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**“Women Empowerment Initiatives in**  
**Nepalese Tourism Industry”**



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**Nepal Tourism Board**  
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## Executive Summary

*Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the “Sustainable Tourism for Livelihood Recovery Project (STLRP)” to support the recovery of Nepal’s tourism via providing short-term employment to poor and vulnerable tourism-dependent communities, capacity building of the tourism trade association and tourism entrepreneurs and institutional strengthening of key tourism sector stakeholders in the country. STLRP partnered with the local government and tourism trade association for the implementation of interventions that are identified conducting joint consultation with the tourism trade association and local government. STLRP promoted joint implementation with matching fund modality by leveraging resources from its partners by ensuring at least 50% budget in its program activities. Further, STLRP reached the unreached tourism potential areas for the promotion of tourism while implementing its activities. The STLRP provided women-focused intervention and conducted exclusive women-targeted capacity-building training-river guide training, trekking guide training, basic homestay management training, etc. The STLRP organized exclusive women-focus training for the first time only for women in Nepal to increase the attraction of women and make them self-reliant as women's participation in tourism is comparatively very low, which is expected to be a milestone in women's workforce development in tourism. The program also prioritized those tourism infrastructures which were directly beneficial or supported to the women tourism workers by creating employment opportunities. The STLRP provided training to around 750 women in the year 2022 and also conducted numerous trainings for women in the year 2023. Similarly, STLRP reached out to 41% women, 5% Dalit, 51 % Janajati, and 46% others respectively in its capacity-building program. To ensure the women, disadvantaged and ethnic communities, the STLRP exclusively designed more than 10 women-focused training and strongly suggested all partners ensure at least 50% women participation. Also, STLRP supported the establishment of women-run homestay entrepreneurs. Promotion of women as a worker and or entrepreneurs will be an added advantage for the sector as women naturally possess various hospitality attributes like aptitudes, mannerisms, softness, listening abilities, and responsible habits. The training helped women to build a career for themselves in the tourism sector, support generating employment and support gender balance in the workforce in the tourism industry. Empowering women is one of the best ways to promote economic growth and to achieve peace and security which support achieving sustainable development goals 5- Gender Equality and Empowering Women. Hence, best practices and learnings from women-focused interventions should be upscaled and replicated to increase the wider coverage of locations as well as beneficiaries for the promotion of the tourism industry in the country.*

## 1. Introduction

Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for initiating a joint project “Sustainable Tourism for Livelihood Recovery Project (STLRP)” to support the recovery of Nepal tourism, one of the hardest hit sectors by the COVID-19 pandemic. This partnership between NTB and UNDP came after the successful implementation of “Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program” (TRPAP) from 2002 to 2007, and a pilot project “Immediate Livelihood Support for the Most Vulnerable Workforce in Tourism Sector” implemented in 2020. The Sustainable Tourism for Livelihood Recovery project – a joint project of the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) and UNDP – aims to support the revival of the tourism sector. In light of the need for immediate livelihood opportunities, STLRP will focus on providing short-term employment opportunities to women and vulnerable communities whose livelihood depends on tourism. Special attention is therefore needed to protect communities that depend on tourism and investments in the tourism sector. Simultaneously, the STLRP will also initiate activities to support the long-term revival of the tourism sector by creating sustainable jobs and livelihood opportunities in partnership with the private sector; developing human resource capacity; supporting the creation of tourism-based enterprises; strengthening sector-related data and information management and digitalization and articulating a comprehensive tourism recovery strategy. Aligned with sustainable tourism concepts, STLRP activities will be oriented toward promoting a green economy. The STLRP has three interlinked outputs:

- Vulnerable tourism-dependent communities particularly women and people from disadvantaged groups in the tourism sector that have lost their source of income due to COVID-19 have received short-term employment opportunities to meet immediate livelihood needs.
- Entrepreneurs and other workers in the tourism sector have enhanced opportunities for employment and income generation through the renovation and development of the tourism infrastructure in major tourist destinations.
- The institutional capacity of the NTB is strengthened through the formulation of a comprehensive tourism recovery strategy, as well as through increased digitization and other efforts for future disaster risk management.

STLRP has given due consideration to women empowerment, gender and social inclusion, and empowerment of poor and marginalized community people. The economic empowerment of women is a critical consideration in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It is a key component of SDG 5 and as well as an important part of SDG Goal 8 on the promotion of sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Gender equality and the economic growth of a country are strongly correlated. It is considered that a 0.1 reduction in gender inequality as measured by the United Nations’ gender inequality index is associated with almost 1 percentage point of higher economic growth. Gender inequalities are still deep-rooted in every society. Women suffer from a lack of access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes. In the country, women's human resources are limited in the tourism industry, especially the rafting and trekking industry. Similarly, meaningful participation of women and socially excluded groups in user

committees is poor. Hence there is a need to promote inclusive development by prioritizing women, the poor, and people from disadvantaged groups in all aspects of STLRP interventions.

In Tourism, men are pre-eminent in the workplace. Hence, STLRP offers more and more capacity-building initiatives to women for their income opportunities and support in the tourism sector as well. By empowering women, STLRP aims to promote leadership among women and youth in tourism that will have a ripple effect on the condition of their families and communities.

## 2. Relevance

Nepal is a favorite destination for mountaineering and trekking, and wide cultural tourism with more than one million tourists visiting Nepal per year in recent years. This activity is a major source of jobs for hundreds of thousands of local people who serve as porters, trekking guides, tour guides, or work in hotels, etc., most of them come from poor backgrounds. These people now have minimal income or have lost jobs entirely due to the COVID-19 crisis. Since the tourism sector in Nepal is essentially seasonal, the affected people are generally daily wage earning. Despite the huge potentiality sector, tourism contributes less than 4 percent to Nepal's economy.

The gender dimension of the tourism sector is important to consider in Nepal. The proportion of male participation/engagement is very high in the rafting and trekking sector. However, in homestays, the only sub-sector employs more women than men. About 57.3% of workers in homestays are women. Many of the homestays are managed by women. This type of tourism mechanism provides equal opportunity for all and can promote stronger community engagement, particularly by engaging more women in the tourism sector. On the other hand, the government has also initiated efforts to increase the number of women in other sub-sectors, including as guides. A favorable environment must be ensured to frame the tourism sector as a women-friendly sector. There is a need of developing different programs and initiatives that strive to reach and empower women, who can work in the tourism industry from the grassroots to the national, regional, and continental levels, with a particular focus on building the capacity and confidence of the most marginalized women, such as young women and girls in major tourism destinations and tourism potential areas. This is achieved through the provision of tailored and customized capacity-building and capacity development packages that not only provide partners and stakeholders with the specialized knowledge and skills needed to develop and carry out capacity in the tourism industry but also further 'tourism industry-based empowerment' – enhancing their agency and confidence in their ability to become a quality service provider in the tourism industry for positive change.

