



"Together in Hand, Transforming Lives"



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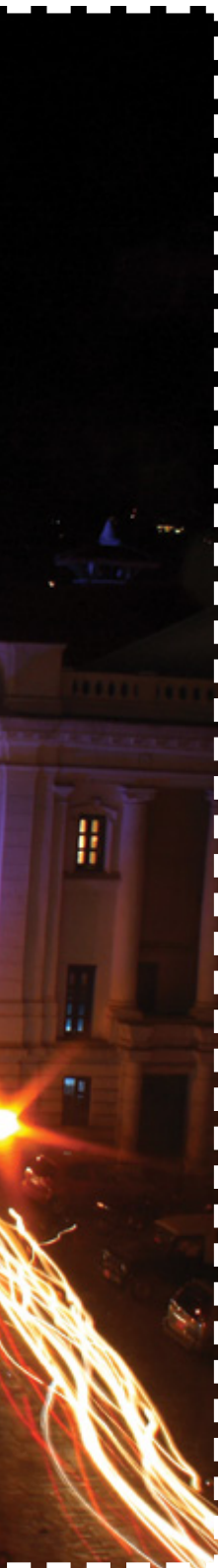
**Years of
Advocacy,
Empowerment,
and Change**

CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY: 2005 – 2025

Fellowship and **EARLY DAYS**



Igniting the night as 3,000 people held burning candles, forming a record-breaking AIDS ribbon—honoring lost souls, supporting the living, and illuminating hope in the fight against HIV/AIDS.



■ **n the late 1990s and early 2000s, Nepal faced the AIDS epidemic, particularly among people who use drugs, leading to isolation, stigma, and discrimination.** Amid this crisis, a fellowship of recovering drug users emerged in Basantapur Durbar Square, offering resilience and hope to rebuild their lives. This era also marked the rise of a movement —often led by those directly affected— advocating for the health rights of People Living with HIV and drug users.

The concept of establishing an organization emerged in response to this national movement. The founders believed that while embracing the Greater Involvement of People with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) principle, the new organization must include not only those infected but also those affected by HIV/AIDS to ensure broader impact and societal acceptance. This vision of solidarity took shape in **FAITH—Friends Affected & Infected Together in Hand—a name that symbolizes unity, resilience, and a commitment to justice.**

At a time when People Living with HIV faced media vilification and widespread misinformation, FAITH prioritized advocacy to combat stigma, empower communities, and influence policy. Media became the key tool to challenge stereotypes and promote accurate, humane representation.

In September 2005, this grassroots movement became an officially registered organization. The journey was not without challenges, but FAITH remained steadfast in its commitment to a world where every individual is treated with dignity and respect.

Roshan Miraz
Founder & Advisor

Reena Lama
Founder & Executive Director



The 2010 World AIDS Day event uses powerful theatre to highlight the stigma and rights violations faced by female and trans sex workers in Nepal, amplifying their unheard voices.

FAITH emerged in response to a national movement for the health rights of people living with HIV and those who use drugs. The collective efforts, including FAITH's, have expanded HIV programs significantly in Nepal. However, as evidence highlighted the vulnerability of people living with HIV to Tuberculosis (TB), we took action. We became pioneers in advocating for and implementing TB programs for people living with HIV, making notable progress in HIV and TB-HIV programs in Nepal.

Despite these achievements, adolescents and women living with HIV, female sex workers, and women who use drugs continue to face challenges in accessing discrimination free essential health services, particularly Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and human rights. This prompted FAITH to broaden its scope, aligning with the evolving needs of the community we serve.

In 2016, we declared ourselves a women-led organisation, marking the beginning of our advocacy for SRHR, violence prevention and response, including psychosocial support, economic rights, gender equality, and social equity for our community.

Our journey has been a profound learning experience, offering insights into ourselves, the community, and strategies to hold the government accountable. We continue to leverage these lessons to drive change, aspiring to shape a society that embraces marginalized populations. For instance, the lessons learned from our advocacy in HIV, combating stigma and discrimination, have been instrumental in advancing our efforts in SRHR, human rights, and other critical areas.

