



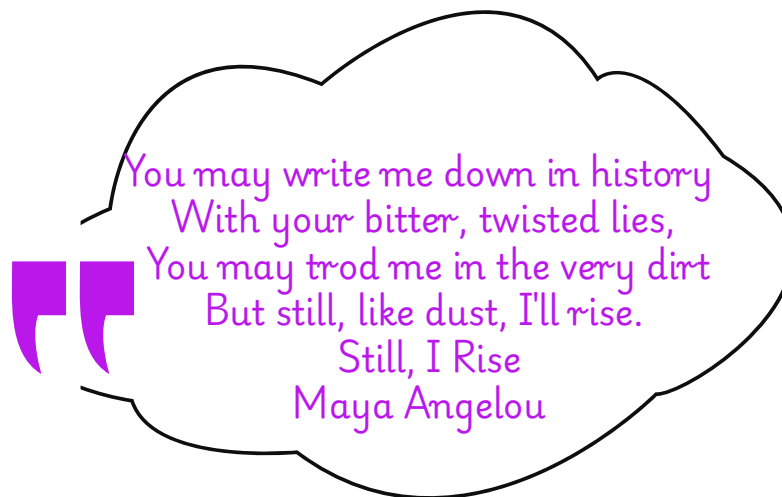
The Canvas of Change:

WOREC's Artistic Resistance
During the
16 Days Campaign



WOREC

Rising Against Violence: WOREC's Transformative 16 Days of Activism







For WOREC, the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is not just a campaign—it is a movement, a festival of feminist resistance, and a relentless pursuit of justice. Just as Angelou's words proclaim the indomitable rise of those who have been oppressed, this campaign stands as a defiant voice against the chains of patriarchy and violence that seek to silence women and marginalized groups. Rooted in the fight against patriarchal oppression, this global call to action, spanning from **November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to December 10 (Human Rights Day)**, is both a tribute and a testament to the power of collective struggle.

Since its inception in 1991, the campaign has grown into a powerful platform where survivors, activists, and human rights defenders unite to break the silence surrounding gender-based violence (GBV), demand accountability, and reimagine a world free from fear. In Nepal, it has become more than an observance—it is a catalyst for transformation, where voices long ignored rise in defiance, resilience, and hope.

As WOREC's leadership affirms, *"These 16 days remind us that our struggle is both deeply personal and undeniably global. Every voice raised, every mind changed, every life empowered—we celebrate each step forward while continuing to dismantle the systems that perpetuate violence."*

But the vision extends beyond eliminating violence. WOREC dreams of a world where:

-  Women's right to dignified work is not debated but defended.
-  Social security is not a distant promise but a lived reality.
-  Bodily autonomy is not questioned but respected.
-  Laws and policies are not just written but woven into everyday lives.

These 16 days are not an end, but a renewed commitment to year-round action. They are a testament to the unyielding spirit of those who refuse to be silenced, those who fight for justice despite adversity, and those who believe in the power of unity.

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As one young activist beautifully put it: *“These 16 days show us what’s possible when we stand together. But beyond them, our fight lives in every challenge we make, every injustice we refuse to accept, and every life we uplift.”*

These 16 days are not just about remembering the pain—they are about celebrating the courage to rise above it. As another young activist said: *“Our strength comes not from the absence of fear but from the courage to rise in spite of it.”*

WOREC’s commitment is clear: We will rise, we will resist, and we will create a world where justice is not just a dream but a lived reality. With courage, creativity, and unwavering resolve, WOREC and its allies continue this fight—not just for 16 days but for a lifetime—until justice is not an aspiration but a lived truth.

➤ Theme and Slogan for 2024

The 2024 campaign in Nepal carried multiple powerful messages:



National Slogan:

**"Towards 30 Years of the
Beijing Declaration and
Platform for Action: Unite to
End Violence Against Women"**

International Slogan:



Joint Campaign Slogan:

**“Recognizing Women Human Rights
Defenders: Campaign Against Violence
Against Women”**



These interconnected themes emphasized the need for collective action while recognizing the specific challenges faced by women human rights defenders. The slogans resonated across different levels of society, from urban centers to remote villages, creating a unified voice for change.