### कान्तिपुर Lack of skilled manpower in the tourism sector

The problem is that the manpower prepared by the state cannot be sustained in the country: Businessmen

Falgun 3, 2079 | Kantipur Correspondent



Lumbini - The stakeholders here have said that there is a shortage of skilled workers in the tourism sector, which has been affected by various reasons. They said that due to the lack of skilled workers, there is a problem in upgrading tourist services.



In the country, women's participation in tourism is meager. A negligible number of women participate as porters, trekking guides, rafting guides, etc. The majority of the women's involvements are at lower-level jobs. There could not be balanced development of the tourism sector without enhancing the equitable share of women workers in access to and control over the benefits from tourism in a context where more than fifty percent of the total population is women. Similarly, there is a towering need for pro-women (focusing on protecting and safeguarding women) tourism policy, action plan, and programs to pull up poor and marginalized women from their handful numbers and lower status of participation in the tourism industry to establish equal opportunities for themselves. There is a pronounced gender imbalance in Nepal's tourism sector. For many years, men are prominent in the tourism sector. Tourism industries are facing skilled manpower shortages and even alarming shortages of women workforce after the COVID-19 pandemic. To revive the hard-hit tourism sector, Nepal Tourism Board in collaboration with tourism trade associations provides skill-based training to women and marginalized communities, and now trying to revive the tourism sector by increasing women's participation as men are away for extended periods working overseas mainly as migrant laborers.

### **3. Objectives**

Entrepreneurs and other workers in the tourism sector can enhance opportunities for employment and income generation through skill development, job creation, enterprises, market linkages, etc. for the local economic development to revive tourism activities along the trails and major tourist destinations. The following are the specific objectives.

- To provide skill-based training focusing on women, the LGBTIQ community, and marginalized communities to promote equal opportunities for all.
- Provide capacity-building training to women in trekking, hotel and restaurant, travel-based industry, river base tourism industry, and small-scale hotel and homestay.
- Increase the gender gap in the tourism industry.

### **4. Target Audience/Beneficiary and selection**

STLRP ensures women, youth, marginalized people, and ethnic minorities as beneficiaries to promote inclusion by adopting the following practices.

- Priority is given to local women associated with the tourism sector who have lost their jobs and source of income.
- STLRP prioritizes women as porters, local guides, and workers in hotels and restaurants.
- Priority to poor women and other disadvantaged groups with limited access to resources, education, or skills development opportunities.
- Identifies the target population by carefully looking at intersectionality recognizing diversity among women and considering intersectional factors such as age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, and geographic location for inclusivity.
- Encourages STLRP partners to ensure at least 50% of women beneficiaries including marginalized and disadvantaged community people.

## 5. Strategy for Women Empowerment

Considering Nepal's protracted and widespread inequality and various forms of structural exclusion in gender and social dimensions, STLRP has promoted inclusive development by prioritizing women, the poor, and people from disadvantaged groups in beneficiary selection and design of activities according to their needs and priorities. STLRP also takes extra efforts to identify entry points for the engagement of women and disadvantaged groups in decision-making roles at the community level by ensuring compulsory participation in the user committee for the re/construction of the tourism infrastructures. These groups are mostly associated with informal sectors and hence many of them either lost their jobs or sources of income during the pandemic. STLRP partners with public and private institutions dedicated to these groups. Similarly, STLRP provides a platform for rural, disadvantaged women who have few opportunities to develop knowledge, learn and use their skills to earn to support themselves and their families.



STLRP ensures the integrated and multiple strategies while ensuring the women's capacity building and participation in the re/construction of tourism infrastructure. The following are the key strategies to enhance women's empowerment and disadvantaged communities.

- From participation to transformation- ensuring and encouraging inescapable truth—we cannot transform our world unless the status of women is transformed.
- Enhancing women's intervention, especially women's participation in decision-making, leadership, and peacebuilding in the user committee.
- Empowering women's economic status via the promotion of skill building, training, and professional development.
- Integrating women empowerment interventions with re/construction of tourism infrastructures.
- Integrating gender equality and women's empowerment into the program implementation strategy.
- Designing and implementing exclusive women-targeted interventions to enhance their skill and employment opportunities.
- Prompting equal opportunities for all by designing a special skill enhancement program for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, or questioning (LGBTIQ) community.
- Targeting women-focused intervention in geographically unreached areas.
- Promoting women's empowerment through community initiatives and advocacy.
- Committing to promote gender equality in corporate and human resource policies and practices.
- Promotion of gender equality actions explicit in all processes and interventions.
- GESI integration in Result Framework, Multiyear Workplan, and GESI-friendly annual work plan.
- GESI integration in collaborating partner's action plan/activities.
- Adopted exclusive dedication to promoting gender equality and empowerment of women in tourism through GESI-targeted exclusive interventions.



## **6. Operations**

STLRP operates in collaboration and coordination with the local government. For capacity building of the women, STLRP has partnered with 3 local governments ([Apihimal Rural Municipality](#), [Badimalika Municipality](#), [Dupcheshwar Rural Municipality](#), and [Budanilkantha Municipality](#)), two tourism trade associations ([Hotel Association Nepal](#), [Nepal Association of Tours and Travel Agents \(NATTA\)](#)), one NGO and one Academic Institute i.e. [Nepal Mountain Academy](#)- a government organization functioning under the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of Nepal that provides various skill enhancement program.

## **7. Community commitments**

To ensure smooth implementation of the Programme, ownership of the local community is utmost. STLRP has been implemented in close coordination with the local government, local community people, and the Users' Committee (UC) with cost-sharing from respective municipalities, tourism trade associations, and local community people. Since local communities and local government are leading the project management and implementation, STLRP supports building local capacity for planning and implementation of development projects at the community level in addition to promoting social cohesion. On top of that, the participation of communities and community-based organizations is vital to promote ownership and sustainability. Partnership and synergy are crucial in not only achieving program outputs but also attaining sustainability.

