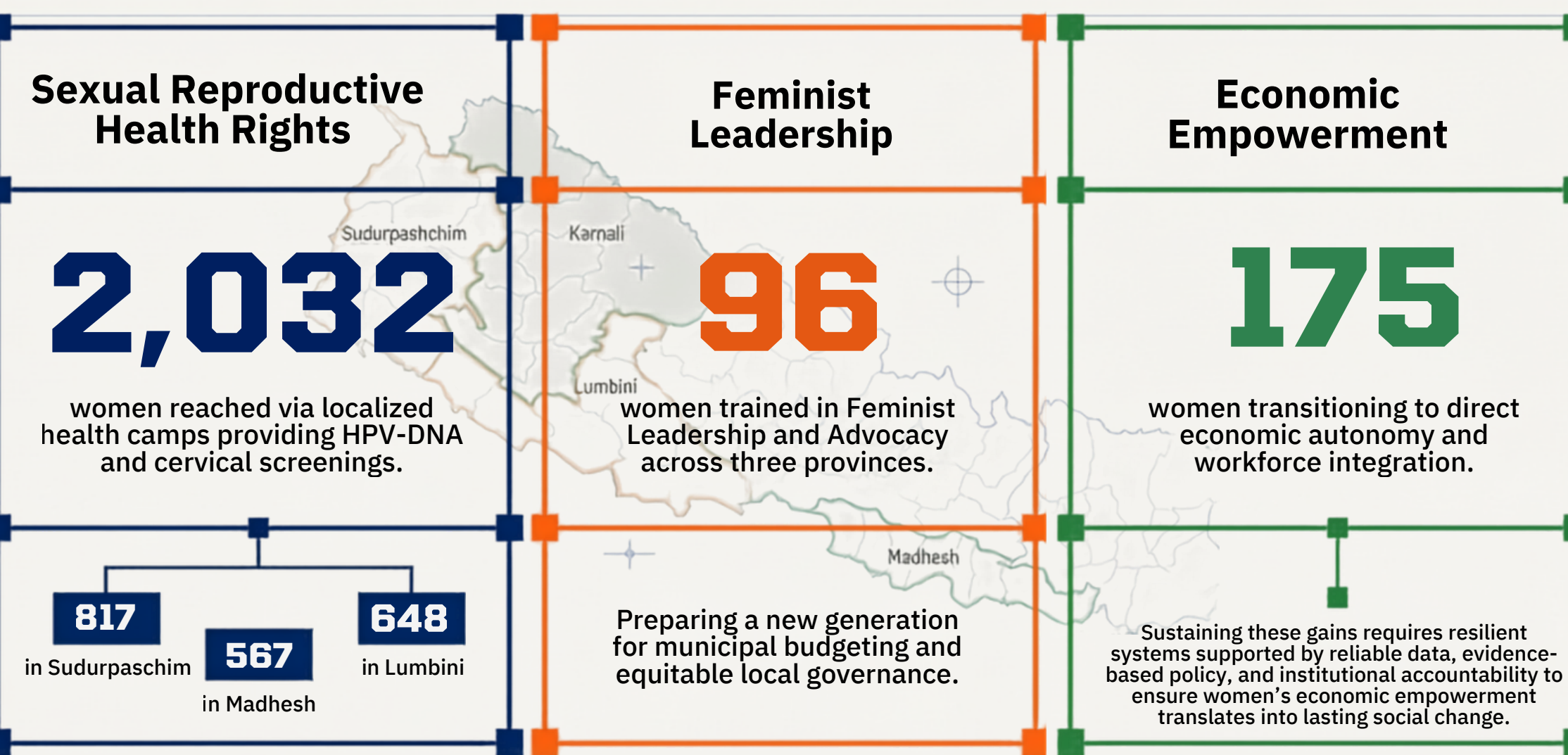


A measurable shift toward systemic impact across Nepal



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From Participation to Social Transformation

The reporting period of April-June 2026 marks a decisive strategic evolution for WOREC, moving beyond project-based activities toward an integrated, impact-oriented institutional framework. The core philosophy driving this transition is the recognition that sustainable social justice cannot be achieved through isolated interventions; it requires the fundamental transformation of the institutions and power relations that govern society. By synthesizing grassroots evidence with high-level policy advocacy, WOREC is dismantling the "participation" narrative—where women are often merely tokenistic attendees—to demand a governance model where equality is embedded into the very architecture of the state. This quarter served as a critical bridge, translating provincial lived realities into systemic insights that challenge national legislative contradictions and international human rights frameworks. This review evaluates how WOREC has strengthened institutional accountability by shifting the burden of inclusion from specialized "branches" to the entire governance structure, setting the stage for deep-rooted human rights and social justice.