These powerful messages didn't just remain words on paper – they sparked a movement that touched hearts and minds across Nepal. As the November air grew crisp and November 25th approached, the carefully chosen themes found their true voice in the streets and communities throughout the country. From bustling Kathmandu to the quiet corners of remote villages of Karnali Province, these calls for solidarity and recognition of women's rights defenders resonated deeply, turning inspiration into action. The stage was set for a remarkable display of unity and purpose that would show Nepal's and WOREC's unwavering commitment to ending gender-based violence.

➤ Nov 25: A Powerful Stand Against Gender-Based Violence from Kathmandu and around Nepal

The streets of Kathmandu came alive with purpose that morning. Under the resonant slogan "Our Collective Commitment: Solidarity to End Gender-Based Violence" and "Recognizing Women Human Rights Defenders: Campaign Against Violence Against Women," hundreds of voices united in a powerful chorus for change. From the steps of Maitighar to the open spaces of Bhrikuti Mandap, more than 500 determined individuals - activists, survivors, government officials, and citizens - marched shoulder to shoulder, their footsteps echoing their resolve.



The air was electric with hope and determination as WOREC, alongside other leading organizations like the Tarangini Foundation, National Campaign for Women's Rights (NCWR), and the National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders, led the charge. Their banners fluttered in the wind, each one telling a story: "When women stop, the world stops," "End impunity now," "Justice for survivors." These weren't just slogans - they were the voices of countless survivors.

At Bhrikuti Mandap, the march turned into a corner meeting, and the Honorable Naval Kishor Shah Sudi, Minister for Women, Children, and Senior Citizens, stood before the crowd, acknowledging the tireless work of civil society in pushing for gender equality. His words were met with determined nods from the assembled activists who had spent years fighting this battle. The passion deepened as Honorable Kamala Kumari Parajuli, Chairperson of the National Women Commission, spoke about the barriers survivors face in their quest for justice.

But this day held even more significance. In a corner meeting charged with anticipation, WOREC unveiled "Anbeshi 2024" - more than just a publication; it was a mirror reflecting the harsh realities of gender-based violence in Nepal. As the pages turned, statistics transformed into stories, and data points became real lives affected by violence. The place shifted as the evidence laid bare the gaps in protection while activists nodded in solemn recognition of the truths they witness daily.

The campaign's spirit wasn't confined to Kathmandu's streets. Similar scenes unfolded across many districts, from East to West, from Sunsari, Morang, Udaypur, Sarlahi, Saptari, Dhanusha, Mahottari, Dang, Jajarkot, Rukum-West, and Kailali. In each location, WOREC, along with other local organizations and community members, came together, proving that the fight against gender-based violence knows no geographical bounds.



The day ended, but its impact lingered. Through powerful street theater performances, soul-stirring songs, and poignant poetry, the message was clear: this wasn't just another campaign - it was a movement for change, powered by evidence and driven by compassion. As the sun set over Kathmandu, the dual force of public advocacy and research-based documentation laid a foundation for the 15 days ahead - days that would challenge, inspire, and move Nepal closer to a future free from gender-based violence.

This wasn't just Day One of a campaign; it was the continuation of a journey toward justice, marked by both tears and triumph, powered by the unbreakable spirit of those who dare to stand up and speak out.

➤ From Streets to Communities: District-Level Action and Impact

The vibrant energy of the first-day march echoed throughout Nepal, evolving into targeted community initiatives that brought the campaign's messages to life in unique and impactful ways. As WOREC district offices and activists worked to translate national commitments into local impact, a tapestry of initiatives emerged, each addressing unique local challenges while remaining true to the campaign's core message of solidarity against gender-based violence.

➤ Breaking the Silence: Strength in Solidarity- Kailali

In the fight against gender-based violence, words are not enough—action must follow. As part of the 16 Days of Activism, WOREC- Kailali, in collaboration with Sagarmatha Women's Community Organization, Tarangini Foundation, NGO Federation, and other partners, organized an interactive discussion on the implementation of the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Fund and the crucial intersection of mental health.