STLRP involves the local community in the selection of project interventions. The selection process of schemes is based on systematic prioritization and as per a sense of community ownership, genuine needs, demonstrative, the culmination of partnership, and resource optimization. Whenever possible, project personnel visited the sites and appraised the schemes by local officials, consulted with local communities, and had rigorous discussions with officials for further improvement of the schemes. Similarly, the project prioritizes interventions offering more employment opportunities (renovation of tourism infrastructures, installation of signage and waste management bins) and had potentialities for tourism promotion (construction of green trails, cycle trails, etc.) at local levels. Most of the interventions would benefit poor and vulnerable tourism workers focusing on women and socially excluded groups. Local communities were involved in each step of project execution: planning, implementation, monitoring, and handover process. In 2022, the project provided jobs to 2000 poor, vulnerable, and marginalized community people (5% Dalit, 51% Janajati, and 46% Others) and capacitated 747 women in the skill-based program.

## **8. Stakeholder engagements**

STLRP activity is aligned with national priorities and partners with government (provincial as well as local governments), private sector and tourism associations, UN agencies, and other development actors and NGOs including community-based organizations for effective and efficient implementation of the project. The STLRP has partnered with relevant provincial and local governments for effective implementation and monitoring of activities on the ground. The project also explores opportunities to mobilize financial resources to co-finance joint activities

and so far, able to mobilize an additional budget of USD 400,000 in its interventions. In the years 2021 and 2022, STLRP partnered with more than 50 local governments, almost all tourism trade associations of Nepal (Trekking Agents Association of Nepal (TAAN), Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents (NATTA), Nepal Association of Rafting Agents (NARA), Restaurant and Bar Association of Nepal (REBAN), Tourist Guide Association of Nepal (TURGAN). Similarly, STLRP partnered with UNWTO for promoting a sustainable tourism database in Nepal. Further, STLRP conducted more than 20 joint monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of project interventions.



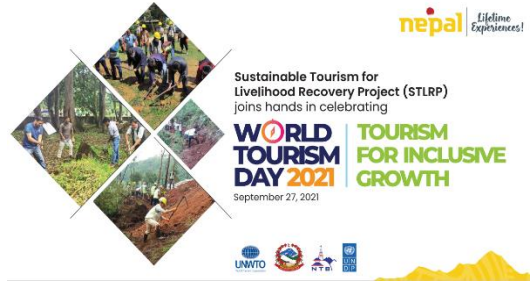
STLRP signed a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with Nepal Mountain Academy (left), NARA (middle), and NATTA Nepal (left) for skill enhancement training.



UN Assistant Secretary-General Kanni Wignaraja observed and inspected the foot trail and cycle trail developed by STLRP in Chandragiri together with the UNDP Resident Representative, Deputy Resident Representative, CEO of Nepal Tourism Board, and Mayor of local government.

## 9. Awareness building initiatives

STLRP, in addition to its capacity-building program, conducted numerous awareness-building initiatives in tourism. Several awareness campaigns and promotional activities will also be conducted targeting both domestic and international tourists. As a promotional event, the project partnered with other relevant institutions in organizing international conferences, national workshops, a celebration of World Tourism Day, and a celebration of World Environment Day. The project also prioritizes domestic tourism promotion initiatives.



A glimpse of the reforestation campaign on World Environment Day 2022, a celebration of World Tourism Day, and the inauguration of a cycle rally.



Speech competition among school children on domestic tourism promotion



CEO of Nepal Tourism Board handover 50 waste management bins to the Minister of MOCTCA in Pasupati- a cultural heritage site of Nepal

## 10. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

STLRP partnered with local government, private sector tourism trade associations, NGOs, and community-based organizations for the implementation of the women's empowerment initiatives and the key roles and responsibilities of stakeholders are as mentioned below in Table 1.

Table 1. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

S. N	Stakeholders	Roles and Responsibilities
1	Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, feasibility study, need assessment, and preparation of the priority tourism promotion interventions.</li> <li>• Prepare Detail Estimates, and Detailed Project Reports (DPR) with existing standards, codes, and guidelines.</li> <li>• Obtain necessary permits, and approvals for the construction and operations of infrastructures.</li> <li>• Construction, Implementation of project activities.</li> <li>• Collaborating with relevant stakeholders, User groups, Community Engagement and STLRP.</li> <li>• Resource mobilization as a matching fund for implementation</li> <li>• Technical support to user committee for program implementation.</li> <li>• Take a lead on the selection of poor, vulnerable, and marginal people as a beneficiary both for re/construction as well as capacity building.</li> <li>• Monitoring progress and quality of work, conducting site inspections, ensure quality and quantity of work.</li> <li>• Evaluate and report to the project team after completion.</li> <li>• Ownership/Sustainability of the Scheme.</li> </ul>
2	Tourism Trade Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training needs assessment and preparation of the priority training list for joint interventions.</li> <li>• Preparation of The Detail Project Report</li> <li>• Take the lead on the selection of poor, vulnerable, and marginal people as a beneficiary of the capacity-building Programme.</li> <li>• Rapport Building and maintaining partnerships with relevant government agencies, and local organizations.</li> <li>• Mobilizing their regional and district office for listing of beneficiaries, and selection of beneficiaries.</li> <li>• Field supervision, monitoring, and quality assurance of the activities.</li> <li>• Providing regular financial/project report update to the donor.</li> </ul>
3	Academic Training Institute (NMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training content design, preparation of manual.</li> <li>• Training resource book preparation and printing in collaboration with STLRP</li> <li>• Beneficiary selection via a public notice, taking an interview.</li> <li>• Delivery of training and certificate handover</li> </ul>
4	NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Planning and Proposals that align with the project priorities and requirements.</li> <li>• Prepare Work schedule, DPR, Cost breakdown, and scheme details.</li> <li>• Monitoring project progress, evaluating outcomes, and making necessary adjustments.</li> <li>• Monitoring progress and quality of work, conducting site inspections, ensure quality and quantity of work.</li> <li>• Rapport Building and maintaining partnerships with relevant government agencies, other NGOs, and local organizations.</li> <li>• Facilitating community participation and ensuring the inclusion of marginalized groups in project activities.</li> <li>• Providing regular financial/project report update to the donor.</li> </ul>
5	Tourism Research and Training Institute (TRTI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the sustainable tourism club concept in schools.</li> <li>• Capacity building of the clubs on tourism promotion issues</li> <li>• Organization of national conference on tourism promotion</li> <li>• Linking sustainable tourism club with Global Travel &amp; Tourism Partnership (GTTP).</li> <li>• Two girls i.e., Ms. Arpana Bhandari from New Horizon School, Kathmandu &amp; Ms. Saraswati Karki from Bidhya Sagar School Jorpati has been selected as a winner from Nepal to participate in GTTP Research Conference going to be held in London from Dec (4-7)2022, a member of sustainable tourism club.</li> </ul>
6	Project Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the Programme and budget</li> </ul>
7	STLRP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical/financial support, field supervision, monitoring, and evaluation.</li> </ul>

