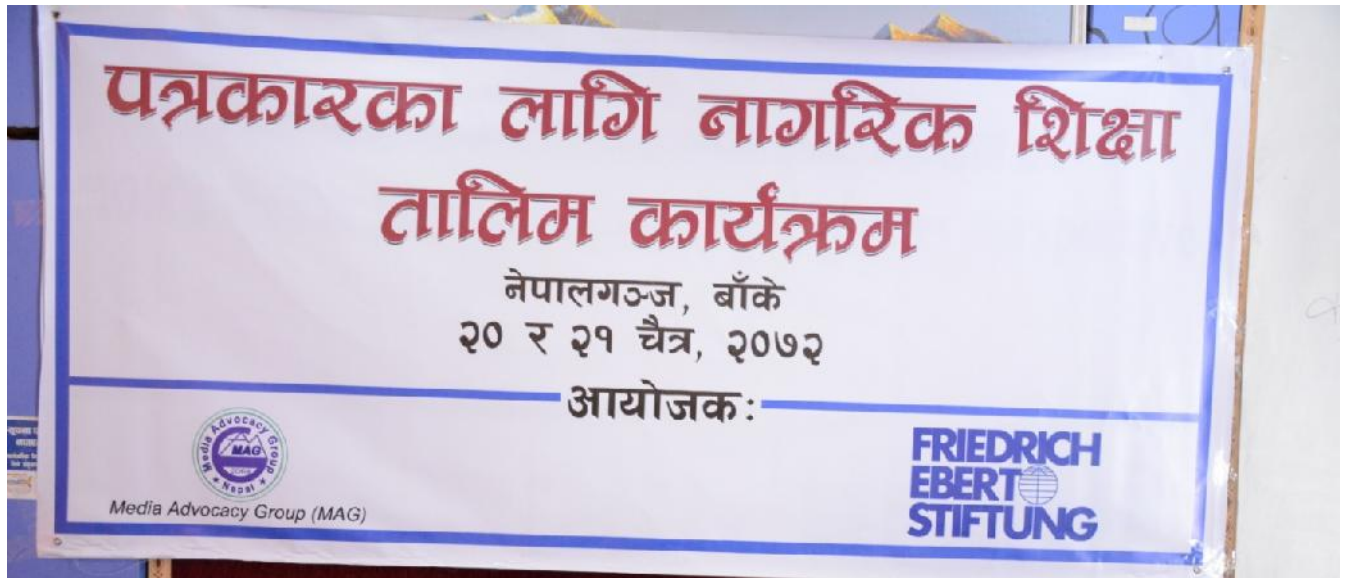


# A Report on 'Two-day Training for Journalists on Civic Education'

Nepalgunj, Banke  
2-3 April, 2016



Organized by- Media Advocacy Group

Supported by – Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Nepal (FES)

## **Introduction:**

Civic Education is an education process where citizens learn about their rights, duties and responsibilities which empowers and motivates them to identify the areas of political and governance processes that they can participate and they can do to influence political outcomes, thereby improving the quality of governance at both local and national levels. It is considered as one of the indispensable part for a democratic practice in any country. It makes citizen accountable towards their duties and responsibilities as a citizen. Citizen knows about pursuing the particular values and norms while performing their social life responsibilities through civic education. The core learning of civic education is values and principles of transparency, participation, responsiveness, accountability, empowerment and equity; and communication and access to information being one of its integral aspects of learning.

Similarly, Civic journalism (also known as public journalism) is the idea of integrating journalism into the democratic process. The media not only informs the public, but it also works towards engaging citizens and creating public debate. The civic journalism movement is an attempt to abandon the notion that journalists and their audiences are spectators in political and social processes. In its place, the civic journalism movement seeks to treat readers and community members as participants. In Civic journalism, reporting is done with considering the way the people present and resolve their problems.

Media and Journalism plays a vital role in determining the proper functioning of laws, rules & regulations, practices and norms of a state. Both strengthen individual and community to participate in policy development processes and its implementation. Any form of media can act as a bridge between the government and a citizen.

