Youth VIP, Australia
- Australia support group – Charles Sturt University, Australia
- Project Nepal
- Samrachana Nepal
- Outline Media
- Radio Nari Awaj, Jumla
- PACE Nepal

## The Year 2014 Highlights

### Women Empowerment

- 37 Miteri women groups formed where 600 women are directly organized and mobilized,
- 13 Miteri male supporting groups formed where 300 men members engaged in women empowerment activities, 2 model men for women empowerment were selected and honored,
- 12 Miteri Adolescent mixed groups are formed where 250 girls and boys are involved
- Miteri Birthing Center has been constructed and in operation in Sunnigaun VDC of Jumla where at least 10 pregnant women visited monthly for regular check up and 3-4 women visit monthly for institutional delivery,
- 2 ANMs are supporting Birthing Center in Sunnigaun and Lamra VDC of Jumla. The ANMs also provide family planning counseling and other normal check up,

- 35 women groups were oriented about caring in the period of menstruation cycle, pre delivery check up and institutional delivery,
- 1 local woman from Sunnigaun, Jumla received scholarship for ANM course,
- 50 women, men leaders and gender facilitators received training on gender and Social inclusion,
- 20 women groups declared Chaupadi free groups.

## Education Support Program

- 48 students including 35 girls and 13 boys received scholarship support,
- 2 school teachers were supported in Kalika Primary School of Lamra and Shree Bhairab Primary school in the Kudari VDC of Jumla,
- 2 schools were supported for extra coaching classes/ tuition support where 29 students are benefitted,
- 21 school management committee, parents and teacher are capacitating for ensuring quality education,
- 2 schools were supported for toilet construction,
- First Aid kits were distributed in 15 schools.

## Livelihoods Improvement

- Miteri Recycle Center (MRC) is operated by AWON as a social business to sustain the livelihood improvement activities for the marginalized women
- 4 poor and the most vulnerable women received livelihood supports through Miteri recycle center to set up their own business
- 30 women groups are collecting monthly saving and doing income generating activities
- Coordination among others organization for skill based trainings and income generating activities

## Peace building & Humanitarian Support

- International Peace day was celebrated in Jumla by announcing (stone foundation) to built Miteri Peace Learning Center in Jumla. Now Miteri Peace Learning Center is in the construction process
- 3 social leaders were nominated for N- Peace Award 2014.
- Founder President "Ms. Radha Paudel" was interviewed and welcome as a chief guest in various FM radio, television, peace forum and peace related articles published in print media

## Major Activities and Achievements

### 1. Women Empowerment

In order to empower poor, excluded and marginalized communities AWON has been working in four thematic areas: women empowerment, livelihoods improvement, education support and humanitarian assistance at local, national and international levels. It has been working in an integrated approach to address multiple and underlying causes of poverty, conflict and marginalization. All themes overlap, are interlinked, and are crucially important to establish a peaceful and just society through Miteri Gau-Let's Live Together Campaign'. AWON is appealing to the global community to work with the issues and opportunities. For this, 'Miteri Gau-Let's Live Together Campaign' is the lead strategy. Miteri Gau is an indigenous practice, widely accepted across the culture. The first two words in Nepali, means mutual love and respect beyond blood and marriage, and last four words are the English translation of first two words. Thus, it has great influence to create a non-violent culture, to negotiate, mediate and share resources, and ensure a peaceful and just community. Further, AWON adopted various contextual strategies such as partnership, media mobilization, policy advocacy; capacity building and rights based approach.

Action Works Nepal uses a tool to analyze underlying causes of poverty. The tool assists in identifying poor and the most vulnerable population, and underlying causes of poverty. The



tool guides AWON to select its target/impact group members. Following this process, AWON formed 37 groups including the most marginalized, poor and vulnerable women. There are 15 to 25 members in each group and they meet weekly and discuss on local emerging issues to find out the solutions. The group members share and talk about the conditions and status of women rights, gender based violence, power relations, safe abortion and family planning. The discussion start very informally where they share their own experiences, find out their friends and family to go ahead working together for ending gender based violence for women empowerment. The empowering tools in practice are power mapping, women mobility mapping, story writing, history taking etc. Each working VDC has a social mobilizer /volunteer who help to facilitate women's group on their prioritized issues and support them to mobilize. As we realize the crucial role of men engagement for women empowerment, we have formed and mobilized 13 male supporting groups where local political leaders, teachers, model men, traditional healers, as well as husbands and father in laws of the women group members are targeted.

Both women and men group members sit together and discuss different issues. Both groups also jointly organize social campaigns and work together for community development works. This practice or way of discussion had help women to get positive support from men in the village and also contribute in mutual understanding of gender issues. AWON volunteers facilitate weekly meetings, discussions and conduct local socio - cultural programs in local languages in different issues in order to create awareness.

## 1.1 Miteri Women's Group

A total 600 poor, vulnerable and excluded women engaged in weekly discussions through 37 groups (at least 15 to 25 women in a group) in project intervened areas namely Lamra, Kudari, Sunnigaun VDCs of Jumla and Rachuli, Phoimahadev VDCs of Kalikot district. They represented from dalit, poor, and marginalized family identified by the community participation using power and resource mapping tools. They meet together every week and discuss about their daily life, problems seen in the village and other issues related to women empowerment. The key issues discussed till date are about personal hygiene, sanitation, domestic violence, sexual harassment, gender based discrimination, cowshed practice (Chaupadi), social security, parental role in quality education, election identity card, role in election, land rights, women's participation in decision making, family planning, safe abortion etc. As a result, women leaders from the groups are also being proactive and leading to facilitate the dialogues, negotiation around disputes, misunderstandings, and debates about gender based violence. The discussion in the groups had raised their confidence to talk in the mass, with political leaders and men. They also participate in the district level campaign program, awareness raising activities and training.