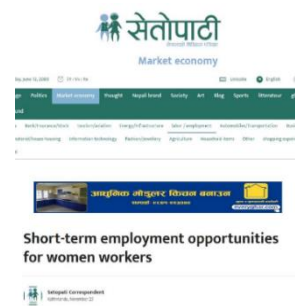
## 11. Evaluation and overall effectiveness

STLRP equally gives priority to the effectiveness and evaluation of the intervention. Similarly, the project also assesses the results and approaches of the project interventions. The evaluation assessed results against output targets and amended the program if required during the project board meeting. Whether the project's contribution is in line with higher-level outcome results (*changes in socioeconomic status through the project interventions*), implementation approaches, and challenges encountered as well as key lessons learned are thoroughly analyzed. STLRP makes specific recommendations for the future course of action regularly. STLRP ensured at least twice project board meetings together with numerous joint monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of the project as well as scaling the best practices.



## 12. Outcome

Nepal Tourism Board enhanced the skills of 747 women tourism sector workforces via different skill-based training in collaboration and coordination with local government and tourism trade associations. Out of 747 women who received skill-based training, about 50% of women are now eligible for jobs with certified licenses, and the remaining 50% returned to their jobs with improved skills. The Skill Improvement Program helped to develop the skills and competencies, supported to upscale capacities resulting in contributions towards self-employment and entrepreneurship development. The reskilling of existing human resources in the tourism sector enhanced their capacity so that they could maintain and or provide much-needed quality services. The women-targeted training helped to leverage tourism to bridge the gender gap and also aimed at generating tourism revenue and jobs and improving economic opportunities for women.



*“I got an international job as a rafting guide in Dubai, UAE with my rafting guide license which I got from skill-based training of STLRP. The training opportunity was a turning point for me that I am now able to earn much higher incomes as compared to my daily wages before which for sure supports to have a better livelihood of my family,” Ms. Sujina Shrestha, 24, Dhading.*



*“We realized that training given to women is going to be more sustainable because they are going to live in the community while male members of the family look for new occupations. So, providing training to women will also help to keep them sustainable, hence our focus is to empower women in the tourism industry”- Dr. Dhananjay Regmi, CEO of Nepal Tourism Board.*



Mr. Suresh Adhikari, Secretary of the Ministry of Culture Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), and Resident Representative of UNDP Ms. Ayshine Labe including the CEO of Nepal Tourism Board inaugurated the knowledge products.

### 13. Women Empowerment Activities

STLRP partnered with local governments, local stakeholders, and associations and involved the local community in the selection of STLRP interventions. The selection process of schemes was based on systematic prioritization and as per a sense of community ownership, genuine needs, demonstrative, the culmination of partnership, and resource optimization. Following are the summary activities with their beneficiary as mentioned below in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of women empowerment activities and associated beneficiaries

S. N	Sectors	Training	Collaborating Partner	Total
1	Homestay	Basic Homestay Management	Local Government (Api Himal Rural Municipality)	89
2	Trekking Industry	Trekking Guide	Nepal Mountain Academy (NMA)	285
3	River-Based Tourism Industry	River Guide	Nepal Association of Rafting Agencies (NARA)- Tourism Trade Associations	70
4	Hotel and Restaurant Industry	a) Advance Cook	Hotel Association Nepal Agencies (HAN)-Tourism Trade Associations.	57
		b) Restaurant and Bar Management	Hotel Association Nepal Agencies (HAN)-Tourism Trade Associations.	68
5	Travel, Tour, and Ticketing Industry	a) Tour Product Development	Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agencies (NATTA)-Tourism Trade Associations	65
		b) Airlines Ticketing		37
		c) Customer Service		27
6	Tourism Journalism	Photography Training	Nepal Federation of Photojournalists (NFPI)	49
<b>Total</b>				<b>747</b>

Nepal Tourism Board gives utmost priority increasing the number of people from socially excluded and backward communities. Mostly, people from Dalit-discriminated communities as per conventional belief, Janajati- marginal tribal community people, and others as presented below in the figure.

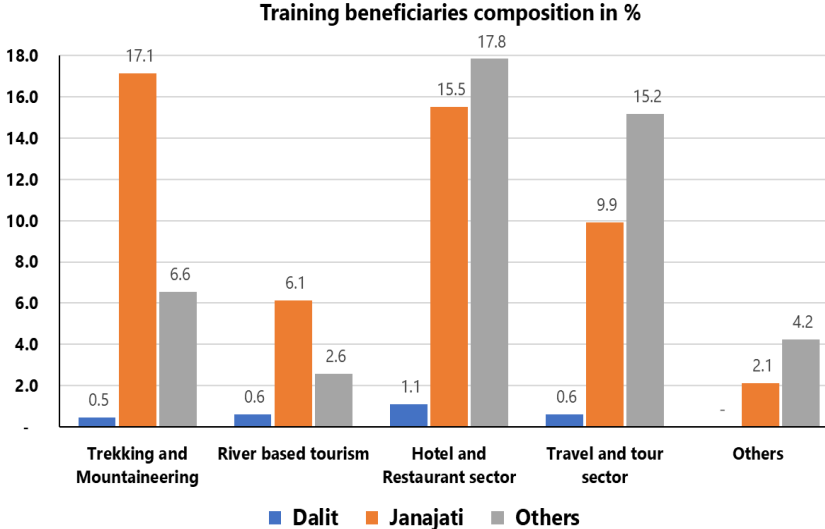


Figure 1. Beneficiaries’ composition of the capacity building program of the year 2022

**13.1 Short-term employment for poor and vulnerable women dependent on tourism**

Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) provided jobs to around 2,000 poor and vulnerable women whose livelihood depends on tourism as a short-term employment opportunity in the years 2021 and 2022 to retain the critical workforce associated with this sector, NTB enhanced the capacity of the tourism associations including private sector tourism stakeholders to accelerate the recovery efforts. Through short-term employment. It helped vulnerable tourism workers to meet their immediate livelihood needs and also gain additional income through cash transfers against their involvement in the construction and renovation of small-scale tourism infrastructure. As a result, those tourism workers who were involved in interventions likely increased their incomes, and increased food purchasing capacity in crisis. It ensured better access to food for themselves as well as their households. The involvement of tourism workers in short-term employment helped workers to come out of the depression caused by the adjournment of the tourism



business and the loss of their jobs. The STLRP whenever possible empowers workers, and increases female participation, and the involvement of youth which supports inclusive and resilient economic development.