The gathering was not just about policies and numbers; it was about lived realities. Women shared their struggles, the silent battles fought behind closed doors, and the urgent need for mental health support alongside legal and social interventions. Discussions highlighted the gaps—limited accessibility to the fund, bureaucratic hurdles, and the pressing need for more survivor-centered approaches.

Initiatives like women's shelters and help desks in Dhangadhi Sub-Metropolitan City have provided some relief, but challenges remain—overburdened organizations, stretched resources, and the persistent shadow of stigma. Yet, amidst these obstacles, hope endures. Every voice raised and every effort made strengthens the collective fight for a world where no woman has to suffer in silence.

This dialogue was more than an event—it was a commitment. A promise to push forward, to advocate harder, and to ensure that no survivor is left unheard. The road is long, but step by step, change is being painted onto the canvas of justice.

► Cultivating Change in Classrooms- Udaypur

While rallies and policy dialogues commanded attention in one area, equally powerful transformations were taking place in the other corners of Nepal. The campaign recognized that lasting change requires reaching future generations, leading to targeted initiatives in educational institutions.

In the quiet classrooms of Triyuga and Gauriganga, a storm of change was brewing. As part of the 16 Days of Activism, WOREC-Udaypur organized awareness sessions in schools, weaving together discussions on gender-based violence and substance abuse. These were not just lessons; they were revelations.

For many students, violence was not an issue—it was a routine. A father hitting a mother was "normal." A brother's word was law. A girl's silence was expected. But as conversations unfolded, perspectives began to shift. Some boys hesitated, insisting that household chores weren't meant for them. Others, for the first time, questioned why their mothers bore the burden alone.



The raw honesty in the room was both heartbreaking and powerful. Students spoke of experiences they had never shared, realizing that what they had accepted as ‘just life’ was, in fact, injustice. The discussions didn’t just end with words—they ignited a spark. Two survivors of violence, empowered by the knowledge of their rights, decided to seek legal help.

Change doesn’t happen overnight. Some still struggled to accept that equality isn’t a threat but a right. But what mattered was that the seed had been planted. These sessions weren’t just about awareness; they were about unlearning, about reimagining a world where violence isn’t excused, and silence isn’t the only answer. The road ahead is long, but every shift in mindset, every brave question asked, and every voice that refuses to be quiet is a victory. And in those classrooms, amidst hesitant admissions and quiet realizations, the future was already beginning to take shape.

➤ Bridging Ground Realities with Systemic Change: A Policy Dialogue on Domestic Violence and Justice System- Kathmandu

As awareness spread through communities and classrooms revealed the deep-rooted nature of gender-based violence, it became clear that lasting change would require addressing systemic barriers in Nepal's justice system. This understanding catalyzed a crucial multi-stakeholder dialogue in Kathmandu.



Thus, a gathering took place in the heart of Kathmandu that wasn’t just about sharing knowledge—it was about igniting change. On December 8, 2024, as part of the 33rd International, 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, WOREC, along with ActionAid Nepal, National Campaign for Women Rights (NCWR), Tarangini Foundation, and National Alliance for Women Rights

Defenders (NAWHRD) brought together a diverse group of voices to engage in a powerful policy dialogue on the complexities of gender-based violence (GBV) and the justice system.

The core of the dialogue was a panel discussion moderated by WOREC’s Executive Director Sunita Mainali, which delved into the personal and institutional barriers that perpetuate GBV. Panelists included Gopal Prasad Rizal, Deputy Attorney General; Purnima Chand, Deputy Superintendent of Police; and Bindra Maharjan, Chairperson of the Women Human Rights Defenders, Lalitpur. They discussed how the justice system often overlooks the trauma survivors experience and how the judicial process needs to be reimagined to ensure it is survivor-centric. They also focused on the damaging practice of forced reconciliation in domestic violence cases, urging for the abolition of such practices that harm survivors' rights and dignity.

As the dialogue unfolded, important themes emerged—such as the need to separate reconciliation from cases of violence, as forced reconciliation can retraumatize survivors and undermine the seriousness of the violence they faced. Participants agreed on the importance of creating more accessible legal processes, reducing structural barriers, and ensuring that survivors' voices are heard and respected within the judicial system. The panelists also emphasized the necessity of awareness programs to educate the public, particularly in rural areas, about the legal rights of GBV survivors and the resources available to them.