As part to support National Anti-Rape Campaign, AWON together with other like minded organizations, took a lead role to organize Dharna (sit in) program, and presented an attention paper to the District Administration Office in Jumla. And also as a partner organization, AWON is continuously showing its



Meeting with women groups in Lamra VDC, Jumla



AWON along with different organizations showing solidarity in Jumla against Anti- Rape campaign

solidarity on this campaign by participating in the meetings, sit- in- protest, rallis, dharna and other socio cultural programs in Kathmandu. This campaign was started from September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2013 and ongoing with an objective to increase existing level of awareness on sexual violence, influences on making fast track policy to punish and provide justice to the survivor, create environment to internalize by every citizen of the country to understand that sexual violence sensitivities.

## **1.2. Miteri Male Supporting Group**

In order to get greater impact on the women empowerment, AWON realizes and critically engage working with men's group in the program areas. There are 13 men groups where 300 men are participating. Local political leaders, role/model men, teachers, traditional healers, family male members of the women members are bring together in the male supporting group where they meet informally in each fortnight. The men group members discuss about the issues raised in the women groups, interest of the women and work together to get out the solutions. Male supporting groups are facilitated by AWON social mobilizers and volunteers. The men group members are also oriented about women's human rights, gender, gender based violence, women sexual health rights, family planning, safe abortion etc. This process had strengthened confident of women not only to dialogue with men but also they are being supported by male members in their family for household chores and in encouraging women to participate in decision making positions. To encourage and acknowledgment of the men support for women empowerment the local women groups find out the model men from the group and community who not only support his spouse and female members at his home but also work as campaigner in the village to educate on women rights to other male in the communities, help women in the community. This year 2 role model men one from Kudari and one from Lamra VDCs of Jumla were identified and honored.

### **1.3 Miteri Adolescent Group**

Engaging with the adolescent and youth is very important to bring changes in the mindset and create a dynamic critical mass for development. Youth are the strong pillar for the development, as they are aware and bring in the main stream of the various development programs they can be the future change maker. Internalizing the above fact this year AWON formed 12 adolescent mixed groups based on schools where 250 girls and boys are involved. They are aware about the child rights, sanitation and hygienic, ending Chaupadi practice; gender based violence and also engage in the extra activities.

### **1.4 Increase access to safe abortion and family planning**

With the funding support from safe abortion action fund UK, safe abortion and family planning related activities were carried out in Sunnigaun, Lamra and Kudari VDCs of Jumla district, where abortion is considered as 'taboo'. Women here are not aware of their reproductive health rights and have little access to services. This project is addressing gender norms, values and behaviors with regards to reproductive and sexual rights, particularly safe abortion and family planning. 21 women groups from three VDCs are directly mobilized for awareness raising activities on sexual health rights. The program also engage with male supporting groups where (key stakeholders, spouse of women groups and traditional healers), are facilitated. To impact in the greater population adolescents are focused for awareness rising through school based program and hotlines.

To increase the access of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized women on health service, health professional from the grass root level to District Health Office are trained and capacitate. Sunaulo Pariwar Nepal (SPN) is a technical partner to support and backstop AWON on smooth operation of the projects.

### 1.4.1 Base Line Survey

A baseline survey on the "The awareness and utilization of sexual and reproductive health rights and services among men and women in Jumla district" was conducted in Jumla three VDCs and one municipality where the project was going to be launched to assess the knowledge and know about the ground problems about the sexual and reproductive health rights situation. The research was conducted with the technical support from Sunaulo Pariwar Nepal. All together 613 household interview, 12 KII, 12 FGD were taken as the sample.

## 1.5 Miteri Birthing Center (MBC)

In coordination with NRN UK and Siddhartha Nepali Samaj, Miteri Birthing Center (MBC) has been constructed in Sunnigaun, one of the remote villages of Jumla, in order to create awareness on the sexual and reproductive rights of women, to reduce neonatal and maternal mortality rates, and to increase access to health services by local communities.

For the smooth running of the Miteri Birthing Center, AWON has recruited one local ANM and had provided all kind of material support to daily operate the birthing center. ANM "Saradi Rokaya" is trained as ANM and skill birth attendant and holds few years of work experiences in the local hospital. She is assigned in a twenty- four hours duty in the center. About 446 (Four hundred forty six) households of Sunnigaun VDC are expected to directly benefited from the MBC. The ANM is providing services and taking care of women with pregnancy cycle. Every month about 10 women are coming for regular pregnancy check and 3 to 4 women come for institutional delivery.

Likewise, about 60 women suffering from the uterus prolapsed and reproductive and sexual health problems visited the MBC every month. The ANM diagnoses the cases, do some preliminary treatments and refers serious cases to the district hospital for further treatment. She also initiated community level awareness and community mobilization on maternal health, new born care, menstruation cycle, safe abortion, family planning, sexual health right of women, and personal hygiene. She is giving pre-natal and post- natal care to mothers and new born in the village. However, due to lack of awareness on maternal and child health, many

beneficiaries are still out of access to birthing center. They still practice and prefer traditional and home delivery as they don't want to go outside for delivery. Unless and until the case is serious and find some complications they don't visit birthing center. Thus there is a need to organize door to door visit, and awareness campaigns to increase the outreach of Miteri Birthing Center. The district health office has not

provided and supported this center as the village is not listed for birthing center but the health post committee and locals are giving pressure to register and to list the area for birthing center.