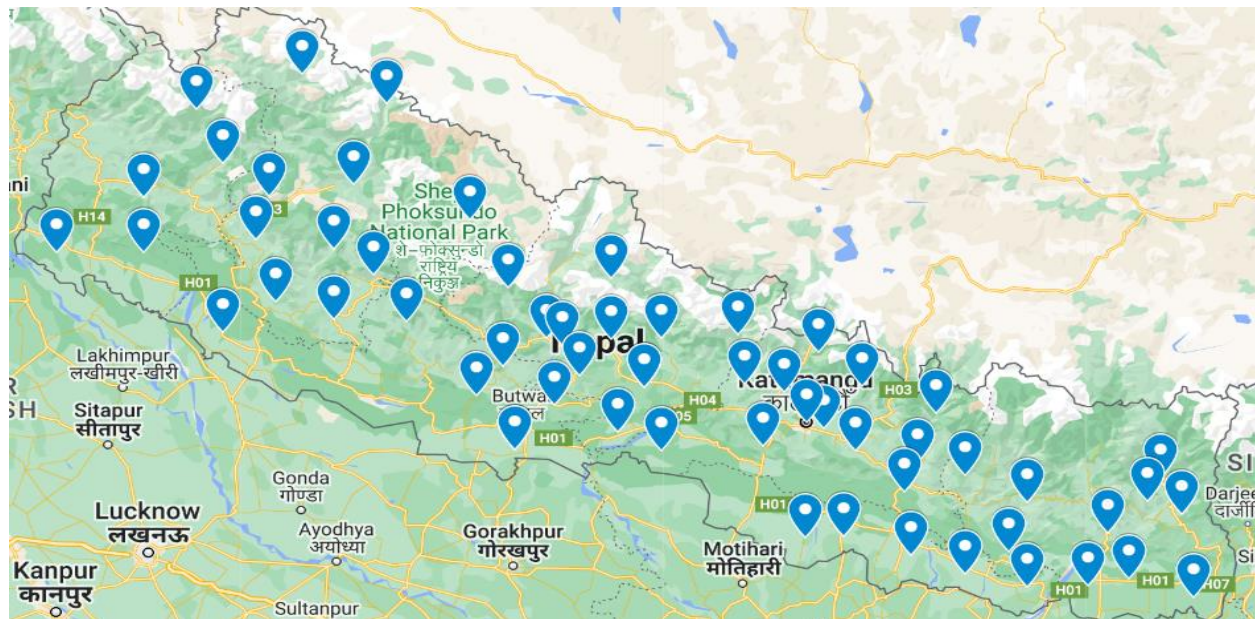


Figure 2. Coverage of women beneficiaries of short-term employment from almost all districts of the country in the year 2021 and 2022.

### 13.2 Women's Empowerment in Homestay Sector

Homestays play a vital role in the growth of tourism by providing cultural immersion, personalized hospitality, local insights, economic empowerment, sustainable practices, diverse accommodation options, and promoting rural tourism. Homestays run by cooperatives are succeeding in providing better facilities and good experiences for tourists in rural areas. To foster the growth of homestays in rural areas, STLRP partnered with Apihimal Rural Municipality, Darchula, and other local governments to provide homestay management training to 89 local women. Training helps local women to demonstrate their skills and art to provide quality food and comfortable accommodation to internal and external tourists. Homestay in raw trekking trails in the rural district of Nepal is expected to empower the local women to have stable earnings in addition to seasonal work. The preparation of local cuisine, hygiene, and sanitation, guest management, customer services, etc. were all highlighted during the training.

With the capacity enhancement in homestay sectors, it creates economic opportunities for local people in the tourism potential areas as well as support to promote the local destinations. Homestays provide a unique opportunity for local families to earn income and become self-reliant. In many rural areas of Nepal, agriculture is the primary source of income. But homestays offer an alternative income stream for families, which helps supplement their income and creates economic stability. Additionally, homestays provide opportunities for skill development and job creation in the tourism sector. Homestays also promote mutual social and cultural exchanges between visitors and locals. Visitors gain a deeper understanding of the local culture, traditions, and way of life while the host family learns about different cultures and customs from the



visitors. Homestays also promote responsible tourism practices and encourage visitors to respect the environment and the local culture.



Figure 3. Capacity building of women to establish a homestay business in Api Saipal Mountain region- one of the geographically unreachable areas regarding tourism in Nepal.

### 13.3 Women and LGBTIQ community people’s Empowerment in Trekking Sector

The trekking sector contributes a significant portion of revenue generation to the tourism sector of Nepal and provides numerous job opportunities. The number of women actively employed in the trekking industry is extremely low, despite the industry employing considerable human resources. To boost the active female participation in the front lines of the trekking industry, the STLRP in partnership with Nepal Mountain Academy (NMA) provided trekking guide training exclusively targeting women. STLRP capacitated 285 aspiring enthusiast young women including LGBTIQ community people eligible for a licensed trekking guide. The licensed trekking guide training has opened a wide range of opportunities to participants in the trekking industry of Nepal. ***In addition to women-focused trekking guide training, the STLRP has provided exclusive trekking guide training to 24 LGBTIQ+ community members for the first time in Nepal.*** Overall, the project is focusing to increase women participation in the tourism industry of Nepal.



नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्ड र संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघीय विकास कार्यक्रम सूचनाकारको सहकार्यमा सञ्चालित संयुक्त परियोजना चिन्तिकोवार्जनाका पुनःउद्वानका लागि दिने पर्यटन परियोजना (एसटीएलआरबी)को सहयोग तथा नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डको प्रशिक्षण प्रतिष्ठान (एनएमए) सँगको सहकार्यमा काठमाडौंमा महिलाहरूका लागि ३५ दिने त्रिभुजक माउण्टेन गाइड तालिम सुरु भएको छ ।