In response to the challenges worsened by COVID-19, we recognized the urgent need to expand our focus to include Gender-Inclusive Economic Empowerment programs and education, particularly in STEM. The pandemic disproportionately affected young people, women especially from vulnerable populations, worsening existing inequalities in access to economic opportunities.

Finally, FAITH's strategic plan also includes climate change as a key focus. We believe addressing the intersection of gender, climate, and economic empowerment is essential for creating resilient communities, especially for the marginalized. By integrating climate adaptation strategies and providing women and youth with the tools to adapt, we aim to reduce vulnerability and promote a secure future.

Today, FAITH proudly serves as a multifaceted advocate for change, working to uphold the health, rights, and dignity of Nepal's most vulnerable and marginalized communities.

Vision:

We envision a world where every individual from marginalised populations can freely exercise their fundamental rights without coercion, stigma, discrimination, or violence.

Mission:

Our mission is to act as catalysts in dismantling stigma surrounding marginalized populations by promoting a rights-based approach, fostering positive attitudes, and ensuring participatory engagement to uphold their dignity, freedom, and equal rights.

Goal:

To guarantee the fundamental rights of women and children from marginalized groups, empowering them to lead healthy and dignified lives, free from coercion, stigma, discrimination, or violence.

Targeted beneficiaries:

- Female and Trans sex workers, women who use drugs, women living with HIV,
- Girls and women from indigenous population, Dalit community, individuals living with disabilities, and those marginalized either geographically or politically.

Thematic areas:

- Human rights
- Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
- Violence prevention and mitigation
- Mental health
- Gender Inclusive education and economic empowerment
- Climate change

Our Strategic Approach:

Strategic Objective 1.

Cultivating leadership among marginalized populations to articulate their needs and concerns to policymakers, ensuring their voices are heard and acted upon.

Strategic Objective 2.

Advocate for and ensure Equity and Dignity of Marginalized Populations

Strategic Objective 3.

Integrating Mental Health Interventions for Holistic Empowerment

Strategic Objective 4.

Gender Inclusive Education and Economic Empowerment Programs

Strategic Objective 5.

Climate Change Interventions Targeting Marginalized Populations

Strategic Objective 6.

Cultivating a Learning Organisational Culture

Strategic Objective 7.

Organisational Strengthening

Milestones:

2005

Officially registered and launched “Music for AIDS” on World AIDS Day, uniting renowned artists to raise awareness, amplify advocacy, and combat stigma.

2006

Organized Nepal’s largest AIDS Candlelight Vigil, bringing together over 3,000 people from the public to honour lives lost to AIDS, raise awareness, combat stigma, and advocate for treatment.

2007

Launched a corporate social responsibility campaign for HIV/AIDS, inspiring corporate leaders to establish the Corporate Social Consortium (CSC), a sister organization of FAITH. Organized Nepal’s first regional HIV/AIDS conference in the Sudurpashchim Province.

2008

Managed the 3rd National AIDS conference, implemented the media component of GTZ’s “SangSangai” youth-focused HIV/AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) program, and mass media campaign on harm reduction.

2009

Engaged corporate houses in the HIV/AIDS response, conducted media campaigns to encourage healthcare-seeking behaviour among females who inject drugs, and developed the national TB-HIV mass media IEC guidelines under Global Fund Round 7.

2014

Implemented Phase 2 National Tuberculosis Programme under GFATM as a regional sub-recipient, covering nine districts in Sudurpashchim Province

2013

Intensified Early Tuberculosis Case Detection in Children (0-14 years) in 12 districts under TB REACH/WHO.

2012

Led media advocacy to promote OST-methadone, implemented a comprehensive package for injecting drug users in Kanchanpur till mid 2015 and conducted a baseline assessment of injection practices and sharps waste management across 63 district hospitals under MoHP and WHO.

2011

Celebrated 100 years of womanhood with “Buddhana” on International Women’s Day, merging art and activism to amplify hidden voices for awareness, empowerment, and change.

2010

Facilitated the development process of the Global Fund Round 10 HIV proposal, implemented the TB-HIV component as a sub-recipient under the National Tuberculosis Program/GFATM until mid 2013, and unified ART and HIV advocacy.