### **“Blessing of Sunnigaun: Miteri Birthing Center”**

**Sensitiveness in institutional delivery increased in Sunnigaun, a remote village of Jumla.**

*“I was near to death and in most panic condition during my labor pain, my family and I had left every hope to be alive but fortunately I was brought to Miteri Birthing center and got new life with my new healthy baby. Birthing Center is blessing to women in Sunnigaun.” – Chaiti Nepali.*

This is the voice of a woman who gave birth to a healthy baby with the help of skilled birth attendant in Miteri Birthing Center in March 2014. During the first visit to the MBC, she asked- *“I am anxious and insecure, will I be alive with my baby?”* It was really tough to provide counseling to her. Despite of illiteracy and low awareness in Jumla, ANM was able to convince her and make her aware about the risk of pregnancy and pre antenatal care along with safe delivery in MBC and post antenatal care. She frequently visited health post for regular check up, took all the precautions, and finally came for her delivery. She was brought to the birthing center as per the instruction of the health post for delivery. She was screaming from the labor pain and almost her family and she were losing confident. The ANM in the birthing center checked up her health condition and found there was no any critical condition, all seemed normal. She provided counseling to her and her family. Near after 3 hours she gave birth to a

healthy baby normally. There was happiness seen in the face of all family members. Both the mother and baby were healthy.

The pregnant women of Jumla have no guarantee of their life in the time of delivery. The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) in the Karnali area is still 12 times higher the national average due to unavailability of quality and trained service providers in the remote villages. There is also no provision of any emergency funds for transportation and associated costs. Chaiti Nepali, a twenty years old lady, got the information about the Miteri Birthing Center (MBC) through the volunteers as she also participate in the women group discussions and she came in touch with the Birthing Center. These days, we can see some positive changes in the remote villages of Jumla as women and their family members are becoming gradually conscious about the health condition. However, many of them still hesitate to come to institutional delivery. Coming year AWON will focus on the awareness campaign and activities about maternal health.

### Support to Birthing Center in Lamra VDC

AWON has assigned a full time ANM in Lamra VDC of Jumla from this year. The ANM will support to operate a Birthing Center in Lamra. The birthing centre will be managed and continued by DHO and VDC after six months. World Vision Nepal and DHO are supporting necessary equipments for the birthing centre. This birthing centre provides service to the residents of Lamra and Hanku VDCs.

### ANM Scholarship support

One local woman is supported to study ANM in scholarship. Now she is studying in Karnali Technical School in Jumla. After successfully completion of her study, she will be working in the Birthing Center of Sunnigaun.

## **1.6 Training & Capacity enhancement of the social Leaders & Volunteers**

As a strategic partner of Italian Foundation, AWON facilitated three events of gender and social inclusion training (first in January and second in April 2014 and third time in August 2014) to social leaders, gender facilitators, field officers, project staff and partner organizations of livelihood and women empowerment project. The major objective of the training was to review and reflect project level activities, to strengthen capacities of volunteers and gender facilitators and recommend and suggest project team and donor on social mobilization. Power mapping, women mobility analysis, historical timeline, dependency analysis, case study were applied as tools to find out root causes of poverty, caste, class and gender based discrimination and gender based violence. At the end of the training all the participants come up with the commitment and action plans. The action plans will be reviewed in every three months period and further support will be provided.

## **1.7 Chaupadi Free Campaign**

"Chhaupadi" is the practice of delegating women and girls to cowsheds during menstruation and childbirth. Menstruation and childbirth are considered impure acts. Chhaupadi is a serious culture based form of Gender Based Violence (GBV) where silence and stigma are embedded in each successive generation. Although the practice of Chhaupadi was outlawed by the Nepal Supreme Court in 2003, many women, especially in rural areas, still observe Chhaupadi. Despite menstruation being a natural process that is part of nearly every girl and woman's life, it is still treated as a taboo in countless cultures and societies across the globe. A profound silence around the topic, combined with a lack of access to information, results in girls and women possessing very little understanding of their own bodies. Menstruating girls and women often feel ashamed and embarrassed about themselves, exacerbating the silence because they would rather keep it a secret than talk about it. Facing health problems and socio-cultural taboos surrounding their periods, they become isolated from family, school, and their



communities. Women and girls miss school and productive work days, thus falling behind their male counterparts.

AWON has been working to abolish Chhaupadi since our inception. We are currently working with and in the communities of Jumla and Kalikot. As a part of these campaign 25 women groups and 10 men groups are mobilized. They were aware about sanitation and hygienic, importance of menstruation cycle in human life, reproductive rights and gender based violence. From the series of these discussion now most of the women realize that due to poor hygienic care, poor nutrition food taken in the period cycle most of the women in Karnali suffers from various health infections likewise; uterus prolapsed, irregular and more bleeding in period, infection for newly delivery women and newly born child, some time this causes death of women and child too. This awareness was eye opening to the women in the groups and they started leaving the cowshed practices and started to stay in side the home with good hygienic and take nutrition food. Though it was very challenging to them to start disobeying the cowshed practices because it was deeply rooted from the years and was connected with the faith in god. Where there is will there is way, the awareness raising program was not only focused with the women but also with the men (their spouse, son, father in-laws), faith healers which also help them to internalize cowshed practice as ill practice. Till now 20 women groups had declared Chaupadi free group and 4 villages are declared Chaupadi free village. Now women groups had lead this awareness campaign, they organize deuda (local song) competition now other local stake holders are also joining together in the campaign of ending cowshed practice/Chaupadi in Jumla.

### Menstrual & Hygiene Day Celebration

May 28th, 2014, AWON celebrated Menstrual Hygiene Day by organizing different programs with the school children of Lamra VDC of Jumla.



