



## HEAD LINE

- Capacity building on ageing issues and vulnerabilities
- Orientation program on sexual and gender minorities communities
- World social forum
- Interaction with ministry of federal affairs and general administration
- One Billion Raising celebration
- Mitini Nepal fund for local initiatives
- LBQ women group formation

## LBQ women group formation

On February 28, 2024, the virtual formation of the provincial-level LBQ Women Alliance was successfully concluded by Mitini Nepal. Nilam Dhungana, the Program Officer of Mitini Nepal, initiated the meeting by introducing the participants and highlighted the primary goal of uniting Lesbian, bisexual women, and queer women from all seven provinces in a common forum. Sarita K.C., the Executive Director of Mitini Nepal, emphasized the failure of both the LGBTIQ movement and the feminist movement in adequately addressing the concerns of LBQ women. She further added, the alliance aims to provide a unified platform for LBQ women to articulate their rights, extend support for those coming out about their sexual orientation, and, critically, collaboratively draft a position paper. She underscored the importance of recognizing diversity within women at the local level and stressed the need to analyze various aspects of LBQ women's lives, including education, health, employment, economic status, legal gender recognition, political participation and local government initiatives. The responsibility for crafting the draft position paper rests with the group, involving discussions among team members to address specific questions aimed at shaping the content. With 33 attendees, including LBQ women from seven provinces, along with Mitini Nepal staff, the meeting aimed to unite voices and advocate for the rights of LBQ women, bringing their issues to the forefront of mainstream discourse.







## ORIENTATION PROGRAM ON LGBTIQ COMMUNITIES

### CAPACITY BUILDING ON LGBTI AGEING ISSUES AND VULNERABILITIES (FIFTH SESSION)

On February 7, 2024, Mitini Nepal successfully conducted the fifth session of Intergenerational Learning "Capacity Building on LGBTI Ageing Issues and Vulnerabilities" focusing on "Generations United: Strengthening Intergenerational Bonds". The session started with check in and review of previous session on GBV on which participants highlighted the effectiveness of the National Women Commission's 1145 hotline service, which has been instrumental in providing a range of services and facilities to those in need. These services include offering legal counselling, providing legal remedies, and arranging for temporary accommodation in safe homes to GBV victims when required. Continuing the session, Sarita KC, the Executive Director of Mitini Nepal, initiated a thought-provoking plenary discussion by posing questions that focused on the strengths of LGBTI young and elders, how can young and elder support each-other and what could be done for inclusive advocacy for elders. The participants engaged in an open discussion during the plenary session exploring various perspectives and sharing insights on the subject matter. They delved into the unique strengths that both senior citizens and youth bring to the table, acknowledging the wisdom and experience of the former and the energy and innovation of the latter. Moreover, the conversation shifted towards exploring ways in which senior citizens from gender and sexual minority communities and youth could forge meaningful connections to support each other. Lastly, the participants brainstormed strategies for inclusive advocacy, emphasizing the need for joint efforts between senior citizens and youth to address issues affecting their communities.

On February 8, 2024, Ekta Nepal, a community-based organization under the phase third, Mitini Nepal Fund for Local Initiatives with the support of Mitini Nepal, successfully conducted the orientation program on sexual and gender minority communities at Shree Shiva Ganga Basic School in Urma, Kailali, Sudurpaschim Province. Separate orientation classes were held for both teachers and students on the same day. The subject of gender and sexual minority communities was entirely new to the participants, who expressed that despite their exposure to textbooks covering sexuality and reproduction, their understanding was limited. Students revealed that, through the program, they interacted with members of the community for the first time, gaining valuable insights. Professor Ram Sahek Rana, previously lacking a comprehensive understanding of the community, shared a transformation in his perception, overcoming fear and dispelling misconceptions. The teachers emphasized the importance of continued public awareness programs, highlighting the positive impact on breaking stereotypes and fostering understanding. The orientation, facilitated by Ekta Nepal coordinator Raj Chaudhary and Karuna Nepal for different grade levels, witnessed active participation from President Sandeep Bhujel and Kriti Chaudhary. A total of 127 individuals, including teachers and students from classes 6, 7, and 8, actively engaged in the enlightening program.