A Timeline of Transformation

2015

Incorporated recommendations from HIV KP into the National Tuberculosis Strategic Plan, provided relief support to victims of the devastating earthquake.

2016

Transformed into a women-led organization and pioneered SRHR advocacy for women living with HIV, women who use drugs, and female sex workers in collaboration with beneficiary-led community organizations, with ongoing support from AmplifyChange.

2017

Set up a playground at Shanti Nikunja School to mitigate the psychosocial impact of the 2015 earthquake among students. Organized a national conference on sex workers' health and human rights. Continued advocating for marginalized women's SRHR.

2018

Inclusion of the specific stigma and discrimination clause in the "Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act 2018", mentored beneficiary-led organizations to advocate for increased SRHR funding and resources and provided outreach services to improve the SRH of female sex workers.

2019

Trained SRH providers to deliver stigma-free care, supported by FP2020/UN Foundation and advocated for better access to safe abortion services in response to the US Global Gag Rule.

2024

Intensified advocacy efforts to combat violence against female and trans sex workers and empowering vulnerable and indigenous youth in STEM through targeted training programs.

2023

Continued violence prevention and response programs for sex workers by promoting their right to equality and non-discrimination, providing mental health services, and strengthening the movement for policy advocacy against violence.

2022

Launched violence prevention and response programs to address the impact of COVID-19, starting with a financial literacy program for the economic empowerment of female sex workers.

2021

Researched health and human rights violations against women living with HIV, women who use drugs, and female sex workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and provided relief support.

2020

Utilised digital methods to enhance SRHR knowledge and awareness.



Developed over 30 audiovisual materials, including documentaries and short films, to advocate for the health and human rights of marginalized populations, addressing HIV, SRHR, safe abortion, violence, and related issues.



Contributed to achieving the objectives of the National Tuberculosis Programme (NTP) through the Nepal Support Project, GFATM National Strategy Application (NSA) Phase 1 and Phase 2, across 13 districts.



Successfully integrated a stigma and discrimination clause in the “Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act 2018” to protect SRHR rights of female sex workers, women living with HIV, females who use drugs, and LGBTIQ individuals.



20 beneficiaries led community-based organizations from 17 districts mentored and built capacity for resource mobilization to advocate for Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, contributing to raising over \$400,000 to date.



3000+ case studies recorded from beneficiaries on SRHR violations, including safe abortion and violence, are being used for evidence-based advocacy.



6,912 beneficiaries from 17 districts oriented, trained, received service to improve their Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights



1,113 Local Government and Health care providers from 16 districts trained and oriented on beneficiaries’ rights to stigma and discrimination free Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights services.



280 beneficiaries from 15 districts received COVID-19 relief package



595 beneficiaries from seven districts oriented in financial literacy, 60 enrolled in vocational training, 15 secured jobs, and 18 started businesses.



300+ Policy makers including parliamentarians and elected local government officials, informed about the right to non-discrimination and equality for female sex workers to address violence against them at the policy level.



1,000+ beneficiaries received psychosocial services



1,732 beneficiaries from 10 municipalities oriented on legal literacy



3,000+ women offered with violence-related assistance, including emergency safe shelter



50+ young people are being trained in STEM education for their economic empowerment



1,000+ students viewed STEM documentaries featuring four inspiring women role models and shared their aspirations to pursue STEM careers for community development.



6000k & counting... Social Media Reach



"Cricket for AIDS" raises awareness about HIV through an impactful match between the National Centre for AIDS and STD Control and the HIV/AIDS Control Board of Nepal.



An expressive art workshop in a women's prison to explore health and human rights, with special gratitude to Ms. Indira Ranamagar, now the Deputy Speaker of the Federal Parliament of Nepal, for her support.



Young people learning hands-on experience in STEM, equipping them with skills for employment opportunities.

Success stories:



Reclaiming My Dignity, Rights, and Future

- Sapana Shrestha

A FAITH outreach worker once sat down with me and began asking about my mental health. I responded casually, saying I was fine, and that life was as good as it could be, just so I could get back to work. But they kept asking questions. As I answered, I began to realize that the pain, the sleepless nights—they had a name. It wasn't just personal; it was real, and it mattered. Through their guidance, I attended healing sessions. Slowly, I began to see the invisible chains I had been living with. I feel much better now.