Deuda Song competition on the occasion of Menstruation Day

It was the very first Menstrual Hygiene Day celebrated throughout the world with activities to garner awareness around menstruation, and menstruation hygiene, in addition to celebrating this natural process. Remarking the Menstrual Hygiene Day "**Ending Cowshed/Chaupadi Practice**" was taken as an important discussion. Many young boys and girls were involved in this important discussion about menstruation. Girls presented a brief about the situation they faced due to this ill practice of Chaupadi in their home and community. They highlighted how this practice had isolated women and girls, causes various health infections. They also highlighted that Chaupadi practice is a violation of women rights, a terrible form of gender based violation. Most of the men and young boys also committed to end this practice in their home and community. AWON is proud to have been a part of the global dialogue and celebration for Menstrual Hygiene Day.

## 2. Education Support Program

### 2.1 Scholarship Support

Every child has rights to education. AWON works with the remote, marginalized and underprivileged children and their families to ensure that right is realized and these children get the opportunity to thrive. As part of education support program, AWON has provided scholarship support to poor students in Jumla, and Kalikot districts of Karnali, one of the most remote and marginalized regions of



School Dress and Stationary items distributed to the students

Nepal. Working and facilitating in those districts, AWON has realized and understood that the lack of education opportunity is a major barrier to demonstrate potential by children. Limited school resources, lack of quality education, lack of awareness about the education, gender discrimination and absence of monitoring mechanism are some of the root causes that many

children are still out of schools. They are force to work as an agriculture labour in the age when they supposed to go to school. Those who are enrolled to primary education can not complete and continue their education; school dropout is high among girls and Dalit (so called untouchables). In year 2014, AWON provided scholarship to 48 students, including 35 girls and 13 boys, in primary and secondary level schools. Among them, 5 were children with disability, 4 were orphans and 12 were *Dalits (so called untouchable)*.

## 2.2 Teachers Support

AWON is also providing full time teacher support in two schools. Targeting to the students who are not only poor in their studies but also economically poor to take such facilities is supported from extra coaching/ tuition classes in three subjects (Math, Science and English) in two schools. 29 students are supported in these extra coaching classes.



## 2.3 Engagement with the school management committee

Poor governance of the management of school and lack of interest of parents and management committee in ensuring it is one of the barriers found for quality education in the school. In this concerns to ensure the governing part on overall management and quality education AWON started to work with School management committee to enhance their capacities and provide technical support. Till date 21 school management committees from Jumla and Kalikot are being facilitated and mobilized.

Not only that, school children is also oriented about sanitation, personal hygiene, child rights, and to celebrate children day and to organize extra curriculum activities in coordination with teachers and school management committees.

This year, AWON has provided financial support to build toilets in two schools and also distributed first aid kits in 15 schools of Jumla and Kalikot districts. Furthermore, for coming year AWON focused to work together with the schools in awareness rising of school children in sanitation and hygienic behavior as well as on sexual and reproductive health rights.

### **"We are in the school, instead of working in farm and household chores"**

From the very beginning of the establishment, AWON is working in the in Karnali region for quality education. Lack of awareness, high dropout ratio, poor income, gap in monitoring mechanisms of district education office and gender discrimination are the major issues and hindrances for quality education in the region. While in a meeting with school management committee, parents, teachers and students, a student mentioned that she could not continue her study because she twice got failed in English and Science subjects. She also narrate that English, Math and Science, these three subjects are very complicated and they cannot understand in class, they need more coaching classes to get pass mark and perform better. So in 2013, with the supports from school teachers, AWON contributed to tuition classes in three subjects for poor and weak students. For encouragement of teacher's contribution, AWON provided some financial incentives to run the extra classes.

Those students, who were very weak in their studies, represented poor family and were about to dropout their education, were selected for the tuition support. In the last year, grade eight 12 students from Mahadev Higher Secondary School, Kalikot were selected for this support. After regular tuition support, students are performing well in their regular classes, became serious in their studies, all attained their school and all classes daily. They are also performing well in their classes and examinations.

One of the students, Hajura Hamal, explained that, *"I was one of the weak students in my class, often failed in English, Mathematics and Science. I used to sit in the last bench and always escaped teachers and their questions, hardly attended class for 10 days in a month. Since AWON started tuition classes for very poor students like me, I am punctual to school and I got good marks in all subjects in the final exam of class 8 and now studying in class nine."*

She is now punctual in her school and has chosen optional mathematics as her optional subject. She want to continue her studies and want to be a school teacher in near future by which she can support many of the students like her and aware them about the importance of education.

Adding more to her satisfaction she says, *" if AWON had not selected me or others weak students from my class, we would not have been capable to compete with other talent students, and failed the exam and most of them were forced to drop out from the school and work in the household chores and farm. But now we are in school, we feel lucky today and would like to thank AWON and our teachers for their contribution".*