Theme 1: Human Rights and Social Justice – Dismantling Systemic Barriers

In the current landscape of Nepal, addressing human rights necessitates a strategic focus on the structural root causes of exclusion rather than its symptoms. This quarter, WOREC focused on identifying how patriarchal mindsets and political protectionism institutionalize a continuum of violence. The objective was to move duty bearers from reactive incident reporting to proactive systemic reform, ensuring that the state's justice architecture is both survivor-centric and insulated from interference.



Addressing the Continuum of Violence

High-level dialogues with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and Nepal Police highlighted a crisis of gender-based violence (GBV) sustained by a culture of impunity. Police AIG Damber Bahadur BK emphasized that superficial efforts are insufficient, calling for integrated action plans and structural transformation across ministries. Similarly, NHRC Secretary Murari Prasad Kharel underscored the necessity of evidence-based policy, noting that long-term solutions require identifying the root causes of violence through rigorous research. These dialogues identified that the normalization of domestic violence and the political protection of perpetrators remain the primary barriers to justice.

The discussions also revealed persistent institutional challenges. Survivors continue to experience fragmented services that often require them to repeatedly recount traumatic experiences, while weak coordination and entrenched gender biases within justice institutions undermine trust and accountability.

In response, WOREC advocated for stronger coordination among One Stop Crisis Management Centres (OCMCs), enhanced institutional accountability, gender-responsive capacity building for duty bearers, and evidence-based policy reforms. Together, these efforts advance a justice system that is survivor-centred, accountable, free from political interference, and firmly grounded in human rights.



Reproductive Justice as a Fundamental Right

The struggle for reproductive justice was articulated this quarter through global engagement at the Women Deliver 2026 conference in Melbourne and localized health camps that reached 817 women in Sudurpaschim, 567 in Madhesh, and 648 in Lumbini. While these camps provided essential HPV-DNA and cervical screenings, the strategic focus remained on policy friction.



Dr. Renu Adhikari
WOREC's founder, noted,

All their stories
and all their
experiences are in
**‘Our Bodies,
Ourselves.’**

Along with the **stories**
and **political activism**,
we started **brokering
power** at the personal
as well as at the
political level.”



*Stories inspire **change**. Power makes it **possible**.*

Dr. Renu Adhikari argued that the Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Rights Act (2018) is undermined by the National Penal Code, which continues to criminalize abortion under certain circumstances. This legal contradiction pushes women toward unsafe practices and creates legal risks for those seeking essential care. True reproductive justice requires dismantling the patriarchal control that persists despite legislative gains.



Every migrant has a story, and every story is evidence.

Muna B.k

Policies become meaningful only when they listen to lived experiences.

Abiral

Young people are not asking whether migration is good or bad-they are asking whether it is fair, safe, and dignified.

Sharada Rai

Women Leading Community Advocacy

Women's groups continued transforming local concerns into collective action. Advocacy efforts contributed to the declaration of additional Chaupadi-free wards, submission of attention letters demanding stronger government action against violence against women, and coordinated campaigns seeking justice in high-profile GBV cases. These initiatives demonstrate how organized women's leadership can influence both public discourse and institutional accountability.

Advancing Citizenship and Legal Identity

In Janakpurdham, women's groups championed access to legal identity by recognizing that birth registration, citizenship, and marriage registration are fundamental gateways to rights, public services, and social protection. Through seven door-to-door orientation sessions, women advocates engaged directly with households to raise awareness of the importance of timely legal registration and encourage families to access essential government services.

By bringing information directly to communities, these grassroots efforts strengthened awareness of citizenship rights, promoted social inclusion, and empowered vulnerable women and families to claim the legal identity that underpins their full participation in society.