The event closed with a heartfelt commitment to action. Key speakers, including the former judge of the High Court Kuldat Bhurtel, Police Inspector Nita Thapa, and Laxman Bhandari from the Ministry of Law, all echoed the call for continued advocacy and reform. They emphasized that ending gender-based violence requires collective efforts across all sectors, from legal reforms to grassroots awareness and support for survivors.

Ultimately, the event marked a crucial step in ensuring that Nepal's judicial system better serves the needs of GBV survivors. Much like the classrooms of Triyuga and Gauriganga, where young minds were awakened to the realities of gender-based violence, this dialogue created the foundation for lasting change. It was not just a conversation about policy; it was a reaffirmation that every survivor deserves access to justice, that their voices matter, and that every one of us plays a role in building a more just society. The road ahead may be long, but the dialogue planted the seeds of transformation, ensuring that the future is one of equality, respect, and justice for all.



Labor Desk Implementation: Addressing Workers' Rights through Local Government Collaboration- Udaypur

A pivotal meeting was held as part of the 33rd International Campaign for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, organized by WOREC-Udaypur, Tarangini Foundation, and GEFONT.

This event focused on implementing labor desks and aimed to raise awareness about workers' rights and the crucial role of local governments in ensuring social security for workers.

Key figures such as Jas Bahadur Tamang, the President of JIFNAT Udayapur, and Maya Bhandari, the Chief Guest, attended the gathering alongside various local and national representatives, creating an inclusive dialogue on the challenges faced by workers and the importance of institutionalizing labor desk mechanisms.

The main objective of the event was to highlight the significance of registering workers and maintaining proper records through the labor desk system. Presentations focused on the process of workers' registration, their contributions to social security, and the role local governments play in supporting the formalization of workers. It was emphasized that labor desks must ensure equitable access to work opportunities and be responsible for issuing identification cards to workers, thus solidifying their legal identity and rights.

A key discussion point involved the definition of workers, recognizing both physical and intellectual labor as integral to the workforce. Questions were raised on how this framework can be practically implemented at the local level to ensure that workers, regardless of their role, can access proper legal and social protection. Among the 22 attendees were 1 women and 5 men, all active participants in the session. The presence of such a diverse group of workers underscored the importance of inclusivity in labor rights discussions, with particular attention given to the challenges women face in the workforce.

This event also highlighted the critical role of collaboration between local governments and labor desks. The success of implementing labour desks relies heavily on the support and cooperation of local authorities, ensuring that workers' rights are respected and their issues are adequately addressed. The discussions underscored the belief that if local governments take necessary actions to implement these systems effectively, there could be significant improvements in resolving the challenges faced by workers.

Overall, the meeting reinforced the need for stronger local governance and more effective communication between community workers and government bodies. It was evident that, with proper support and engagement, the implementation of labor desks could serve as a vital tool in safeguarding workers' rights, particularly for marginalized groups. The event not only served as a platform for addressing immediate labor issues but also as a step toward building a more inclusive and supportive workforce in the future.



Engaging Traditional Leaders as Catalysts for Change- Kailali

Understanding the deep-seated influence of traditional leaders in shaping societal norms, WOREC organized interactive programs in Kailahri Rural Municipality and Bhajani Municipality (Ward 6). These sessions provided a crucial platform for Badhghar and Bhalmansa, respected community figures, to engage in open dialogue about dismantling harmful practices such as Chaupadi (menstrual exile), witchcraft accusations, and other deeply ingrained cultural forms of gender-based violence.

WOREC recognized that lasting change cannot be imposed from the outside—it must be driven from within communities. With this vision, the discussions focused on strengthening awareness of legal frameworks that criminalize gender-based violence while encouraging traditional leaders to become vocal advocates for safer and more equitable communities. By fostering an inclusive space, the program also engaged sexual and gender minorities in awareness efforts, ensuring their voices were part of the larger movement for transformation.