The lists of students supported from different schools for **scholarship** this year are presented below:

| SN | School's name  | Type of support              | Total     | F         | M         | Dis<br>abl<br>e | Orp<br>han | Dalit     | Support   |
|----|--|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|------------|-----------|---|
| 1  | Durga Secondary School, Lamra, Jumla                       | Bridging Course              | 17        | 17        |           | 2               | 1          | 6         | KINDERHILIFE, Germany                                   |
| 2  | Seti bada Secondary School, Newakot Jumla                  | Uniform and Stationary items | 4         | 2         | 2         |                 |            | 2         | Youth VIP, Australia 2013                               |
| 3  | Shree Secondary School, Navidada , Jumla                   | Uniform and Stationary items | 3         | 1         | 2         | 1               |            |           | Youth VIP, Australia 2013                               |
| 4  | Shree Shiva Bahraiv Primary, School, Jumla                 | Uniform and Stationary items | 4         | 2         | 2         |                 |            |           | Youth VIP, Australia 2013                               |
| 5  | Sharee Gyan Jyoti Primary School, Phunga, Sunnigaun        | Uniform and Stationary items | 4         | 3         | 1         |                 | 3          | 2         | Youth VIP, Australia 2013                               |
| 6  | Phoi Mahadev Higher Secondary School, Phoi, Kalikot        | Bridging Course              | 12        | 8         | 4         | 2               |            | 1         | KINDERHILIFE, Germany                                   |
| 7  | Bhairab Nath Primary School, Kudari Village, Jumla         | Teacher Support              | 1         |           | 1         |                 |            |           | Project Nepal, USA                                      |
| 8  | Kalika Primary School, HiyaKhola, Jumla                    | Teacher Support              | 1         |           | 1         |                 |            | 1         | AWON support group, Charles Sturt University, Australia |
| 11 | Ratnechudeshwor S. School, Bohorgaun (Bal Kumari Bhandari) | School fee and dress         | 1         | 1         |           |                 |            |           | Ram Thapa from Germany                                  |
| 12 | Ratnechudeshwor S. School, Bohorgaun (Amrita Devkota)      | School fee and Dress         | 1         | 1         |           |                 |            |           | Garima Aryal from, Australia                            |
|    | <b>Total no of students</b>                                |                              | <b>48</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>5</b>        | <b>4</b>   | <b>12</b> |   |

### 3. Livelihood Improvement

#### 3.1 Miteri Recycle Center

As a part of livelihood improvement, AWON had started Miteri Recycle Center (MRC), a social business to manage livelihood improvement program on a sustainable basis. The activity is also selected to provide humanitarian support to the target beneficiaries at the time of emergencies. As per the motto of lead strategy "Miteri Gaun: Let's Live Together" campaign, AWON collects second hand/used clothes from various places, recycled them and sell them in minimum/ low costs in the program areas. Till date, AWON has reached in four districts Jumla, Kalikot, Dailekh and Humla. AWON receives cloths and others necessary items whatever people wanted to donate in the peace culture for Miteri Gaun. Once the clothes reached to the MRC, the cloths are well washed, repaired, stitched, ironed, labeled and packed well and look like retail items rather than donations, and sold at a price that is affordable to the poorest consumers/ people. This preserves the dignity of the people buying the clothes.



Visitors visiting MRC Stall at Kathmandu

As part of income generating activity, AWON is now focusing to start Miteri shop in Jumla to support poor, marginalized and single women. This year, AWON supported 4 women as retailers to sale recycled cloths in their villages. The women receive 10% income of the total sell to help them to support their daily life expenses, to save money to expand their business and to send their children



A woman, from remote village of Jumla, bought cloth of the Miteri Recycle Center



to the schools. AWON is receiving a very good response from the people/customers as the clothes are sold at a very cheaper rate with quality. AWON is currently lacking to meet the demand of the cloths in the program areas. There are four collecting hubs supported by Heifer International, Woman's Dream, Family Planning Association of Nepal and K&K College where people are donating cloths to support the MRC in regular basis. There is also a good response from the outsiders and visitors whoever visit MRC. In the coming year, AWON will focus on running more Miteri shops in other program areas by the expansion of its network and collecting hubs. For details please visit <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Miteri-Recycle-Center-Nepal/508155022598780>

### Now, I can buy pencils and note copies to my children

*"Now I can buy pencils and note copies to my children; Though I struggle from several ups and downs in my life, when I found smiles on my children faces that make me smile, I forgot when my eyes stop wetting but my heart become cold and I feel shame when they ask me for the pencils and note copies and there was no option just to be quite and wait for money to get from somewhere else "* -Jayrupa Neaupane from kartikswami, Jumla.

"Women's rights to food, security and justice" is being overshadowed in poverty, social discrimination, and gender based violence in Jumla. Poverty has affected women the most as they have to live a destitute life without physical, mental and social security. Poverty has ultimately affected the health security of women. With an objective to support and empower women, who are poor, single and war survivor; AWON has



Jayarupa Neupa Neupane Selling MRC

Clothes



initiated Miteri Recycle Centre from last three years. MRC has focused on empowering women for their better economic life.

Here is the story of 45 year old woman, Mrs. Jayrupa Neupane who lives alone with her two little children in Jumla. She unfortunately became war victim, where she lost her life partner during the insurgency period between Maoists and Nepal army. The conflict has hit this innocent woman, as she was forced to go through state of physical, mental and economical turmoil, which has made her socially and economically insecure. *“they killed my husband and left me to suffer in poverty and torture, I only knows how I am surviving with my children and fighting to fulfill the daily routine of our life”* –said Jayrupa.

MRC has selected her as a social entrepreneur for establishing Miteri Shop in her village. She is now selling MRC cloths in her own home and earnings 10% margin from the sold cloths. She had not go out to sell the cloths, she manages to sell the cloths doing households chores, villagers comes and ask the cloths, they also put the demands for more cloths. Since these cloths are in the very low and reasonable price, people in the village demand more. This opportunity of MRC, as a distributor, has made her to live her life in dignity; independent as she doesn't has to beg for mercy anymore. She is very much thankful to AWON. There are many women like Mrs. Jayrupa in Jumla who are throttled by the devastating outcome of war and are forced to live in sorrow of the loss of loved ones, poverty, discrimination and injustice. Their eyes are wondering in search of such opportunity which will change their life to better future.