Labor Rights and Migration

At the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), WOREC challenged the prevailing narrative of women migrants as passive victims. The analysis revealed that restrictive "migration bans" intended to protect women are the primary drivers of vulnerability, pushing labor toward irregular and unsafe routes. This systemic failure increases the risk of trafficking and modern slavery. WOREC advocates for a rights-based migration governance model that recognizes women as leaders and ensures safe, transparent recruitment channels that honor the dignity of the labor force.

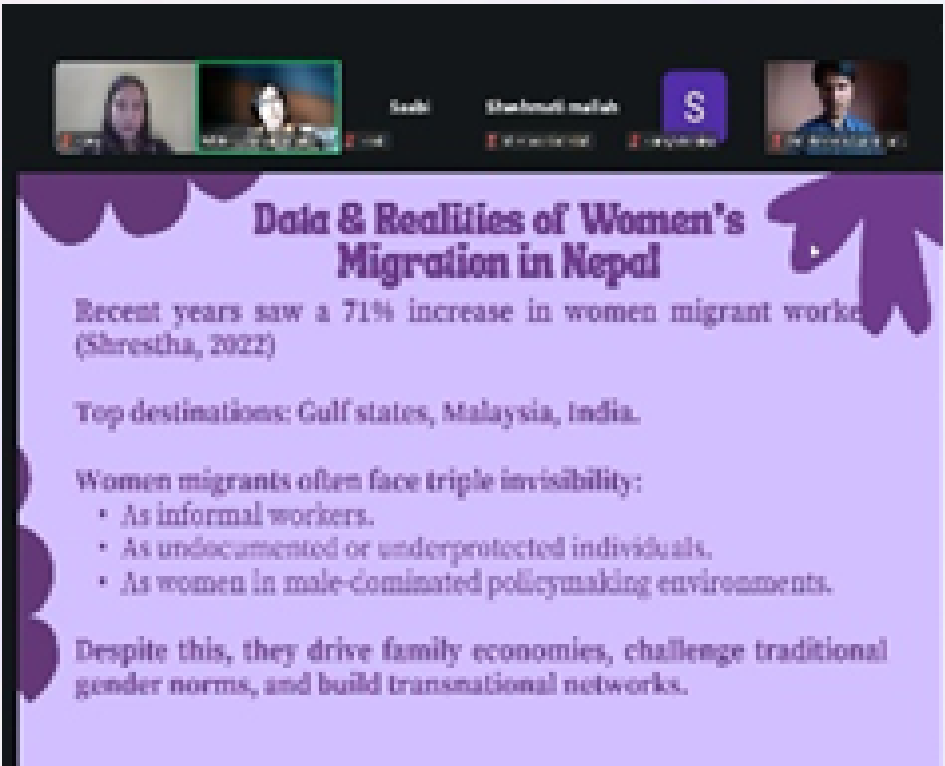


As the focus on institutional protection strengthens, WOREC's framework naturally extends to how women exercise leadership over the resources and environments that sustain their lives.



Young Voices Driving Critical Conversations on Migration

Recognizing young people as active contributors to policy dialogue and social change, WOREC continued creating platforms for youth to engage critically with migration governance through its ANKUR and Manjari internship initiatives. With technical guidance from WOREC, the interns organized a three-part webinar series on "Understanding Youth Perspectives on Migration," bringing together young people, researchers, returnee migrant women, and migration experts to explore migration beyond conventional narratives of employment and remittances.



The discussions highlighted migration as a complex issue shaped by gender inequality, economic insecurity, human rights, and state policy. Participants emphasized that restrictive migration policies often fail to prevent migration and instead increase women's vulnerability by pushing them towards irregular migration channels. By amplifying youth perspectives and lived experiences of returnee migrant women, the webinar series contributed to informed public dialogue and reinforced the need for rights-based migration policies that promote safe migration, transparent recruitment, legal protection, and sustainable reintegration.

Theme 2: Ecological Justice and Women's Leadership – Building Resilient Communities

Ecological justice is inextricably linked to women's economic agency. In Nepal's agrarian context, the climate crisis disproportionately affects women who shoulder the bulk of labor but lack control over resources. WOREC's strategy positions women as economic leaders in transformative agriculture and disaster preparedness.

Transforming Agriculture into Opportunity

Across Sudurpashchim, Madhesh, and Lumbini Provinces, WOREC continued to strengthen women's economic leadership by supporting the development of Local Agricultural Market Strategies. Through the promotion of bio-intensive organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices, women farmers are improving productivity, strengthening local value chains, and reducing dependence on harmful chemical inputs and exploitative market intermediaries.