I also joined FAITH's legal literacy workshop. I had never even heard the term 'economic violence,' but I soon realized I was living it. My partner controlled everything—my earnings, my choices, my life. Through the workshop, I met others with similar experiences, found support, and gained the courage to take legal action. Walking away from him was the hardest thing I've ever done, but it was also the first step toward reclaiming my life. The organization also provided emergency shelter for me and my children for a couple of nights.

Another battle awaited me—I had no citizenship, no legal identity. I understood how crucial it was. Fortunately, I also managed to obtain my citizenship card. I didn't just learn about mental health or violence. I got my dignity, my rights, and my future back. Today, I stand stronger—not just as a survivor, but as someone who has reclaim her life back.

Success stories:

Breaking Barriers:

- Swastika Pokhrel



I always dreamt of pursuing a career in Information Technology, envisioning a future where I could work with technology and create meaningful solutions. However, the cost of a four-year bachelor's degree was far beyond our means.

Someone informed my mother about a free IT training program being launched by FAITH, offering a rare opportunity for young people like me to gain technical skills without the burden of financial constraints. Encouraged by the possibility of a better future, I inquired and was invited to take the test. After undergoing the selection process, which included an interview, I was thrilled to learn that I had been accepted into the program. This opportunity felt like the first real step toward achieving my dream of building a career in IT.

Beyond acquiring technical skills in IT, I am discovering a newfound confidence within myself. This journey is empowering me to step out of my comfort zone, set clear career goals, and, most importantly, believe in my own potential. Connecting with other students has broadened my perspective and helped me build a strong support network. With each milestone, I feel more prepared to navigate the professional world and shape a future that once seemed out of reach.

From Struggle to Strength: A Journey of Redemption and advocacy

- Sarah Dahal



My journey with FAITH began in 2007 when I was featured in one of their documentaries on the stigma faced by women who use drugs. That moment ignited my path to change. By 2010, I had overcome addiction—a victory that fuelled my commitment to helping others. For the next decade, I worked as a community outreach worker in HIV prevention and drug harm reduction programs.

In 2018, I joined one of FAITH's projects focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for sex workers. I was especially grateful for this opportunity, as it allowed me to address a broader range of health concerns, including mental health, safe abortion, — an aspect that had previously been challenging to focus on due to certain limitations. I was given the opportunity to present ground realities to key stakeholders, including the Family Welfare Division and the National Centre for AIDS and STD Control, to improve the SRHR of marginalized communities.

Though I couldn't pursue higher education, my field experience provided invaluable skills. FAITH recognized my potential, guiding me beyond outreach work into technical roles such as training, data collection and analysis, and documentation. Looking back, FAITH's belief in me transformed my life—from overcoming addiction to becoming a voice for others. Today, I remain committed to creating a more inclusive and supportive world for those who need it most.

Success stories:

Uniting for Justice:

- Sabina Limbu, President, Women Workers Protection Union

For over two decades, I have been advocating for the rights of women working in the informal entertainment sectors, facing violence, discrimination, and exploitation through collective action. In 2015, 500 women came together to establish the “Women Workers Protection Union.” I first encountered FAITH in 2016 and formally partnered with them in 2018. While our goals were aligned—fighting for dignity, respect, and equal rights for these women—our approaches differed. Initially, I struggled with their direct approach but soon realized its role in meaningful change. Addressing the harsh realities women face is essential to creating effective and lasting solutions.

One of the things I learned from FAITH is the importance of identifying root causes, exploring solutions, and selecting practical methodologies together with the beneficiaries to ensure that the programs are tailored to the real needs and lived experiences of the community. A great example of this collaborative approach was the development of our mental health and violence prevention program, where input from those directly affected shaped the initiative.

Through this partnership, we strengthened our networks, enhanced our technical capabilities, and secured sustainable funding. This journey has reshaped my activism and reaffirmed the power of solidarity. Though our work is far from over, together we continue striving for a world where every woman is valued and empowered, deserving of fairness, dignity, and protection—regardless of their profession.