A total of 95 participants actively contributed, sharing insights, personal experiences, and reflections on the shifting dynamics of gender norms. These conversations marked an important step toward reshaping cultural narratives, empowering leaders to challenge regressive traditions, and reinforcing the collective responsibility of communities to end violence and discrimination.



➤ **Resilience Amidst Recovery: Voice Against Violence in Earthquake-Affected Regions- Rukum West and Jajarkot**

In the earthquake-ravaged districts of Jajarkot and Rukum-West, where communities were still grappling with loss and rebuilding, the 16 Days campaign took on a unique significance. Through Women Friendly Spaces operated by WOREC, the campaign demonstrated how gender-responsive disaster response could create pathways for addressing deep-rooted social issues.

➤ **Hope Rises from Rubble: Community Mobilization in Jajarkot and Rukum-West**

As dawn broke over the mountainous terrain of Karnali Province, communities still bearing the fresh scars of the earthquake found strength in solidarity. The campaign's energy flowed from Sanibheri and Aatbishkot municipalities in Rukum-West to Bheri municipality in Jajarkot, weaving together stories of resilience and resistance. In these regions, where traditional practices like polygamy and child marriage often overshadow progress, the campaign sparked crucial conversations about gender equality amidst reconstruction efforts.

The Women Friendly Spaces became more than just safe havens – they transformed into centers of empowerment and change. Local school children, through their art and expressions, painted a powerful picture of both harsh realities and hopeful futures. Their artwork revealed a growing awareness of gender issues that transcended their immediate circumstances, proving that even in times of crisis, seeds of social transformation can take root.



In areas where families were focused on rebuilding homes, the campaign demonstrated how gender-sensitive disaster response could address immediate needs while laying the groundwork for long-term social change. Through targeted interventions and community dialogues, these activities highlighted the interconnected nature of disaster resilience and gender equality.

The remarkable participation of local communities, especially young people, in these activities demonstrated that even in the face of natural disasters, the fight against gender-based violence remains relevant and urgent. Their engagement proved that crisis response and social transformation could - and should - go hand in hand.

➤ **Press Conference for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence: A Comprehensive Overview of Planned Activities- Kailali**

On the 9th of Mangsir 2081 (24th November 2025), a pivotal press conference was held in Kailali to announce the planned activities for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Organized by the NGO Federation in coordination with the central organizing committee of the campaign, the event highlighted the collective efforts of various organizations, including WOREC, working to combat gender-based violence in the region.

Devi Khanal, Provincial Coordinator of the NGO Federation, presided over the event, reinforcing the importance of unified action. Sabitra Ghimire, a central member of the Federation, attended as the chief guest, bringing valuable insights on advancing gender equality. The session was moderated by Gokul Khadka, an official of the NGO Federation, ensuring seamless communication and engagement.

WOREC-Kailali played a key role in the press conference, with District Coordinator Geeta Choudhary presenting the core objectives of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. She emphasized the significance of sustained advocacy efforts in addressing gender-based violence, empowering communities, and driving social change. WOREC's engagement in the campaign aligns with its broader mission to create a safe and just society for women and marginalized groups.



The press conference gathered 38 participants, including journalists from various media outlets and representatives from 22 community-based organizations actively working in Kailali. These organizations, operating at local, district, and provincial levels, have pledged to implement diverse activities throughout the campaign period.

A total of 153 activities have been planned, backed by a collective budget of NPR 2,817,000. These initiatives range from awareness campaigns and capacity-building sessions to survivor support services and policy dialogues, all aimed at fostering a culture of zero tolerance towards gender-based violence. The disclosed budget underscores the commitment of WOREC and its partner organizations to sustained and impactful interventions.



Beyond announcing the planned activities, the press conference reinforced the importance of collaborative action among civil society organizations, government stakeholders, and community members. WOREC, as a key implementing partner, continues to advocate for systemic change by facilitating dialogue, strengthening grassroots movements, and ensuring that survivors receive the necessary support and justice.

This event served as a crucial platform for engaging the media and public, amplifying the voices of those committed to ending gender-based violence. It also reaffirmed WOREC's dedication to working alongside partners to create long-term, transformative change. As the 16 Days of Activism unfolds, these collective efforts will drive meaningful progress toward gender justice and equality across the Kailali district and beyond.