The initiative also addressed several challenges affecting women's agricultural livelihoods, including labour shortages caused by migration, increasing climate and wildlife-related crop losses, and limited market access. By strengthening women's leadership in farming collectives, promoting organic alternatives such as bio-pesticides, encouraging participatory land-use planning, and facilitating direct market linkages between women producers and buyers, WOREC is contributing to the development of more resilient, sustainable, and economically empowered rural communities.

Gender-Responsive Humanitarianism



Disaster preparedness across the six target palikas- Kailari and Bhajani in Kailali, Tulsipur and Dangisharan in Dang, and Jaleswor and Bardibas in Mahottari- has moved beyond planning into practice through the implementation of Gender-Sensitive Risk Communication Plans. By integrating gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) into local disaster preparedness, these plans ensure that early warning systems for heatwaves and floods recognize women's distinct mobility, safety, and protection needs rather than treating communities as gender-neutral.

Complementing these institutional gains, WOREC strengthened community protection mechanisms through the activation of Sneha Kendras (Safe Spaces) and, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, supported the distribution of dignity kits to women and girls affected by disasters. These initiatives reflect a philosophy rooted in solidarity rather than charity- affirming that dignity, safety, and access to essential support are fundamental rights, even in times of crisis and displacement.



Building on this momentum, WOREC has deliberately woven disaster preparedness into its broader programming. Sensitization initiatives in Shantinagar (Dang), Buddhabhumi and Maharajgunj (Kapilvastu), alongside other intervention areas, carried the same message wherever WOREC works: resilient communities are built when preparedness, protection, and inclusion become integral to everyday development practice.



Economic Empowerment as Safety

The results achieved this quarter reaffirm that economic empowerment is fundamental to women’s safety, autonomy, and meaningful participation in the economy. Through the Economic Empowerment Program, 175 women received vocational training across three municipalities. Meanwhile, the Didi Bahini II program in Siraha facilitated an impactful intergenerational dialogue between veteran Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) and young women entrepreneurs, strengthening knowledge-sharing and solidarity across generations. These achievements demonstrate that when women gain skills, income, and control over their finances, they are better positioned to challenge domestic violence, make independent decisions, and engage in markets as substantive economic actors. Sustaining these gains requires resilient systems supported by reliable data, evidence-based policy, and institutional accountability to ensure women’s economic empowerment translates into lasting social change.

ओरेकको पहलमा : हिंसाको पीडाबाट सफलताको यात्रासम्म



TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING, BY THE NUMBERS

175 women trained

7 training
Batches

5 vocational
sectors

3
Municipalities

Training	Municipality	Participants	Duration
Montessori	Triyuga	26	65 days
Garment	Triyuga	15	81 days
Garment (Batch I)	Biratnagar	75	67 days
Garment	Katari	14	81 days
Beautician	Triyuga	10	78 days
Barista	Triyuga	9	15 days
Garment (Batch II)	Biratnagar	26	55 days

“ Before joining the training, I was afraid to speak in front of even two or three people. Now I can confidently introduce myself and speak without fear ”

-Garment training graduate

“ Now I understand that building confidence, communicating professionally, managing my finances, and knowing my rights are equally important. ”

**Participant, Job Readiness &
Entrepreneurship Training -**

Theme 3: Knowledge Management and Communication

– Institutionalizing GESI Accountability

Evidence-based advocacy and institutional memory are critical to moving from "numerical representation" to "substantive engagement." WOREC's work this quarter centered on embedding Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) into the core of municipal governance.



Women's Leadership Transforming Local Governance

Across Madhesh, Sudurpaschim, and Karnali Provinces, elected women representatives strengthened their capacity to participate meaningfully in local governance through leadership training on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), gender-responsive governance, advocacy, and digital security. Beyond enhancing technical knowledge, the initiative increased women's confidence to engage in municipal planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes. By amplifying the voices of women from diverse social backgrounds, WOREC continues to promote governance that is more representative, inclusive, and responsive to community realities.