### 3.2 Saving and Credit

As a part of economic empowerment, women's need to be engaged in income generation activities. Women groups are facilitated for the importance of saving and credit. From the very beginning of the formation of the groups, women are engaged in the saving and credit. Till date 30 women groups are engaged in the saving and credit. They save NRS. 5 (USD 0.051) to NRS. 50 (USD 0.51) in monthly basis. They ask loan in the groups to run income generating activities small retail shop, farming, animal husbandry etc. Not only that they also ask the money for urgency and very important task like wise; for immediate health check, to pay school and exam

fee, to perform some rituals. At the end of this year 30 Miteri women groups have collected NRS. 2,06,875 (USD 2,111) and involved in the saving and credit transitions which had made them feel more confident and secured in term of asking and getting loan/money soon.

### Group saving details for this year

| District     | VDC       | Number of women Groups | Amount collected till end of the June 014 | Income generation activities from the saving |
|--------------|-----------|------------------------|---|--|
| Jumla        | Sunnigaun | 5                      | 2,750.00                                  | For retail business and animal husbandry     |
|              | Lamra     | 10                     | 104,080.00                                | For retail business and animal husbandry     |
|              | Kudari    | 6                      | 34,425.00                                 | For retail business                          |
| Kalikot      | Rachuli   | 5                      | 48,180.00                                 | For retail business                          |
|              | Phoi      | 4                      | 174,40.00                                 | For retail business and animal husbandry     |
| <b>Total</b> |           |                        | <b>2,06,875.00</b>                        |  |

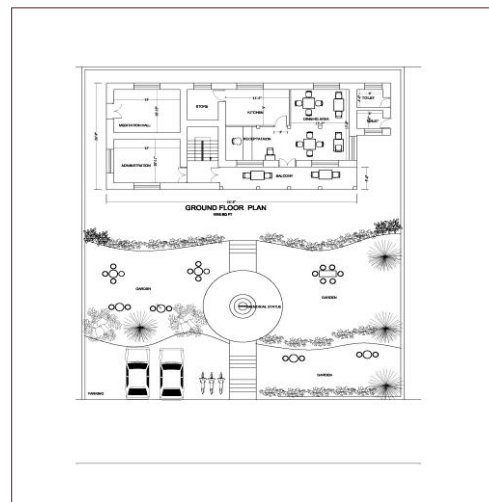
## 4. Peace Building & Humanitarian Assistant

Peace is not an absence of WAR. It is a lifelong process and has to be felt by each individual. The impact of more than a decade long conflict is evident everywhere in Nepal. Jumla is one of the most conflict affected regions. AWON focuses every program for peace within a person, family and community. Our main campaign "Miteri Gaun: Let's Live Together" is a non-violence culture for uniting all the peace makers, youths, well wishers across the globe in a notion of mutual love and respect. Founder President, Ms. Radha Paudel, is a war survivor. She had near to death in 14 November 2002, in 13 hours long cross-firing between Nepal army and Maoists. It is a long story, already published as a WAR memory "*Khalangama Hamala*". This war memoir published about after 12 years and she donated her 100 % royalty (10% secured) against her book for peace commemoration.

In this scenario, in order to honor/commemorate all kinds of people who were died, this Miteri Peace Learning Center is planned to construct in Jumla.

### Objectives

- To honor people who were died during war
- To cultivate peace (non-violence culture) among youths and communities
- To establish a comprehensive peace learning center for all (domestic and international)



This peace commemoration has following components:

### In the Yard

- A common statute at the name of dead people (Maoist, civilians, civil servants, police, army and others)
- Peace Garden
- Peace Sport Court

## The Building

- The Ground Floor: Peace Café, Peace E-library, Peace Dining
- The Second Floor: Peace Multi-Purpose Hall, Peace Physical Library
- The Third Floor: Peace Guest House, meditation hall

The building and its wings will use for public purpose for two reasons:

- To create a peace culture. As the peace centre is situated in a peaceful place with abundance scene all kinds of people love to come. Due to accompany with e-library, café and sports it will provide an opportunity to youths who are unemployed or in stress.
- For sustainability: The e-library, multipurpose hall, café would have access to public with small amount of fees in order to continue the service. Further, it will be used to show movie, educational program and other intellectual debates.

The construction work of Miteri Peace Learning Center has already started led by a local user committee. AWON is engaged in fund raising and networking activities. The main statue in the Peace Learning Center is going to be constructed by committed artistes all the way from Austria (Helga & Mike). The design and estimated cost for building is already finalized.

## The purpose design of the Building of Miteri Peace Learning Center in Jumla.



### 4.1 International Peace day Celebration

In order to mark International Peace Day, AWON organized series of activities in Jumla.

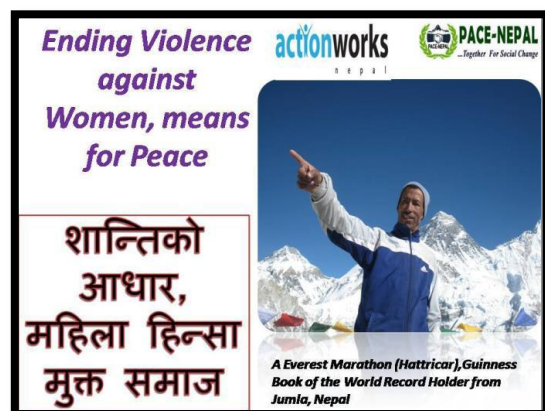
- ***Drawing competition:*** A district level drawing competition organized in active participation of district education office in 19 September, 2013. It was historical event for Jumla where 12 schools participated in the competition. The title of the drawing was 'Jumla in 2018 and role of education sector'. Students were spread out from Krishna temple to CDO office on the road and did their drawing. It was quite fascinating, all passengers, media people and others showed interested on it and appreciated as well. The participants and winners were awarded with certificates and some reading materials.