Championing Rights Through Policy:

Back in 2017, I was leading the Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Bill as Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Women, Children, Senior Citizens, and Social Welfare. Their advocacy ensured the inclusion of women living with HIV, female sex workers, women who use drugs, and LGBTIQ+ individuals. FAITH's community dialogues deepened my understanding of their reproductive health challenges, shaping my push for an anti-stigma clause—now part of the law.

Sex work is often misframed under human trafficking control laws, silencing discussions on violence against sex workers. Many policymakers remain unaware of the legal barriers they face. I believe everyone deserves a life free from violence. Now, as a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Law, Justice, and Human Rights, I continue working with FAITH to review the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2008, ensuring sex workers' rights to be free from all forms of violence remain a priority.

Honorable Advocate Ranju Jha, Federal Parliamentarian

Acknowledging FAITH's Contribution to Women's Empowerment in Lalitpur

I am truly pleased with the efforts FAITH (Aastha) has been making for the upliftment of marginalized women within Lalitpur Metropolitan City. The organization's dedication to empowering women and strengthening communities is highly commendable. Furthermore, I hope that in the coming days, FAITH will continue to contribute to the formulation of policies and development plans that support the social, economic, political, and educational advancement of various women's groups and communities within our metropolitan area.

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, I extend my heartfelt best wishes for this publication and FAITH's continued progress. May the organization grow in its impact, expertise, and institutional development, remaining steadfast in its commitment to serving the people of Nepal. I hope FAITH continues to thrive, making meaningful contributions to holistic development and societal transformation in the years ahead.

Manjali Shakya Bajracharya, Deputy Mayor, Lalitpur Metropolitan City

Securing Nepal's Global Fund Round 10 HIV Funding: A Collaborative Effort

Reflecting on Nepal's situation in 2009, when I served as Director at the NCASC, there was intense debate over whether Nepal should submit a Global Fund proposal for the HIV program. During this critical period, dynamic young activists, including Miraz Roshan from FAITH and other dedicated HIV advocates from the Global Fund Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM), played a pivotal role. Their relentless encouragement and unwavering belief in the need for sustained HIV interventions inspired me to take the lead in preparing Nepal's proposal for the HIV component.

With their motivation, I worked closely with key stakeholders, technical experts, and community representatives to develop a comprehensive and impactful submission. Our collective efforts paid off—we successfully secured funding through the Global Fund Round 10 HIV proposal, bringing in \$57.2 million. This milestone significantly strengthened Nepal's HIV programs, enabling expanded prevention, treatment, and support services for those most affected by the epidemic.

Prof. Dr. Krishna Kumar Rai, Former Director, National Center for AIDS and STI Control (NCASC) , Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal

A Commitment to Rights and Protection:

My heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to FAITH on achieving this milestone of 20 years.

I deeply appreciate FAITH's significant contributions to protecting the human rights and dignity of sex workers. The organization plays a crucial role in safeguarding this marginalized and minority community from potential violence and exploitation through coordination and collaboration with Nepal Police. I sincerely hope FAITH continues to strengthen its efforts in this field and remains a powerful force for change in the years ahead. Wishing the organization continued success in its mission.

SP Mohan Kumar Thapa, Human Rights section, Nepal Police

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FAITH have evolved and responded to the needs of some of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in Nepal. Never shying away from seeking lasting change for communities and bringing those communities along on the journey. Wishing you every success for the next 20 years.

Liz Tremlett, Head of Grant Making, AmplifyChange

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KIOS has been a proud supporter of FAITH's work since 2022 and ever since, KIOS has been especially impressed about the quality and professionalism of FAITH's work and how passionate they are in advocating for the human rights of sex workers in Nepal. Their unwavering dedication for the rights of one of the most marginalised groups in Nepal is truly inspiring and it is evident that by fostering a space where individuals can lead, make decisions, and take control of their lives, FAITH is not just advocating for human rights—it is redefining what meaningful inclusion and equity look like in practice. Warmest congratulations on behalf of KIOS Foundation on your 20th anniversary!

Veera Teittinen, Adviser, KIOS Foundation

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Women Win has been incredibly proud to support FAITH. Their dedication, resilience, and impact over the years have been truly inspiring. Through the FREE Fund and FREE STEM Fund, we've had the privilege of witnessing FAITH's journey and seeing the meaningful change they create especially related to advancing the economic resilience of their communities. We look forward to continuing this partnership and standing in solidarity with their mission.