Considering the importance of civic education and its direct relation with media, Media Advocacy Group (MAG) with the support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Nepal, organized two-day training on 'Civic education for journalists' in Nepalgunj, Banke district on April 2-3, 2016. There were altogether 38 participants from 5 districts namely Banke, Surkhet, Dailekh, Bardiya and Dang. The training was provided to local journalists to encourage them to practice civic journalism by making them understand its importance in the present context.

*(Please find the name list of participants in annex 1)*

## **Objectives of the training:**

The main objective of the training was to increase the participation of journalists in the sector of civic journalism. Other objectives were:

- Conceptual clarity on civic education for journalists
- Create the wider scope and usage of civic education in media.
- Raise greater civic consciousness among journalists about the democratic role of the media.
- Making every form of media accountable and responsible towards the civic education.
- Enhance professional competency of journalists in civic journalism and encourage them towards coverage of civic news in media.

## Day 1

### Opening and Welcome Notes:

Welcoming all the participants in the program, Ms. Babita Basnet thanked them for their valuable presence. Then, she introduced the resource person for the training – Dr. Mahendra Bista (FNJ, President) and Mr. Chandra Dev Bhatta from FES Nepal. Ms. Basnet started the session with a brief introduction of MAG as a nonprofit media organization working in the sector of Right To Information (RTI), Media and Gender. Further, she highlighted the major objective of the training was to build the capacity of the media workers and journalists on civic journalism. She stated that after the training, the participants will be able to gain clear insight on the topic and implement the learning in practice.

### Introduction of Participants:

After the welcome session, the program proceeded further with the introduction of the participants and their expectation from the program. The participants' expectations from the training were to learn about the civic education and its use in journalism and media, as the topic was new for most of them.

Ms. Babita Basnet then requested Mr. Chandra Dev Bhatta to enlighten on the basics of 'Civic Education' in brief and requested the participants for their active participation during the training, so that they can enhance their capability and learning process.

*All the 38 participants were provided books on Civic education & Democracy by FES Nepal.*

### Remarks by Mr. Chandra Dev Bhatta, FES :

As a representative from FES Nepal, Mr. Bhatta welcomed all the participants in the two-day training program. He began his remarks with a brief introduction of FES which is a German-based non-profit political organization named after the first democratically elected President of Germany Friedrich Ebert that works in more than 100 countries in the world. In Nepal, FES has been working since 1994 after the government of Nepal and Germany entered into agreement for promoting freedom, equality, solidarity, and peace. In order to promote the notion of social justice in society. He said that FES Nepal works in coordination with trade union,, political parties, think-tanks of the university, government agencies, NGOs/CBOs and other local organizations, The programmes of FES are mainly focused on holding two types of dialogues- political dialogue and social dialogue. Almost all the programmes of FES are built on the philosophy of FES which seeks to strengthen democracy and peace in society. FES is few among the non-profit organization registered in Ministry of External Affairs of Nepal.



*Pic 1: Mr. Chandra Dev Bhatta delivering lecture on basics of 'Civic Education'*

Speaking on these foundations of FES, he said that freedom is very important for human being. Even

Karl Marx viewed freedom more necessary than equality. It is difficult to comprehend freedom but freedom without equality and equality without freedom is meaningless. He also clarified the concept of 'Equality' and 'Equity'. He added that justice and freedom should go hand in hand.

Further, Mr. Bhatta gave brief overview on 'Civic Education' & 'Citizen Journalism'. He stated that civic education is a practical education and it is very important to journalists as it provides enlightenment. He urged the participants to make use of training period and learn about the civic education and its application in journalism. Similarly, solidarity is related to poverty alleviation and the example of solidarity is support of 0.7 % GDP of developed country to undeveloped country. He also asserted that donation for poverty alleviation has been documented in 'Manusmriti'.

Regarding peace, he cited a quote from Willy Barndt which state "Peace is not everything but without peace there is nothing'. He added that freedom, equality, solidarity and peace bring social justice.