## THE IDDA COUNSELLING CENTER VISIT MITINI NEPAL

On February 9, 2024, the representatives of the Idda Counseling Center in Korea visit Mitini Nepal head office in Ranibari, Kathmandu, Bagmati Province. During the meeting, Sarita K.C., the executive director of Mitini Nepal, and program officer Nilam Dhungana elaborated on the ongoing initiatives in Nepal, shedding light on the specific challenges faced by senior citizens within the gender and sexual minority community. Similarly, the Korean representatives shared concerns regarding housing, family exclusion, dependence on others, and the lack of mainstream visibility for issues faced by homosexual and bisexual women in Korea. Expressing joy at the meeting, the Korean representatives extended financial assistance and presented gifts as tokens of support and affection. They conveyed their excitement about future collaboration to advocate for the rights of the community. The meeting, attended by eight individuals, included translator Dawa Lama from Good Hands Nepal, representatives from the Idda Counseling Center in Korea, LGBTI counselors Jin Ko and Mun from Korea, along with other staff members from Nepal.

## WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

### Panel discussion on intergenerational and intersectional issues of sexual and gender minorities



Mitini Nepal successfully conducted panel discussion on “Intersectional and Intergenerational issues of LGBTQ Community” on 17th January 2024, at Bhrikutimandap, Pradarsani Marga, as part of the 16th World Social Forum held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from February 3 to 7, 2024. The World Social Forum, themed "Another World is Possible," initiated by Nepal, provided a significant platform for global engagement and dialogue on pressing issues. Against the backdrop of this crucial forum, Mitini's Session delved into intergenerational and intersectional challenges within the LGBTQ community, highlighting the imperative for inclusivity and rights recognition. The panel discussion, featuring six distinguished members, explored a spectrum of topics encompassing issues faced by elders, single women, geographically marginalized populations, caste, religion, sex workers, disabled individuals, and the vital role of human rights defenders within the LGBTQI community. The program was hosted by Bimala Gurung, Program Officer of Mitini Nepal, while the panel discussion was moderated by Aarti Chataut, a media person. Before the panel discussion, Sarita KC, the Executive Director of Mitini Nepal, provided insightful highlights on the current situation of the LGBTI community in Nepal, emphasizing intersectional and intergenerational issues within the community challenges. The diverse panel featured Laxmi Ghalan, a renowned LGBTI Human Rights Defender, Samjhana Biswokarma, a lesbian from the Dalit community in a geographically backward province, Sukmaya Magar, a lesbian navigating the challenges of being single and an elder within the community, Ashok Koirala, a gay man contending with religious considerations, Sunita Lama, a transwoman and sex worker and Kusum Sunuwar, a lesbian woman facing with a hearing impairment. Mitini's initiative within the World Social Forum served as a pivotal platform for fostering dialogue and addressing the multifaceted challenges encountered by various segments of the LGBTQ community in the pursuit of a more inclusive and just world.



## Interaction with ministry of federal affairs and general administration



An interaction program with gender and sexual minorities community accomplished on February 16, 2024 in Bagmati Province, Kathmandu organized by Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration. The program commenced with the welcome remarks by the Under-Secretary Dasharath Ram Oad of the Social Inclusive and Social Security Department. He shared that the interaction program was organized in order to shed light on the current issues faced by gender and sexual minorities communities highlighting their needs and challenges. It has been also shared that the program was focused to create a platform for open dialogue and discussion among stakeholders, including members of the gender and sexual minorities community, government officials and civil society organizations. It further identified the strategies and solutions for addressing the challenges faced by gender and sexual minorities including issues related to discrimination, access to healthcare, employment opportunities and social acceptance. Overall, the program aimed to foster understanding, empathy and collaboration to advance the rights and well-being of gender and sexual minorities

## One Billion Rising CELEBRATION

On February 16, 2024, in commemoration of One Billion Rising, Tewa Nepal and Sangat Nepal orchestrated a significant event at Jawalakhel, Kathmandu, Bagmati Province. The program sought to address the alarming reality that violence affects one out of every three women globally. Aptly themed “Rise For Freedom”, the event was a compelling showcase of various activities, including inclusive expressions such as poem, drama, dance, musical monologues, flash mob all aimed at raising awareness and mobilizing action against violence. On the occasion, Mitini Nepal also actively participated in the event, making its presence felt through an impactful drama performance by Aarambha Nepal. The OBR celebration was celebrated during the World Social Forum 2024, “Another World is possible”.





## MEETING WITH FOREIGN STUDENTS FROM SIT

On February 21, 2024, a meeting between representative foreign students from SIT (School of International Training) and Mitini Nepal concluded at Mitini Nepal's head office in Ranibari, Kathmandu. Bimala Gurung, Mitini Nepal's program officer, presented an overview of Mitini Nepal, including its goals, objectives, target groups, and activities, with a focus on supporting gender and sexual minority communities. Discussions covered the challenges faced by these communities, their presence in rural and urban areas, safe spaces, and the broader LGBTIQ movement. The 18 participants, including SIT students, engaged in a Q&A session, and Mitini Nepal expressed appreciation by gifting Maya's handbags and publication books to the students.



