

"THE UNHEARD STORIES: RESISTANCE OF MIGRANT WOMEN."

Women In Migration Nepal (MANJARI)

BACKGROUND

Migration today is not just a movement across borders—it is a deeply political space. It's a governance tool, a development narrative, and a research agenda that too often slips into anti-migrant discourse. Racist, gendered, and classist frameworks criminalize the mobility of those from the global majority, reducing intersectional bodies into objects of control. Dominant narratives depoliticize migration, stripping it of history and context, hiding colonial legacies, caste oppression, patriarchal violence, and exploitative global capitalism behind so-called "push-pull" theories.

Migration is not a crisis; it is the outcome of structural injustice. It also holds the radical potential to dismantle those very structures. And at the heart of this transformative power are women, including trans and non-binary people, whose mobility is shaped by and in turn reshapes oppressive systems. Yet, they are either seen as vulnerable victims or economic engines. Rarely are they acknowledged as political subjects with desires, agency, and leadership.

In Nepal, women's migration, especially for labor, has surged. But their stories are flattened: either glorified as heroic remittance-senders or cast as victims of trafficking and abuse. One demands sacrifice, endurance, and service to the nation. The other invites surveillance and control. Both are problematic. Both reduce women to instruments of the state, economy, and patriarchy.

Their lived realities of navigating exploitation, crossing borders, resisting violence, sustaining families, and transforming communities are rarely centered in policymaking or public discourse. Migrant women are present everywhere, yet remain unheard.

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WHY WIMN – MANJARI?

‘MANJARI’, meaning a bud on the verge of blooming, symbolizes a growing feminist movement rooted in the lived experiences of Nepali migrant women. While global and regional networks exist, Nepal lacks a truly women-led space where returnee women, grassroots organizers, activists, and scholars come together, not as beneficiaries, but as political actors.

Too often, migration conversations are shaped by project logics and donor agendas, rather than by the politics, power, and lived realities of women.

Government-to-government labor agreements continue to exclude migrant women from decision-making. This is not accidental; it reflects deep-seated patriarchal systems that silence those at the margins.

The Women in Migration Network Nepal (WIMN) is our political response. It is a space of resistance and imagination, where migrant women, returnees, their families, and allies organize, amplify their voices, and collectively push for justice. WIMN centers the leadership of those long invisibles such as Dalit women, Indigenous women, queer and rural women, working-class women, not as tokens, but as visionaries.

WOREC’S HERSTORY: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

WOREC’s journey began by standing with survivors of trafficking. But we soon realized that trafficking is not an isolated incident, it is deeply rooted in poverty, casteism, gendered violence, and lack of dignified work. In the early 1990s, we established Safe Migration Information Booths and worked to enhance women’s confidence and legal awareness. However, we also learned that migration cannot be truly safe unless women’s rights to mobility and labor are fully respected.

Over the years, we’ve organized returnee women workers, built leadership, facilitated feminist action research, and advocated for just migration policies. Our work has consistently challenged the patriarchal systems that punish women for moving while profiting off their labor.

Now, with WIMN, we take this work to the next level, creating a national platform for feminist migration politics grounded in solidarity, dignity, and rights.

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OBJECTIVE OF THE MANJARI

To campaign for Right to mobility, social security and socio-economic reintegration through national and international networking

To ensure meaningful participation of women, marginalized communities, and sexual and gender minorities in policy-making processes

To create discourse on intersectionality on gender, caste and class. on the issues of Migration and decent work

To make visible the social and economic contributions of migrant women, who comprise nearly half of the global migrant population

Mobilize for feminist policy change that recognizes migration as a right, not a risk.

To challenge exploitation, restrictions, stigma, and exclusion faced by women migrant workers and push for policy solutions

Reclaim migration as a political issues, not just a development agenda.

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WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS

past and present

RETURNEE WOMEN

with lived experience of foreign employment

FEMINIST ACTIVISTS, NETWORKS, AND ADVOCATES

working on gender, labor, and human rights

ACADEMICS AND RESEARCHERS

who focused on migration, mobility, and intersectional justice

ALLIES AND INSTITUTIONS

committed to just, inclusive migration policies

Who Can Be
the Member
of
MANJARI

CONNECT WITH US

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Let's reclaim the right to move, lead, and belong.
MANJARI is more than a network—it's a feminist movement in motion.