### SESSION 1:

#### CIVIC EDUCATION: PRINCIPLES & THEORIES IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE AND NEPALI CONTEXT

##### MR. CHANDRA DEV BHATTA

Mr. Bhatta began the session by stating two types of education, formal and informal education. Further, he gave brief overview on education system of Nepal with examples to illustrate how unpractical and unethical our education system has become. He said civic education is essential in country like Nepal to sustain its constitutional democracy and hence, Civic education should be a prime concern. There is no more important task than the development of an informed, effective, and responsible citizenry. Democracies are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Mr. Bhatta further added that Nepal has a long history but due to political instability and lack of political commitment from the politicians, slowly we are losing our culture, tradition, moral values and ethics. This is so much to learn from our history in terms of civic education. But, unfortunately we are not able to do so. To explain civic education in Nepali context, he shared moral stories from Mahabharata and ancient era which are very much relevant in today's context of Nepal. Also, he gave examples of Europe and America where

Citing the importance of civic education in democracy, he said journalists should have knowledge on civic education. Journalism is voice of voiceless people. It reflects the perception of society; it triggers positive development in society by strengthening democracy. Speaking of importance of civic education in media, he added that media being the fourth estate should convey the exact message or information to the people. Media should present news only after analyzing it critically and should convey message positively rather than in negative way.



*Pic 2: Participants at the training*

## SESSION 2

### CIVIC & CITIZEN JOURNALISM: PRINCIPLES, AND PRACTICE IN NEPAL MEDIA

#### DR. MAHENDRA BISTA

Dr. Bista started the session by asking participants about civic journalism and citizen journalism. He clarified the difference between Civic journalism and Citizen journalism. In civic journalism, a profession journalist is involved in information and news collection, reporting, analysis, and news broadcast process while in citizen journalism, citizens are involved in all the processes. Editing is done in Civic journalism while editing is not done in citizen journalism hence it is used as democratic practice by the citizens. He also stated that the training focused on enhancing the capability of journalist in civic reporting and civic journalism. He said that civic journalism was practiced effectively aftermath of earthquake of 25 April in Nepal.



*Pic 3: Dr. Mahendra Bista explaining the principles and practice of Citizen Journalism in Nepal Media*

One of the objectives of the training was to discuss on how to practice civic journalism in mainstream media. He said that many journalists have not heard of Civic Journalism and consider it as a new subject, but he informed the participants that civic journalism focuses on citizen. It involves citizen in reporting process. If reporting is done with considering the way the people present their problem and the way they resolve it then the news, feature or report prepared is civic journalism. Hence, Civic journalism is participatory journalism.

Civic journalism helps to connect local people with central government through dialogue. It is the duty of journalists to deliver the right news and information to the people.

He then discussed about the challenges of civic journalism. He added well informed citizen ensure democracy. In civic journalism, the journalist should take information by direct interaction with people/ citizen at ground level. While reporting, journalist should define the target group, the informant should be citizens.

#### Assignment to Participants

At the end of the session, Dr. Bista gave assignment to the participants. He told the participants to bring the newspaper cutting or reports based on civic reporting next day. After this, Ms. Babita Basnet announced the successful completion of the first day training.

## Day 2

### Recapitulation of Previous Day's Training

The second day started with a short recap of the first day's training. Ms. Babita Basnet facilitated the session and welcomed all the participants. She shared the story of MK Gandhi to make the participants realize that 'Change start with you' and urged them to employ the theoretical concept of civic journalism in practice.



*Pic 4: Recap of the second day training*

### SESSION 3:

#### FEEDBACK/COMMENTS ON THE PREVIOUS DAY'S REPORTING ASSIGNMENT

Then, Dr. Mahendra Bista proceeded next session where the participants shared their piece of reporting based on civic journalism. Some participants brought the newspaper cutting to share the example of civic reporting. Dr. Bista commented on each participant's work. One of the participants also shared a documentary to show how local people's issues were raised in the community and how media linked the issues with local people. This clearly reflected the involvement of local people in reporting process and at last, their issue was solved by intervention of media. Dr. Bista appreciated the effort of journalist who brought the issue in front and attempt to solve this issue.