Naledi Kekana, Senior Programmes Specialist, Women Win

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FAITH is making a significant impact on mental health support for female sex workers in Nepal through its peer-to-peer model. They have reached 1,000+ women, providing counselling and advocacy. FAITH's strong financial management, community focus, and sustainability efforts make it a highly recommended organization.

Anna Macdonald, Grants Manager, Elton John AIDS Foundation

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FAITH's media advocacy has been instrumental in raising awareness about Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST), including methadone programs, in Nepal. FAITH has successfully highlighted OST as a life-saving program for people who use drugs, helping to dispel myths and misconceptions while expanding access to essential treatment and support services.

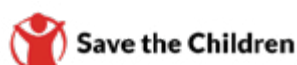
Patricia Karmarz, Program Leader, GIZ Harm Reduction Program, Nepal

Global Support for Local Change

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our donors, supporters, and partners whose contributions have been instrumental in our success.



Government of Nepal
MINISTRY OF HEALTH





An advocacy campaign demanding transparency in HIV/AIDS funding in Nepal, ensuring meaningful and proportionate resources for the community, amplifying their voices for accountability and equitable support.



Community women's group in Nepal's far-west region participating in TB-HIV dialogue.



Art exhibition amplifies the voices of affected communities—FSWs, LGBTIQ individuals, people living with HIV, and people who use drugs—ensuring meaningful involvement in health and human rights advocacy.



BUDDHANA, an advocacy movement for women's rights, challenging traditional norms. The image of women as Buddha sparked resistance from religious fundamentalists yet ignited a powerful conversation on equality.



Happy Bakery trainees heartily thank Senior Experten Service (SES), Germany, for your technical support in establishing Maitreya Bakery!



A playground is set up at Shanti Nikunja School to mitigate the psychosocial impact of the 2015 devastating earthquake on students.

Empowering women and young people from marginalized populations, indigenous populations, Dalit community and those living with disabilities.

Here's to the next five years of FAITH, hope, and transformation.

- ✧ **Empower** young people and women from marginalized populations through leadership programs, ensuring their voices are heard and integrated into decision-making for impactful outcomes.
- ✧ **Intensify** advocacy for marginalized populations' equity and dignity through research, policy advocacy, and initiatives to reduce stigma. Leverage media, technology, and strategic partnerships to advance our mission and drive systemic change.
- ✧ **Promote** mental health services, including mindfulness led by peers, and launch community awareness initiatives to reduce stigma and enhance mental well-being. Advocate for integrating mental health interventions into broader health programs through comprehensive research and collaboration with advocacy groups to drive positive change.
- ✧ **Prioritize** gender-inclusive education and economic empowerment, focusing on STEM skills for marginalized youth to achieve financial independence. Advocate for equal opportunities and support social entrepreneurship development.
- ✧ **Lead** vulnerability assessments to identify climate change impacts on marginalized populations and create tailored adaptation strategies. Advocate for inclusive climate policies and champion community-based initiatives, including indigenous practices, to strengthen resilience and drive lasting change.
- ✧ **Focus** on organizational strengthening by enhancing internal capacities, optimizing processes, and building resilient infrastructure. We intensify efforts to become a learning organization, fostering knowledge sharing, innovation, and adaptability to effectively respond to community needs and ensure sustainable, impactful growth.



Peer-to-peer, community-based outreach psychosocial support - breaking stigma and creating safe spaces for healing.



Filming the HIV and harm reduction Role Model Documentary, screened at the 2012 XIX AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C., highlighting Germany's commitment to global HIV programs.



Elected Local government members from Koshi Province attend the annual joint lessons learned workshop, sharing successes and challenges.



Engaging with Nepal's minority Muslim women in a reproductive health discussion, fostering awareness, dialogue, and empowerment in a safe and supportive space.



Facilitating the gap analysis for Global Fund Round 7 and leading the writing process for Round 10, helping Nepal secure \$57.2 million with key stakeholders.



Urban sustainable farming as climate change adaptation interventions, promoting economic resilience among marginalized women.



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