- **Peace Rally:** In active participation of Radio Nari Awaj, FNCCI and Italian Foundation, AWON organized rally in 20 September, 2013 where the representatives from government, security, media, women activists, peace committee were involved.
- **Stone Foundation of Peace Commemoration (Miteri Peace Learning Center):**  
During auspicious occasion of International Peace day 2013, AWON formally founded the stone of Peace Commemoration in Jumla at the name of 247 people died during a decade long civil war. Local social worker Mr Maha Shankhar Devkota donated 763 m<sup>2</sup> land to the Founder/President of AWON. In the program Mr. Devkota was welcomed as chief guest.
- **Felicitations of Nominees of N-Peace Awards 2012:**  
During the program of International peace day, AWON honored three nominees for N-Peace Award 2013 as:  
I. Ms. Gauri Kathayat- Nominee of Young Peace Champion, 2013  
II. Ms. Sita Buda- Nominee of Women Peace Role Model, 2013  
III. Mr. Lokdarsan Shrestha-Nominee of Men Champion for Gender Equality 2013
- **Book Launched:**  
A book entitled 'Khalangama Hamala' was launched in Jumla formally. Three senior and dedicated persons Mr.. Mahashanker Devkota, AWON's Advisor Dr. Joanne Millar and the senior citizen of Jumla, Mr. Pannalal Rokaya jointly inaugurated the book. This book is written by Ms. Radha Paudel, President of AWON. It is all about the civil war specially focus on terrific cross fire in Khalanga (headquarters of Jumla) in 14 November, 2002. She also highlights briefly on how she survived and worked during war in Jumla. The royalty of this book has already committed to construct Peace Commemoration (Miteri Peace Learning Center).

At last but not the least, the program was addressed by political leaders, ex-ministers, acting CDO, Joanne Millar and Lok Darsan Sharestha. Mr. Lok Darsan Shrestha, coordinator of the Peace Commemoration chaired the program.

- **Flex Message**

As part of demonstrating men engagement into action, peace message has been developed and printed with the picture of The World Record Holder Marathon Runner, Hari Rokaya from Jumla. The flex posted in social media which was seen by more than 10,000 people.



## 4.2. Humanitarian Supports

AWON provides medical, psychological, legal, and shelter support to the women and girls who are survivors of gender based violence, conflict affected, HIV affected and other forms of disasters. AWON employs a lawyer at the national level for prompt response. AWON also collects clothes, stationeries, medicines, and toys in the urban areas and distribute them to the poor people in the Karnali. This year AWON has distributed woolen caps, medicines, stationeries and baby clothes in Kalikot, Jumla and Humla districts. AWON has provided financial support of NRS 9,000 for HIV affected children through baby life home.

AWON has developed a code of conduct for such activities where beneficiaries take leadership in distribution and management. AWON is also working on making emergency fund to provide legal services and counseling on sexual gender based violence cases and made available a help desk including advocates and legal advisors.

### 4.3 Election Monitoring Program

In technical collaboration with Outline Media and funding support from UNDP Conflict Prevention Program, AWON implemented a project "Media Monitoring on Constitutional Assembly Election 2013". The main objectives of this partnership were to explore the political atmosphere surrounding election at the local grass roots, and navigate the mindset and accountability of political parties/ leaders. The program also contributed in creating a positive, perception at the grassroots level in favor of election and to increase level of participation of poor, excluded and marginalized groups/community in democratization process through mobilization of various means of media and evidence based advocacy at national policy discourse for peace building at large.

The project was also focused to analyze the potential for political violence associated with the CA election scheduled for 19 November 2013, to mitigate the risks, by supporting national media to travel to sensitive districts and report on issues related to the election.

A series of project activities were carried out through three programs:

- Fellowship program: Nineteen experienced journalists from the national level with experience of working in popular media houses reached out to 25 districts across all development regions.
- Interactions Programs: Eight interaction programs were carried out where a total of 220 participants benefitted including members of media, political party leaders and experts.
- Radio Program: Ten Radio programs were produced and broadcasted.

AWON also presented a paper on "Paradigm shift required to address Karnali's inequality and poverty" highlighting major issues such as health, education, women, children, environment and climate change.



## **4.4 Reaching out to Meets (ROM) to Strengthen Women's Participation and Security in Jumla and Kalikot**

"Meet" is a relation with mutual love and respect. "Meet" could be anyone (individuals, organizations) who believes in AWON's principles and philosophy.

AWON implemented a short term project granted by UNDP specially to reach out to the "Meets" in Jumla and Kalikot districts. The program strengthens the status of women, peace and security as endorsed by the Nepal Government through National Plan of Action (NAP) on United National Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820.

Various slots of training and workshops in the village and district levels were organized reflecting status of women participation in local level peace building process, meaning and importance of peace to them, and to orient participants on provisions of UNSCR 1325 and 1820. The women, men, traditional healers, students, members of school management committees, teachers, media person, CSO leaders, intellectuals, and peace committees participated in the activities in Jumla and Kalikot districts.

The total of 400 stakeholders was directly involved in the program through training, peace rally, drawing competition etc. Likewise, information on related with this project reached to about 50, 000 people through radio programs, online news coverage, print media and social media. Despite having very small grant and short project period, it added value to make history in the peace building process in Jumla and in entire Karnali region. The presence of AWON's advisor from Australia also added value to the program.

## **5. Volunteering/Internship/Fellowship**

AWON is largely supported by the volunteers/interns across the globe. Few are working physically in the field, few are working through media, and few are in Kathmandu based. During

this reporting period, the total 20 volunteers associated with AWON out of which 14 are working in the field, 5 works in Kathmandu and 1 from the USA.