Institutionalizing GESI through Audits and Policy

This quarter marked significant progress in institutionalizing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) within local governance systems. Sustained engagement with local governments translated into concrete policy commitments, with Birgunj Sub-Metropolitan City reconstituting its GESI Committee and committing to conduct its first-ever GESI Audit, while Pakhamainpur and Agnisair Krishna Savaran Rural Municipalities pledged to undertake GESI audits in the upcoming fiscal year.

Beyond these commitments, WOREC provided technical support for GESI audits and policy development in municipalities including Birgunj, Pakhamainpur, Chaukune, and Panchapuri.

“This assessment acted as an eye-opener. Accountability belongs to the entire municipality, not just one branch. We now have a clear analysis and improvement plan.”

Khadga B.K., Chief of Chaukune Municipality

“ We realized that sustainable implementation requires policy-level arrangements. Once provisions are in place, documentation and accountability become easier. ”

Lal Bir Bhandari, Mayor of Panchapuri Municipality

The process transformed how local governments perceive accountability by shifting responsibility for GESI from a single focal branch to the entire municipal structure. It also encouraged municipalities to integrate gender-responsive infrastructure and services—including breastfeeding rooms and gender-inclusive sanitation facilities—into regular planning and budgeting processes.

These commitments demonstrate a growing recognition among local governments that gender equality must be embedded within institutional systems and governance structures rather than implemented as isolated project activities.

Advancing Inclusive Planning and Budgeting

Capacity strengthening on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) encouraged local governments to rethink inclusion beyond isolated budget allocations. Discussions emphasized that meaningful inclusion begins with planning processes that reflect the realities of women, Dalits, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. These engagements are gradually shifting local planning from compliance-driven approaches toward more equitable and responsive governance.



Building Feminist Leadership

Sustainable social transformation depends on women who can influence decisions, shape public discourse, and challenge unequal power structures. During the reporting period, WOREC strengthened the leadership capacities of 96 women leaders from Madhesh, Sudurpashchim, and Karnali through Feminist Leadership and Advocacy trainings. By building confidence alongside practical advocacy skills, the initiative is nurturing a new generation of feminist leaders capable of advancing inclusive governance and promoting gender equality at the local level.



By bringing emerging digital rights issues into public discourse, the interns contributed fresh perspectives to WOREC's advocacy, reinforcing the need for feminist digital governance, stronger legal protections, and safer online spaces for women. The article has since been published on WOREC's official website, extending youth-led research to a wider public audience and contributing to national conversations on digital rights and democratic participation. -

The Digital Frontline: Online Gender-Based Violence as a Barrier to Women's Political Participation and Democracy in Nepal – Women's Rehabilitation Centre



A group of women are seated in a circle on the ground in an outdoor setting, likely a village square. They are dressed in traditional Indian attire, including saris and shawls. In the background, several colorful banners are strung across the area, featuring text in Hindi. One banner is yellow with black text, another is red with white text, and a third is blue with white text. The scene suggests a community gathering or a public meeting.

News from WOREC, Global Partnern Nepal

Taking Local Evidence to National Dialogue

WOREC presented research on women's political participation and inclusive governance at Mid - Western University Multidisciplinary International Conference 2026, bringing grassroots evidence into national and academic discourse. The presentation challenged narratives that equate women's participation with numerical representation and instead highlighted the structural barriers that continue to limit meaningful leadership and decision-making.



Men as Co-Creators

WOREC in collaboration with the NGO Federation Nepal and Hami DajuVai, the "Beyond Allyship" workshop redefined the role of men. Shifting away from passive support, the framework emphasized "Self-Accountability," challenging men to dismantle patriarchal structures within their own institutions and homes, framing equality as a collective responsibility.



Case Story 2: Re-thinking the Daughter-in-Law

One participant recalled observing his mother washing dishes early in the morning while his sister-in-law was sleeping.

Why isn't my sister-in-law helping my mother?

Later, through reflection, he realized that his sister-in-law had recently arrived in the family and was also adjusting to a new environment.

- Recently arrived in the family
- New home
- New relationships
- Adjusting to a new environment

He shared:

"I never thought that perhaps I should have gone and helped my mother myself."

Analysis

The story demonstrated how gendered expectations are deeply internalized.

- Household responsibilities are automatically assigned to women, while men's responsibility remains invisible.
- Feminist self-reflection helped the participant recognize his own assumptions and reconsider his role within the family.