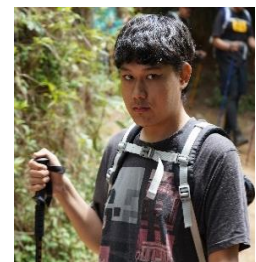
तालिममा सार्ने प्रदेशका २५ जिल्लाबाट १२० जना प्रशिक्षार्थीको सहभागिता रहेको छ । तालिमको उद्घाटन गर्दै नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डका निर्देशक तथा परियोजनाका राष्ट्रिय कार्यक्रम संयोजक मणिराज लामिछनेले पर्वतारोहण क्षेत्रमा महिला सहभागिता अभिवृद्धि गर्ने उद्देश्यले एएफएसबीको सहकार्यमा यो तालिम सुरु गरिएको र यसले पर्वतारोहण क्षेत्रमा नयाँ जनशक्ति तयार हुने बताए । उनले परियोजनाअन्तर्गत विभिन्न क्षेत्रमा जनशक्ति उत्पादन हेर्दै आएको जानकारी दिँदै तालिमलाई व्यावहारिक बनाउन नैदानिक तथा व्यावहारिक कक्षाहरू सञ्चालन गरिने जानकारी दिए ।



There are around 900,000 LGBTIQ populations in Nepal. Although the constitution of Nepal has recognized LGBTIQ, there are numerous practical challenges to equal and just opportunities and access to income and employment for the LGBTIQ people. Most LGBTIQ people in Nepal are suffering challenges because of their gender identity. Nepal Tourism Board organized exclusive Trekking Guide Training for the LGBTIQ community people due to the increasing demand for guides from tourists of the LGBTIQ community as tourists from the same sexual and minority communities seek trekking guides in their community. "Tourists from sexual and minority communities want to have a guide from their community when they come to Visit Nepal." It has come to the board time and again that they are demanding guides from their community. Therefore, this trekking guide training was not only necessary for the convenience of sexual and minority tourists but also for creating equal employment for all communities in the tourism sector.



**Susan GC (22) is a transgender** from Pyuthan. He appears as a man during daylight and a woman in the night. He is a sex worker. Nobody in his family knows about his gender identity and profession. He is recognized as a male in his citizenship. He realized himself different than other men since his school days. Now, he is more than happy to be a part of the Trekking Guide Training. GC has been interested in traveling since his childhood. As soon as he gets a Trekking Guide License, he is planning to lead trekking teams and to go on professionally.



**Sulav Moktan (22) is a BBA student and a transgender woman.** He realized his sexual inclination from his teenage years. He is seeking a job and it is not easy for people like him to get a job easily. With the hope of getting employment, he attended the training. During training, the instructors said that among the foreign tourists who come to Nepal for trekking, some are from the LGBTIQ community, and they seek a guide from their community. He is hopeful that he will be able to get a job in a trekking company and join the trekkers which will help him to become economically sustainable. Economic independence can make him powerful enough to open his actual identity.

**Rubina Bhujel (24), a transgender woman** is a good speaker who pleads for the rights of the LGBTIQ community. Commenting about the training he said, 'It was good training. Most people think connecting the third gender people with the sex business narrowly. Certainly not all of the third gender is involved in sex selling. But whoever is involved, they are bound to because they have no other option but to run their life. A positive side of the trekking guide training is it has elucidated the possibility for the third gender, working as a trekking guide that is earning, respectable and socially perceptible together' he said. Kudos to the organizers who made history, making the training like the first time in Nepal.



## Why Nepal could be the next big LGBTQ travel destination

By Bibek Bhandari  
Updated 12:23 AM EDT, Thu June 29, 2023



People take part in a pride parade in Kathmandu in 2017.

**Kathmandu (CNN)** — As Nepal's first openly gay parliamentarian, Sunil Babu Pant educated his colleagues on LGBTQ topics. More than a decade later, the former lawmaker and activist is sharing similar knowledge with locals and tourists on the capital's streets.

Media coverage: Why Nepal could be the next big LGBTQ travel destination. <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/nepal-lgbt-tourism-intl-hnk-cmd/index.html>

### 13.4 Women's Empowerment in the River-Based Tourism Sector

In Nepal, there are many perennial rivers with a high current that makes them one of the best destinations for river-based tourism in the world. The river-based tourism sector is one of the biggest contributors to the tourism sector of Nepal. It is not experiencing the expected growth rate. STLRP in collaboration with the Nepal Association of Rafting Agencies (NARA), conducted river guide training in Tamor, Kaligandaki, and Bhotekoshi Rivers to enhance the tourism industry workforce focusing to develop the skilled rafting guide in the water base tourism sector. The STLRP conducted “Women River Guide Training” for the first time in the country and aimed to produce a river base-skilled woman rafting guides who are now a critical human resource for the promotion of special interest in the river base rafting tourism industry. Altogether STLRP provided rafting training to 70 women. The STLRP seeks to boost the involvement of frontline women in river-based tourism, which will aid in the expansion of this industry in Nepal.



Photo link of Media Coverage: <https://kathmandupress.com/detail/70301>

*“Nepalese rafting industry needs river guides and on top of that, there is a huge scope for female river guides. A recent scenario has changed, and many people ask specifically for women river guides,” - Mr. Rewati Prasad Upadhyay, Instructor.*





**Story:** [Women river guides: Paddling their way to the top](#)

### 13.5 Women Empowerment in Hotel and Restaurant sector workforce

Hotels and restaurants play a crucial role in the tourism industry by offering vital services to visitors, generating income, opening job possibilities, influencing destination branding, and promoting economic development. Looking forward to capacitating the workforce in hotels and restaurants, STLRP worked on the capacity enhancement of women in the hotel and restaurant sector where the STLRP capacitated 125 existing women hotel and restaurant workers. STLRP provided advanced cook training to working cooks in 6 different districts all around Nepal. STLRP through training enhanced the skills of 57 women existing cooks who were trained in different culinary skills. Similarly, the STLRP provided training to existing bartenders to provide and sharpen their skills in restaurant management and bartending. A total of 68 women hotel bartenders were trained in bartending skills, customer services, food quality management & kitchen safety to enhance customer services.

*"During COVID we faced a lot of problems in terms of workers as many migrated for other sources of income when hotels were closed. After the lockdown was over, we faced problems due to a lack of skilled workforce. The training opportunity provided by the STLRP has helped us to get a skilled workforce to run our hotels," Ms. Jyotsana Sainju, owner of Mount Princess Hotel in Dhulikhel.*

रेस्टुरेन्ट तथा बारहरुको स्तर व्यवस्थापन सम्बन्धी तिनदिने तालिम सुरु

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### 13.7 Tourism Photojournalism Training for Women journalist

STLRP organized photojournalism training for women journalists in collaboration with the National Photojournalist Group (NFPJ). Training capacitated 49 women journalists working in different media. The training was based on a combination of theoretical and practical content on photojournalism that enable women journalists in various aspects of photojournalism. Training provides a forum for women journalists to “share information and resources, exchange ideas, promote media awareness and ethics, and work for gender equality and justice” within the tourism industry and society. Similarly, a capacity enhancement for women journalists supported increased access and equal opportunity for women in the media and provides training, seminars, and workshops. The training provided sustainable entrepreneurial skills to inspire and document the issues affecting communities and find solutions through photography linked with tourism. Training built the capacity of women journalists in using their cameras to tell their stories and making women's voices heard in the tourism industry as well as the country.