Advocating Change from the Grassroots - Dang

While policy dialogues and awareness campaigns unfolded across Nepal, another powerful step was taking shape in the heart of Dang. The Women Human Rights Defenders Network understood that meaningful change requires both visible advocacy and grassroots action, creating a comprehensive approach to combating gender-based violence.

In Lamahi Municipality, a critical conversation was brewing. As part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, the Women Human Rights Defenders Network of Dang, in collaboration with the Women Rehabilitation Center, organized an interactive discussion on November 29, 2024, focused on the challenges faced by those fighting on the frontlines. Under this year's campaign slogan, "Recognizing Women Human Rights Defenders: Campaign Against Violence Against Women," these defenders created a space where silence gave way to testimony.

The stories shared were harrowing yet all too familiar: a rape survivor carrying a high-risk pregnancy with nowhere to turn; a newly married woman rejected by her husband and facing threats from both families; individuals struggling to obtain citizenship; and children experiencing sexual violence at the hands of family members. For many in the room, these weren't just cases—they were daily realities that required immense courage to address. Women Human Rights Defenders spoke of threats, social ostracism, and the exhaustion that comes from swimming against the current of accepted injustice.

What emerged from this raw exchange wasn't just a catalog of challenges but a renewed commitment to solidarity. The participants, representing various organizations across the district, made concrete decisions: to document incidents against defenders themselves, to stand united on complex cases, and to hold local governments accountable for providing security and justice to survivors. In a society where violence is often normalized, these defenders were reclaiming the narrative, insisting that what many dismissed as "private matters" were, in fact, violations of fundamental rights.

The gathering in Dang wasn't isolated—it was part of a nationwide awakening, a recognition that the path to ending gender-based violence requires defenders who are acknowledged, protected, and empowered. And in that meeting room, amid frank discussions and strategic planning, a more just future was already being forged by those brave enough to demand it.

► Illuminating Justice: Madhesh's Movement Against Violence

In the bustling streets of Madhesh, powerful demonstrations illustrated the region's commitment to ending gender-based violence. On November 25th, the streets of Jaleshwar Municipality in Mahottari district came alive with determined voices as government and non-governmental organizations joined forces with human rights activists in a unified rally. Beginning from the municipality premises and culminating at Mahendra Chowk, the event transformed into a corner meeting under the chairpersonship of Jaleshwar Municipality's Deputy Mayor Raushan Khatun, with the Chief District Officer as chief guest.



What made the Madhesh mobilization particularly striking was the seamless blend of traditional advocacy and creative expression. The corner meeting featured not only impassioned speeches but also the launch of WOREC's "Anbeshi" publication and a powerful art exhibition by adolescent girls that reflected the reality of gender-based violence and gender equality. The presence of high-ranking officials—including representatives from the District Administration Office, National

Investigation Department, District Police Office, Armed Police, and the Chamber of Commerce—alongside human rights defenders, journalists, students, and municipality officials demonstrated a community-wide commitment to the cause.

The movement in Madhesh extended beyond daytime rallies. As dusk fell on November 29th, the Women Human Rights Defenders Network, with support from WOREC Dhanusha, gathered at Janakpur Sub-Metropolitan City's Janak Chowk for a solemn candlelight vigil. In the soft glow of the flames, representatives from various organizations—WOREC, INSEC, Maiti Nepal, LIFE Nepal, Afanta Nepal, and the Adolescent Girls Network—stood in solidarity. As Provincial Coordinator of the WHRD network, Rekha Jha offered her closing thanks; the illuminated gathering embodied both mourning for the violence endured and hope for the change to come—a visual testament to Madhesh's role in the nationwide movement for gender justice.



Art as Resistance: The Colors of Change- All WOREC's district

"Art should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable."

Movements need both fire and soul. WOREC understands this deeply, and so it turned to the language of color, brushstrokes, and raw emotion to spark conversations on gender justice. Across districts, from schoolyards to college halls, young minds poured their visions onto canvases—depicting not just hope but resistance. These were not mere competitions; they were declarations.