Awareness leads to change. Change leads to equality.



Violence Against Women and Girls: The Reality Behind the Numbers

The data collected between April and June 2026 indicate that violence against women and girls remains a serious and multifaceted human rights concern. A total of 552 cases were recorded during the reporting period, with domestic violence accounting for 349 cases (63.22%), making it by far the most prevalent form of violence. This was followed by sexual violence with 93 cases (16.85%) and social violence with 48 cases (8.7%). The data also recorded serious forms of violence, including 14 cases of murder, 9 cases of trafficking, 7 cases of suicide, 5 attempted murders, and 6 cybercrime cases. Young women were particularly affected: 170 survivors (30.8%) were aged 18–25 and 163 (29.5%) were aged 26–35, while 64 girls below the age of 18 were also recorded among the affected population. These figures demonstrate that women and girls, particularly adolescents and young and reproductive-age women, continue to face significant risks of violence, requiring targeted prevention, protection, and support mechanisms.

The data further demonstrate that violence against women is not merely an individual or isolated incident but is closely linked to unequal power relations within families, gender discrimination, social norms, and structural inequalities. The high prevalence of domestic violence, particularly within marital and family relationships, points to the persistence of harmful gender norms and the normalization of violence in private spaces. Moving forward, priority should be given to strengthening survivor-centered justice and referral mechanisms, accessible legal and psychosocial services, economic empowerment, safe reporting systems, community-based prevention, and stronger coordination among local governments, law enforcement agencies, service providers, and civil society organizations. suggest me a topic and develop a flyer .

552

CASES
RECORDED

APRIL – JUNE 2026

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS: THE REALITY BEHIND THE NUMBERS

Violence against women and girls continues to be a serious and widespread human rights concern.

Behind every number is a survivor.

WHAT DOES THE DATA SHOW?



63.22%
349 CASES

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The most prevalent form of violence recorded during this period.



16.85%
93 CASES

SEXUAL VIOLENCE



8.7%
48 CASES

SOCIAL VIOLENCE



14

CASES OF
MURDER



9

CASES OF
TRAFFICKING



7

CASES OF
SUICIDE



5

ATTEMPTED
MURDERS



6

CASES OF
CYBERCRIME

SERIOUS FORMS OF VIOLENCE RECORDED

YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTED



64
GIRLS

were below the
age of 18



170
SURVIVORS
(30.8%)

were aged 18–25



163
SURVIVORS
(29.5%)

were aged 26–35

Women and girls—particularly adolescents and young and reproductive-age women—continue to face significant risks of violence.



VIOLENCE IS NOT A PRIVATE MATTER

The high prevalence of domestic violence reflects deeper structural inequalities, unequal power relations, gender discrimination, and harmful social norms that continue to normalize violence within families and private spaces.

Violence against women is
a human rights violation.

THE WAY FORWARD



Survivor-centered
justice and
protection



Accessible legal
and psychosocial
services



Safe and
confidential
reporting
mechanisms



Economic
empowerment
of survivors



Community-based
prevention



Stronger coordination
among governments,
law enforcement,
service providers,
and civil society



EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL HAS THE RIGHT
TO LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE.

- ✓ Break the silence.
- ✓ Challenge harmful norms.
- ✓ Strengthen protection.
- ✓ Stand with survivors.





A Roadmap for Continued Transformation

The April–June 2026 reporting period demonstrates WOREC's continued shift from supporting individual participation to transforming the institutions, systems, and policies that shape people's lives. By advancing survivor-centred justice, rights-based migration governance, women's economic leadership, climate resilience, gender-responsive local governance, and evidence-based advocacy, WOREC has reinforced a holistic approach to advancing social justice.

The achievements of this quarter—from strengthening municipal accountability and expanding women's leadership to amplifying youth voices and influencing national and international policy dialogue—illustrate that lasting change is achieved when community action is translated into institutional reform. Rather than treating equality as a project outcome, WOREC continues to embed it within governance systems, public institutions, and everyday practice.

As WOREC bridges grassroots realities with policy reform, it reaffirms that meaningful transformation is sustained when evidence, feminist leadership, and collective action converge. Together, these efforts are laying the foundation for a more accountable, inclusive, and resilient Nepal where rights are protected not only through advocacy, but through institutions that uphold them.



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