*"The training for women journalists is expected to boost the capacity who use pen and camera in the tourism industry." We are attempting to do this for our women photojournalists not because men photojournalists are better than women or women photojournalists are better than men, but because we are seeing a significant gender gap, particularly in photojournalism"- Mr. Maniraj Lamichhane, Director of the Nepal Tourism Board.*



*"Training will enhance the ability of women journalists to operate cameras in the tourism sector in the context of increasing participation of women in journalism"- Ms. Vimala Tumkheva, President of Sancharika Group.*



### 13.8 Establishment of National Sustainable Tourism Club in Schools

STLRP partnered with Tourism Research and Training Institute (TRTI) for the implementation of the National Sustainable Tourism Club in schools and established 18 National Sustainable Tourism Clubs across the country. STLRP ensured 42% female representation in clubs to increase the capacity of women. The club supports the engagement of school children and the local community in tourism which promotes the tourism culture at the local level.

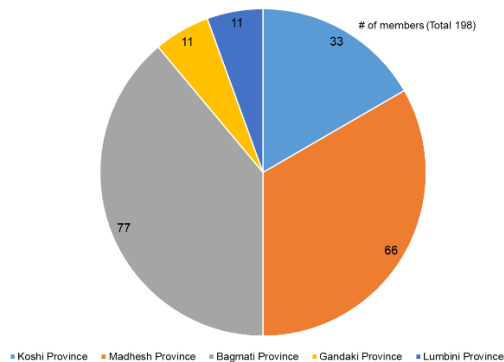


Figure 4. A number of members of sustainable tourism club where girls from grade 6 to 10 were highly encouraged and ensured as a club executive member (42% ensured.)



## 14. Sustainability

STLRP extended support to the tourism trade association to provide the capacity of existing and fresh human resources required as per their industry. The STLRP partnered with key tourism associations, such as the Trekking Agents Association of Nepal (TAAN), the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents (NATTA), Nepal Association of Rafting Agents (NARA), Restaurant and Bar Association of Nepal (REBAN), Tourist Guide Association of Nepal (TURGAN), Nepal Tourist Vehicle Association (NTVA), etc., as well as other relevant private sector associations to increase the capacity of human resource focusing to the women. Further, the partnership with local governments and tourism trade associations created ownership and contributed towards the sustainability of interventions, increased community ownership, leveraging resources, and developing programmatic synergy. Local government and tourism trade association selected the beneficiaries, also provides awareness and counseling on the carrier, and provided opportunities whenever possible to increase the confidence and motivation towards the continuity of the jobs. In addition, STLRP in its interventions encourages its partners to conduct public hearings and social audits for ensuring civic engagement as well as ensuring local stakeholder ownership. Contribution from the community, as well as local municipal governments, has strengthened the belief that the implemented programs continue to make a strong impact on the community even after the STLRP intervention's completion. Numerous local stakeholders were coordinated and involved while the implementation of STLRP interventions; local community user groups, community forest user groups, local clubs, and local tourism promotion committee to ensure women and GESI while implementation of the STLRP activities.



## 15. Media coverage

More than 300 media coverages are streamed. STLRP initiatives and around 100 plus media coverages on women's empowerment initiatives by the Nepal Tourism Board. Some of them are listed below.

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### Nepal reviving its tourism sector through women's participation

WION Kathmandu • Written By: Saloni Murarka • Updated: Jul 19, 2022, 08:12 PM IST



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### Rafting provides women river guides opportunities to grow

Published On: July 19, 2022 08:44 AM NPT By: Muna Sunwar | @TheMunaSun



SINDHPALCHOWK, July 19: Deuralee Chamling, a woman in her 40s has been making her living through adventure. She is a trekking guide by profession and recently scaled Mt Everest. Being the first lady mountaineer to have summited the tallest mountain in the world from Rai community, she wants to explore

TRENDING RECOMMENDED

**UNDP Nepal** 16 June 2022

### River guide training for women

Over fifty women are acquiring the rafting skills that will allow them to become professional raft guides. As part of Sustainable Tourism for Livelihood Recovery Project - STLRP, a joint programme of Nepal Tourism Board and UNDP together with Nepal Association of Rafting Agencies -NARA, those women are being trained. This skill-based training aims to empower the poor and vulnerable women in order to enhance their skills and provide employment opportunity that will ultimately support in their livelihood.

<https://www.setopati.com/ghumphir/ghumphir-news/274249>



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### Rafting training for women started at Bhotekoshi

Setopati Correspondent Kathmandu, June 2



For the first time in Nepal, ¥yafiting training for women has started, it is expected to be a milestone in manpower development: CEO



News campaign Published Date: Thursday, June 2, 2019



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Society  
Expectations of sexual minorities in tourism  
A different edge



According to the National Census 2078, the population of sexual and gender minorities is 2 thousand 928. This is 0.01 percent of the total population. According to statistics, Wagmati Province has the highest percentage of 32.7 percent and Karnali Province has the lowest percentage of 2.8 percent of sexual and minority communities. Similarly, various studies have shown that 2 percent of people in the world identify as sexual and minority.