In places like Jajarkot and Rukum-West, where the earth itself had trembled, art became more than expression—it became healing. Women-Friendly Spaces (WFS), built in the aftermath of the earthquake, transformed into galleries of resilience where children and youth showcased their understanding of gender-based violence, child marriage, polygamy, and the unspoken wounds of discrimination.

And when, during the 16 Days of Activism, a child's painting told the story of a future without fear, it felt like a victory. A testament to WOREC's tireless efforts—meticulously weaving education, awareness, and art into the fabric of change. Because when a young mind paints resistance, a new world begins to take shape.



Recognizing Women Human Rights Defenders: A Powerful Conclusion to the 16 Days Campaign

As the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence came to an inspiring close, WOREC, in collaboration with the National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders (NAWHRD), hosted a dialogue on December 15 during the 17th Annual General Meeting of NAWHRD. This event focused on the theme of “Meaningful Participation of Women in Politics: The Role and Activism of Women Human Rights Defenders,” marked a significant moment in the campaign, shedding light on the critical role WHRDs play in the fight against gender-based violence and their resilience in the face of adversity.

Aligned with this year's slogan, *“Recognizing Women Human Rights Defenders: Campaign Against Violence Against Women,”* the panel discussion brought together a powerful mix of activists, government representatives, and legal experts to engage in meaningful dialogue about the challenges faced by WHRDs, the role of concerned stakeholders, and the need for stronger protective measures and policies.

Ms. Sulochana Khanal, Program Manager at WOREC, kicked off the panel with a thought-provoking presentation, sharing both data and personal stories of WHRDs struggling with threats, violence, and systemic challenges at the local level. These narratives brought to the forefront the urgent need for support and recognition of the invaluable contributions made by these brave women.

The discussion was moderated by Ms. Shyam Shah and featured influential panelists, including Bina Kumari Singh, a prominent WHRD and Province Coordinator of WOREC's Madhesh Province, Mr. Murari Prasad Kharel, a representative from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Mr. Rishi Poudel, a representative from the Home Ministry, and Ms. Mohana Ansari, another fearless WHRD. Together, they delved into the challenges WHRDs face, with a particular focus on the experiences in Madhesh Province, where traditional gender norms and deep-rooted violence against women continue to stifle progress.

Bina Kumari Singh shared her personal struggles, describing how, despite facing threats and harassment, she remains resolute in her advocacy for women's rights at the local level. Her courage echoed throughout the discussion as Mr. Kharel highlighted the NHRC's ongoing efforts to develop a policy specifically focused on protecting WHRDs, assuring that the Commission would continue its support. The Home Ministry representative also pledged their commitment to facilitating the creation of protective policies, working in close collaboration with local authorities to ensure the safety and legal recognition of WHRDs.

In an open-floor discussion, participants shared their own experiences, voicing their frustrations with government agencies' slow response and the lack of swift action to safeguard WHRDs. These conversations underscored the need for urgent, robust legal frameworks and comprehensive support systems for defenders on the front lines.

The session concluded with an optimistic yet determined note, as both the Home Ministry and NHRC reaffirmed their commitment to crafting relevant policies and taking concrete steps to protect WHRDs. This event not only served as a powerful final action for the 16 Days Campaign but also acted as a clarion call for the urgent need to recognize and empower WHRDs, whose tireless work is essential in the fight against violence and discrimination.

By concluding the 16 Days of Activism with this crucial conversation, WOREC reaffirmed its dedication to fostering a society where WHRDs are protected, their voices amplified, and their contributions valued. This event was a bold declaration that the fight against gender-based violence is far from over and that WHRDs will continue to lead the charge, no matter the challenges they face.



