

Annual Report Summary

Friends Affected & Infected Together in Hand (FAITH) — Aastha

17 July 2022 – 16 July 2023

OUR MISSION

To envision a world where every individual can exercise their fundamental rights free of coercion, stigma, discrimination, and violence.

3 Active projects this reporting year	7 Districts reached across Nepal	3 International funding partners	2022–23 Reporting period
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About FAITH

Friends Affected & Infected Together in Hand (FAITH), founded in 2005, is a women-led non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to representing marginalized populations, including women living with HIV, people who use drugs, and female sex workers.

Goal: To ensure the fundamental rights of women and children from marginalized populations to live a healthy and dignified life. FAITH's focus is on women and children from disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable groups, with particular attention to women living with HIV, females who use drugs, female sex workers, and sexual minorities.

- Advocating for the meaningful participation of disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable groups in policy and decision-making processes.
- Supporting the effective and efficient delivery of health services.
- Promoting sustainable socio-economic development for disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable populations.

Methodology: FAITH works through sensitization, capacity building, community and policy dialogues; generates evidence through research to inform advocacy; produces audio/visual awareness materials; develops innovative interventions with beneficiary-led CBOs; and organizes fundraising events.

Project 1: Supporting Economic Empowerment of Female Sex Workers in Nepal

Supported by	FREE Fund/Women Win, Netherlands
Duration	12 months (November 2020 – October 2021)
Districts	Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Sunsari, Morang, Bara, Makwanpur
Budget	USD 48,000.00
Status	Completed

Female sex workers commonly face low literacy, lack of formal work agreements, bank accounts, and legal credit — often compounded by lacking a birth certificate or citizenship. The project aimed to economically empower FSWs by increasing their financial literacy, inclusion, and economic options.

Key Achievements

- Ten beneficiaries capacitated as master trainers; 130 beneficiaries trained directly and 315 more oriented in the field on financial literacy.

- Of 60 beneficiaries who enrolled in vocational training, 15 started new jobs and 18 started their own businesses (three formally registered).
- 90.71% of trained participants reported increased financial literacy knowledge; over 90% reported actively using it — reducing expenses, increasing savings, and seeking formal loans.
- FAITH revitalized its Mantra Savings and Credit Cooperative and established a small bakery training facility to support organizational sustainability.
- FAITH developed four proposals for two partner beneficiary-led organizations, which secured around EUR 60,000 for labour and economic-rights advocacy.

Activities at a Glance

Activity	Target	Achieved	Notes
Needs assessment among FSWs to inform project planning	110	140	Report used for vocational self-analysis.
ToT with beneficiaries on financial literacy	10	10	Master trainers deployed for roll-out training.
Roll-out financial literacy training/orientation	100	445	130 trained directly; 315 oriented in the field.
Support enrolment in vocational training	50	60	15 started new jobs; 18 started own businesses.
Support registration of small business/enterprise	7	3	Some sites lacked registered premises.
Results sharing via social media	1	1	Shared on FAITH's website and social platforms.

Challenges & Learnings

- COVID-19's third wave forced group-size restrictions; the program adapted training from four days to two, with monthly follow-up sessions — a change beneficiaries found more effective than one-time workshops.
- Low literacy among participants slowed data collection; informal, unregistered housing prevented some beneficiaries from formally registering their businesses.
- Beneficiaries reported that supplementary income reduced reliance on sex work and empowered them to decline unsafe clients — showing financial literacy also supports women's safety and empowerment.

Project 2: Promoting the Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination of Female Sex Workers

Supported by	KIOS Foundation, Finland
Duration	12 months (16 January 2023 – 15 January 2024)
Districts	Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Sunsari, Morang
Budget	EUR 33,000.00
Status	Ongoing

FSWs face significant discrimination and disownment due to stigma, and existing laws and policies often fail to uphold their rights to equality and non-discrimination — with sex-worker rights sometimes excluded even from broader

women's rights movements. The project addresses these violations through evidence-based advocacy and coalition-building.

Key Achievements

- Produced three plain-language Nepali documents on violence against FSWs and sex-worker-inclusive rights movements, usable by any FSW-led CBO or NGO for advocacy.
- Trained 12 individuals from FSW-led CBOs (against a target of 10) on human rights monitoring, documentation, and reporting over a six-day training.
- Supported a Kathmandu Valley FSW group to develop an advocacy proposal; a participating organization secured about EUR 9,000 to build a Province 7 human-rights movement.

Activities at a Glance

Activity	Target	Achieved	Notes
Project approval from ward, municipality & SWC	2	2	Approval received from Lalitpur municipality and SWC.
Briefing/position papers on FSWs' human rights	3	3	500 copies each printed for duty-bearers and CBOs.
Organizational capacity-building training for CBOs	10 pax	12 pax	Six-day training on human rights monitoring & reporting.
International-day events & policymaker workshops	300+ pax across events	0	Public events suspended over messaging concerns; shifted to direct policy advocacy submissions.

Challenges & Learnings

- Planned International Labour Day events were suspended after disagreement over softening 'female sex workers' language on banners for safety reasons; FAITH redirected effort to direct policy advocacy submissions rather than obscure the population it represents.
- The three documents produced serve as a lasting framework for engaging duty-bearers, intended for use in the next KIOS-funded period and future FAITH programming.

Project 3: Addressing Mental Health Challenges Among Female Sex Workers in Nepal

Supported by	Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF)
Duration	12 months (1 June 2023 – 30 May 2024)
Districts	Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Sunsari, Morang
Budget	USD 47,986.30
Status	Ongoing

Sex work carries high risk for mental health problems: a Nepal study among FSWs in Jhapa, Morang, and Sunsari found depression prevalence of 82.4%, with violence and HIV-risk behaviour increasing the odds of depression five- and six-fold respectively. FAITH is implementing a community-based peer-to-peer approach to improve FSWs' mental well-being.

Objectives

- Empower FSWs with lived experience of mental health challenges to support their peers.
- Enhance mental health literacy and mental well-being among FSWs.
- Measure the intervention's effectiveness in improving mental well-being and improve uptake of findings.

Activities at a Glance

Activity	Target	Achieved	Notes
Training on community-based psychosocial counselling	10	8	Trained to conduct community-based counselling.
Mental health literacy workshops with FSWs	1,000	24	Only one workshop completed this fiscal year.
Mobilize trained counsellors in the community	1,000	0	Ongoing into next reporting period.
Establish self-help support groups	5	0	Planned for next fiscal year.

Progress Note

Eight of a target ten FSW-led CBO members were trained in community-based psychosocial counselling. One mental health literacy workshop was completed this fiscal year, reaching 24 participants; mobilizing trained counsellors and establishing self-help support groups are planned to continue into the next reporting period.

This summary is published by FAITH for transparency and accountability. It is a condensed presentation of the Annual Report (17 July 2022 – 16 July 2023); the full internal report with detailed activity tables is available on request.