On February 24, 2024, the Summit for Change Hiking program, a collaboration between Mitini Nepal, Youth Thinker Society (YTS), and others, concluded in Kavrepalanchok, Bagmati Province. The hike, starting from Khopasi in Kavre and ending at Balthali Resort via Ladkeshwar Mahadev temple, featured an introduction by Sophie Sangat from YTS. Jesika Gautam, Outreach Officer of Mitini Nepal, highlighted the need for marriage equality for gender and sexual minority communities, citing ongoing struggles despite years of cohabitation. Gautam mentioned Mitini Nepal's Supreme Court petition for marriage equality filed on December 5, 2022, and the recent launch of the "Marriage Equality for LGBTQ Couple" website. The event had 19 participants from diverse backgrounds, including Bankers, engineers, rights workers, businessmen, Students, and teachers.

## THE SUMMIT FOR CHANGEHIKING PROGRAM





## 2-DAY PSYCHOSOCIAL CONSULTATION ON MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OF SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES

On February 24th and 25th, 2024, Sahara Samaj Itahari, with support from Mitini Nepal through Mitini Nepal Local Initiative Fund, conducted a 2-day psychosocial consultation on mental health issues of sexual and gender minorities as part of the "Healthy Body and Equivalent Services" project. The program in Itahari, Koshi Province, began with Suman Tamang providing insights into the purpose, defining LGBTIQ, human rights, and the current situation of the sexual and gender minority community.



Facilitated by Pooja Bhandari, a psychosocial consultant from OCMC, the sessions delved into the emotional well-being of the community members, concluding with guidance on problem-solving and maintaining both physical and mental health. The successful event, hosted by Sahara Society, had 25 participants, including 1 facilitator and 1 support staff from the community within the province, totaling 27 attendees.

## CAPACITY BUILDING ON LGBTIAGEING ISSUES AND VULNERABILITIES (SIXTH SESSION)



On February 28, 2024, Mitini Nepal successfully conducted the last sixth session of Intergenerational Learning "Capacity Building on LGBTI Ageing Issues and Vulnerabilities" focusing on "Rights and Advocacy: Empowering LGBTI elders through policy". During the session, Advocate Binu Lama from the FWLD delivered a PowerPoint presentation focusing on the current legal frameworks and provisions concerning senior citizens. Continuing the session with panel discussions, Mitini Nepal Executive Director Sarita KC facilitated the dialogue. Panelists included Ramhari Gaire, Director of the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Rohit Tharu, Elders Advisory Committee Member from Lumbini Province and Suman Tamang, an LGBTI young rights activist. They fielded a range of questions and suggestions pertaining to the topic at hand. During the discussion, programs and plans initiated by the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens targeting gender and sexual minority communities and various groups within the community were shared. Senior citizen Rohit Tharu and young activist Suman Tamang contributed to the discussion by sharing their personal experiences and insights into the challenges encountered by gender and sexual minority communities. They emphasized the need for policies and laws related to senior citizens to be made more LGBTI senior citizen-friendly. The session concluded total 33 participants.





## Counseling Session

On February 29, 2024, Sabita (name changed) visited the central office of Mitini Nepal with her friend seeking counseling about her different feelings and sexual orientation. Sabita, who was visiting Mitini Nepal for the first time, learned about Mitini Nepal's work for the rights of the LGBTI community through her friend who had visited Mitini's website. Feeling confused and scared because she only had feelings for women, Sabita confided in her friend and together they sought support from Mitini Nepal to understand her sexuality better.

Sabita feared she might be mentally affected because she only felt attracted to women and couldn't express this to her family who wanted her to marry a man. After counseling with Mitini Nepal, Sabita identified herself as a masculine lesbian. She expressed gratitude for finding clarity about her identity but shared her ongoing struggle with her family's insistence on her marrying a man. Sabita stated that if her family continued to pressure her, she would need support from Mitini Nepal.

On February 29, 2024, Mayako Sansar, a community-based organization supported by the Mitini Nepal Fund for Local Initiative, in Kathmandu, Bagmati Province, successfully concluded a workshop focused on 5-year strategic planning. The event, facilitated by Parina Subba, a resource person, engaged 23 participants, including individuals from gender and sexual minority communities, members of the executive committee, representatives from Drishti Nepal, and employees of Mayako Sansar. Through in-depth discussions, group activities, and visual aids, the workshop shaped a comprehensive roadmap for the organization's programs over the next 5 years, fostering collaboration and strategic vision in Kathmandu.

## Five year strategy planning



### For more information:

Website: [www.mitininepal.org.np](http://www.mitininepal.org.np)

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