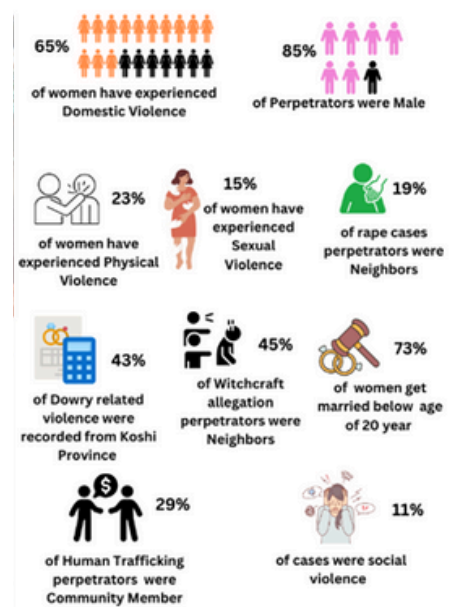
Anbeshi: Turning Pain into Power Through Documentation

Beyond the candlelight vigils and protest marches, WOREC's "Anbeshi 2081" serves as the silent revolution at the heart of the 16 Days Campaign—a meticulous record of stories that society often prefers to forget. Launched on November 25, 2024, this publication does what statistics alone cannot: it bears witness to women's lived experiences of violence, transforming individual suffering into collective evidence that demands action.



The pages of Anbeshi reveal a harsh reality that unfolds primarily behind closed doors: 65% of documented violence occurs within homes, where women should feel safest. Each of these 911 cases represents a woman who dared to speak when silence was expected. The remaining statistics—11% social violence, 13% sexual violence, and 6% trafficking—are not merely numbers but narratives of resistance. Most telling is that 85% of perpetrators were men, confirming what women's movements have long maintained: gender-based violence is a manifestation of unequal power relations that must be dismantled at their roots.

Executive Director Sunita Mainali reminds us that these 1,393 documented cases represent only those women who could overcome immense barriers to reporting. Behind each counted story lie countless others silenced by the political protection of perpetrators, by a society that questions the victim rather than the violence, and by judicial systems that exhaust rather than empower. This year's Anbeshi also turns its lens on a critical but often overlooked reality: the women human rights defenders who document these abuses do so while facing threats themselves—targeted precisely because they dare to challenge the systems that perpetuate violence. Their courage transforms documentation from a passive act into a revolutionary stance against oppression.



► Why the 16 Days of Activism Matter for a Feminist Organization Like WOREC

For an organization rooted in feminist principles, the 16 Days campaign is not merely an event—it is an assertion of resistance, solidarity, and collective power. WOREC understands that violence against women is not an isolated phenomenon; it is interwoven with economic injustice, cultural norms, and political structures. That is why WOREC fights on multiple fronts—legal, economic, social, and cultural—to dismantle the very systems that enable oppression.

Through this campaign, WOREC reaffirms its mission: to build a world where women and marginalized communities can reclaim their bodies, their labor, their voices, and their futures.

The struggle continues, but so does the hope. And as long as oppression exists, WOREC will stand, resist, and rise together with her community, allies, and partners—again and again. A just world is possible and we together make it possible.

"Social Transformation: Our destination"



CONCLUSION

The 2024 16 Days of Activism campaign represented more than just a series of events—it embodied a collective journey toward gender justice. Through its comprehensive approach, combining high-level policy advocacy with grassroots activism, the campaign demonstrated the power of unified action in addressing gender-based violence.

For WOREC and its partners, the campaign reinforced the importance of continued resistance and hope. The diverse activities across Nepal showed that change is possible when communities unite with a common purpose. The collective actions taken during these 16 days were not just symbolic gestures but tangible steps toward a more just and equitable society. The dialogues initiated, the commitments made, and the awareness raised will continue to ripple through communities, influencing policies, attitudes, and behaviors in the long term.

This campaign also underscored the necessity of sustained engagement and solidarity. The fight against gender-based violence is not confined to 16 days—it is an ongoing struggle that requires persistent effort, resources, and collective commitment. WOREC and its partners remain steadfast in their mission to challenge patriarchal norms, advocate for policy reforms, and empower those who have been silenced.

As we move forward, the lessons learned and partnerships built during this campaign will continue to inform and strengthen the ongoing struggle for gender justice in Nepal. By fostering inclusive dialogues, amplifying marginalized voices, and pushing for systemic change, WOREC reaffirms its dedication to a future where women and marginalized communities can reclaim their bodies, their labor, their voices, and their futures.

The struggle continues, but so does the hope. And as long as oppression exists, WOREC will stand, resist, and rise—again and again.



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