Esther Cassady, Volunteer from United States work for six months in AWON based on KTM. She support on documentation, create new website of AWON and raise network for fund raising. She expressed her opinion as:

*“There is so much to be done to advance the equality and dignity of women. And Radha is fearless and seemingly inexhaustible in her fight for peace and social justice. I could not have asked for a better teacher to show me what it means to give of myself, to have humility, generosity, gratitude, and always, to have hope.”*

## 6. Networks and Affiliation

AWON has been working with various formal and informal networks and alliances since beginning especially for the policy discourse on women’s human right, peace building and democracy. AWON served as contact office for Kathmandu WHRD network and also expressing solidarity in various campaigns, meetings, press release organized by NAWHRD. The campaign related activities are heading with the network called women’s campaign for peace and constitution, Women Pressure Group (Mahila Surchha Dabab). Internationally AWON is a member of N- Peace network, Beyond Beijing Committee (BBC), Trust Law and many more online networks and forum. AWON also show solidarity on various international campaign and day celebration to ensure the human rights.

## 7. Media mobilization

OUTLINE Media is the strategic partner of AWON since beginning. It has covered the news, advertisement widely through online; [www.onsnews.com](http://www.onsnews.com). Locally in Jumla, AWON has partnership with Radio Nari Aawaj. It has broadcast different local activities and campaign programs through news, interview, and radio jingle especially about human rights, GBV and peace building.

## 8. Monitoring Visits

During this year monitoring visits were made by executive boards members and staffs assigned to various projects and campaigns. Likewise, external field visits were made by Tuka Sandwell, , from the United Kingdom. Ms. Sandwell's visit was focused on Miteri Birthing Center. Dr. Ed Kellerman from Project Nepal Denton Taxes, USA; Joanne Miller advisor of AWON, from Australia also visited to the program districts and observed various activities. Samuel Biddle from Australia had visited Jumla on January 2014 for the situation analysis of Chhaupadi and helped in the fund raising activities. The visits were very much helpful in fund raising, networking and in highlighting organizational achievements and learning across the globe.

## 9. Evaluations and Studies

AWON carry out research in order to find out more about emerging issues and thereby improve its programming. This year, AWON has conducted below research studies.

- The awareness and utilization of sexual and reproductive health rights and services among men and women in Jumla.
- A field survey on role of rural women in peace building process in Jumla (8 KII, 2FGD)

This research studies had been conducted but it is in the process of data analysis and preliminary findings.

## 10. Income & Expenditure of the Organization

The financial statements of total income & expenditure have been prepared on cash basis. The statement includes yearly financial cycle from July 2013 to June 2014. Total grant received from different donors in the reporting period was NRS. 14,936,950.00 (US\$ 152,418). Likewise, the expenditure was 6, 131,969.00 (US\$ 62,571) and next period of remaining fund balance is NRS. 8,804,981.00 (US\$ 89847).

| S.N                    | Programme                                      | Fund Received (NRS) | Expended during the year (NRS) | Remaining Fund Balance (NRS) |
|------------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1                      | Grant for SAAF Programme                       | 7,826,729           | 830,765                        | 6,995,964                    |
| 2                      | Grant for Education Support Programme          | 881,249             | 298,104                        | 583,145                      |
| 3                      | Grant for Miteri Birthing center               | 2,155,351           | 1,300,503                      | 854,848                      |
| 4                      | Grant for UNDP ROM                             | 615,379             | 615,379                        | –                            |
| 5                      | Grant for National Media Reporting on Election | 3,087,218           | 3,087,218                      | –                            |
| 6                      | Grant for Peace learning center                | 371024              | –                              | 371024                       |
| <b>Total</b>           |  | <b>14,936,950</b>   | <b>6,131,969</b>               | <b>8,804,981</b>             |
| <b>US\$ 1 = NRS 98</b> |  |                     |                                |                              |

## Major Challenges

During the reporting period, AWON faced following challenges to meet its objectives and vision.

- Level of commitment among team members
- Limited funding and few long term donors
- Limited funding opportunities for the organization to carry out national level initiatives
- Limited human and other administrative resources
- High operation cost on implementing the programs

## Conclusion

In spite of geographical difficulties AWON is working in the remote areas of Nepal and achieving positive responses in its deeds. AWON is working for the socio-economic transformation of the region through women empowerment, economic empowerment, education support and humanitarian support activities. AWON has involved in a social transformation process. The process challenges social malpractices and injustices based on gender, caste, class, ethnicity and geographical region of the communities. There is a need to empower marginalized and excluded population to strengthen their voice to claim their rights. There is also a need to engage with institutions and policies to make them more democratic, transparent and

accountable. AWON is committed to develop genuine partnership with likeminded individuals and organizations to expand its programmatic and advocacy scope for meaningful contribution in socio-economic transformation and peace building in the country.

## Recommendations

- Expansion of the network of collaborators, partners and supports,
- Strengthen and systematize "Miteri Gaun- Let's Live Together Campaign", and give more emphasis to livelihood improvement and empowerment programs,
- Capacity enhancement of the staff and volunteers,
- Emphasis and strategic inputs on fund raising,
- Emphasis on documentation and dissemination of learning.

## Contact us at

**Action Works Nepal,**

**Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**+977-01-4227730**

**Email: [actionworksnepal.awon10@gmail.com](mailto:actionworksnepal.awon10@gmail.com)**

**[www.actionworksnepal.com](http://www.actionworksnepal.com)**

**Find us in FB: <https://www.facebook.com/actionworks>**