Thus, people with sexual orientation and gender identity appear to be more unemployed than the general

हेर्पोज > समाचार पढ्नु

## महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम

रिभर गाइड तालिममा महिलालाई नेपाल एशोसिएशन अफ व्याप्टिड एजेन्सिज (नारा)ले निशुल्क तालिम प्रदान गर्ने नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डले जनाएको छ।



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काठमाडौं। नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डले नेपालमा पहिलोपटक महिलाका लागि जलयात्रा तालिम शुरु गरेको छ।

बोर्डले संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घीय विकास कार्यक्रम (यूएनडीपी)सँगको सहकार्यमा जीविकोपार्जन पुनःस्थापनाका लागि दिगो कार्यन्वयन कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत प्रशिक्षणको क्रममा महिलाहरूको तालिमको सफलतापूर्वक अन्तर्गतमा भएको छ।

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- प्रभा श

## Home stay training for women to attract tourists

Kiran Dhani  
Tuesday, November 20, 2019



Darchula: The Apithimal rural municipality of the district is training local women to demonstrate their skills and art to provide sweet food and easy and comfortable accommodation to internal and external tourists who come to visit Apithimal. Narahari Thekere, planning officer of the rural municipality, informed that local women have been trained to make the program 'Visit Apithimal' included in the budget for the current fiscal year 2070-80 successful. He said

## 15.1 Newspaper

### Media Coverage in English

29 June 2023: [Why Nepal could be the next big LGBTQ travel destination. \(CNN Travel\)](#)

23 June 2023: Why Nepal could be the next big LGBTQ travel destination.  
<https://edition.cnn.com/travel/nepal-lgbt-tourism-intl-hnk-cmd/index.html>

20 July 2022: Nepal reviving its tourism sector through women's participation ( Wion News)

16 November 2022: WOMEN RIVER GUIDES: PADDLING THEIR WAY TO THE TOP (UNDP Nepal)

11 Nov 2021: Short-term employment opportunities for women workers in the tourism sector

11 Nov 2021: Women in tourism business get relief from Corona

11 Nov 2021: Short-term employment opportunities for women workers

11 Nov 2021: Tourism Board to provide short-term employment to women workers

11 Nov 2021: Tourism Board to provide short-term employment to women worker.

11 Nov 2021: Tourism Board to provide short-term employment to women workers

11 Nov 2021: पर्यटन बोर्डले महिला श्रमिकलाई अल्पकालीन रोजगार दिने, ज्याला दैनिक एक हजार, (Nyapage, Kathmandu)

11 Nov 2021: नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डले पर्यटन क्षेत्रमा कार्यरत महिला श्रमिकलाई अल्पकालीन रोजगार प्रदान गर्ने, (Mero Jilla)

11 Nov 2021: पर्यटन बोर्डले महिला श्रमिकलाई अल्पकालीन रोजगारी प्रदान गर्ने (Nawalpur FM)

18 April 2022: इतिहासमै पहिलोपटक नेपालको सुदूरपश्चिममा ४३ जना महिलाहरूलाई ट्रेकिङ गाइड तालिम (APITV, Kathmandu)

15 June 2022: भोटेकोशीमा महिला रिभर गाइड तालिम ( शिलापत्र)

15 June 2022: नेपालमा पहिलो पटक महिलाको लागि यूथाफिटिङ तालिम शुरु, जनशक्ति विकासमा कोशेढुङ्गा सावित हुने अपेक्षा: सीइओ रेग्मी (Digital Khabar, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: Nepal's first women's expedition begins (Setopati, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: नेपालमा महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम सुरु (सञ्चारकर्मी, काठमाडौं)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey (Nepal Views, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: First-ever sailing training for women begins, (Safal Khaber, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey, (Radio Nepal, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey begins (Janasewa News, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: Nepal's first women's expedition begins (नेपाल प्रेस, काठमाडौं)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey, (SauryaKhaber,Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: Women's First Journey, (इन्भेष्टेपेपर, काठमाडौं)

16 June 2022: महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम (Chitwanpress, Chitwan)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey to be trained (मुल्लानी खबर)

16 June 2022: नेपालमा महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम सुरु (xclusive News Time, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey good news (गोठालो खबर-३)

16 June 2022: महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम सुरु (Radio Tamor, Sindhupalchowk)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey, (Hallo Chitwan, Chitwan)

16 June 2022: Women's training begins, (मार्गदर्शन)

16 June 2022: महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम (नेपाल कुरा)

16 June 2022: Women's training begins, (युग खबर)

16 June 2022: महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम (सेतो खबर)

16 June 2022: Women's training begins, (Chakrapath, Kathmandu)

16 June 2022: महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम (तीखोकलम)

16 June 2022: Women's first-ever voyage training begins (अनलाइनपत्रिका)

16 June 2022: For the first time, a women's journey has been started in the tourism ward. (सहयोगी मन नेपाल)

16 June 2022: Rafting training for women begins for the first time, will prove to be a milestone in human resource development: CEO Regmi (CAPITAL NEPAL)

16 June 2022: महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक रिभर गाइड तालिम (कर्णालीखबर)

16 June 2022: नेपालमा पहिलो पटक महिला रिभर गाइड तालिम: सुकुटेमा सुरु (नयाकोर्ण)

16 June 2022: नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डले नेपालमा पहिलो पटक महिलाका लागि जलयात्रा तालिम सुरु (आर्थिक सञ्जाल, काठमाडौं)

16 June 2022: Women's Guide Training Begins For 15 Days (Sunrise Nepal)

16 June 2022: Women's first journey begins , (HKNepal.Com)

17 June 2022: नेपालमा महिलाका लागि पहिलोपटक जलयात्रा तालिम सुरु (Frontline Khabar)

28 June 2022: राष्ट्रिय गाइडमा महिलाहरूको सहभागिता बढ्न थाले (Avenues Television)

2 Jul 2022: Adventure sports attract women., (Kantipur TV HD)

15 July 2022: Ronisha says, 'We have to make the world know that Nepali women are not weak even in adventure' (Kathmandu Press)

18 July 2022: Recruitment for 42 people, number of female trainers increased (सेतोपाटी)

20 July 2022: Nepal reviving its tourism sector through women's participation ( Wion News)

15 November 2022: Home stay training for women, (Darchula F.M)

16 November 2022: WOMEN RIVER GUIDES: PADDLING THEIR WAY TO THE TOP (UNDP Nepal)

14 December 2022: Women's participation in mountain guide training significant, (न्यूज कारोबार)

14 December 2022: Mountain Guide Talima attracts women(Bizshala)

24 February Tourism Board imparts trekking guides training to 12 women, (Bikash News, Kathmandu)

Kathmandu)

29 July 2023: Three-day photojournalism training for women journalists in collaboration with National Photo Journalists Group (Annapurna Times)

28 July 2023: Three-day photo journalism training for women journalists, (Harpahar.com)

29 July 2023: राष्ट्रिय फोटो पत्रकार समूहको सहकार्यमा पत्रकार महिलालाई तीन दिने फोटो पत्रकारिता तालिम (Photo Feature), (Annapurna Times)

## **15.2 Television coverage of women empowerment**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFx31D82GBA&t=9s>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=651488312607303>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=5715507161812549>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q827MIOmZ3Q>

## **15.3 Stories**

<https://undpnepal.exposure.co/women-river-guides-paddling-their-way-to-the-top>