#### Reflection of the practical session:

- Civic journalism focuses on the development process of the society.
- It urges the citizens to participate in policy making, ensures good governance, state bind by the law, regime of law, transparency, right to information, civil rights and duties and responsibilities of a citizen.
- Journalists involved with the different forms of media need to practice civic journalism by following the code of media conduct.
- Journalism is a challenging field but if one is determined to move ahead then one can play a vital role in establishing a responsible and accountable state and its citizen.



*Pic 5: Practical Session at the training*

After reviewing assignment, Dr. Bista urged each participant to practice civic reporting and asked them to choose a topic for news preparation from the perspective of civic journalism. Each participant shared the topic which they intend to report very soon. With this practical session, the participants realized their local people's issue and were committed to raise their issues and link with the local government for necessary action.

#### **SESSION 4:**

#### **REPORTING ON CIVIC ISSUES AND EXPECTATIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND CITIZENS WITH MEDIA**

#### **DR. MAHENDRA BISTA**

Dr. Mahendra Bista mentioned that civic reporting entails:

1. Civic related topic
2. involve citizen in reporting process
3. deals with problem of citizen and seek the solution
4. link the citizen's issue to the concerned local or central level stakeholders

He further said that civic journalism is democratic journalism as it facilitates to exercise real democracy in the country thereby strengthening democracy. He firmly believed that strong practice of democracy is ensured by civic education. The effective functioning and stability of democracy is important then its establishment. If a country and its citizen practice complete democracy then it can be said that civic education is intrinsic practice in the state.

In democracy, there is people's participation and Civic journalism empowers people and community as it speaks the voice of people. It connects people with the mainstream of development

He shared that civic journalism was practiced extensively in Nepal during earthquake. Speaking of the importance of Civic journalism, he said it creates awareness. It plays vital role in transformation. It increases people's direct participation in policy making and its implementation. It promotes democratic practices, good governance, human development and it is a medium that enhances accountability, transparency and empowerment. The civic journalism not only deals with the local issues and problems, but anything related to people.

He also said that there are two types of media- Alternative media and Mainstream media, and Civic journalism can be used in both media.

## ROLE OF MEDIA HOUSES IN PROMOTING CIVIC EDUCATION

Media houses and media related organizations play an important role in promotion of civic education through holding dialogues with people and civil society members on political and social issues and bridging a gap between government and local people. Further, media houses can promote civic journalism by providing access to local people in political system and governance process by creating awareness among people on basics of democracy, engaging them in democratic processes, raising and solving citizen's issues by making state accountable for this. Moreover, media houses can reflect civic education in news content and civic based organizations can promote civic journalism by conducting orientation program to educate people and campaign advocacy.

He also shared the format of civic journalism with the participants and stated that if a news/report is created in its format then the effect of the news on the targeted group can be achieved. A civic journalist should consider the following things at the time of making news:

- Focus on Issues of community and people's life.
- Focus on issues than event.
- Priority should be given to those issues that give positive and transformative impact to the society.
- Journalist should not give negative opinions but can be critical.
- Engage people in reporting and advocacy campaign.
- Issues related to education, health, and service delivery, distribution of source and resources, social justice, improvement in livelihood can be the subject.
- Give priority to people's advantage in reporting on development and enterprises.
- Conflict reporting should be done with positive impact.
- Democracy, freedom and social justice are basis of civic journalism and hence, these cannot be neglected.
- Reporting should be solution oriented and should not always present problem. It should seek solution from community level.
- Promote dialogue for problem solving.
- Guide for solidarity, should not lead to social polarization.

## CHALLENGES OF CIVIC JOURNALISM

The role of journalist is not limited to reporting news, but to manage and present news based on truth and evidence to the people as well. The civic journalism was practiced to do so. The main principle behind civic journalism is that the information became more evidence based, reliable and timely when people's participation is more.

### SESSION 5:

#### COVERAGE OF CIVIC ISSUES IN LOCAL MEDIA: EXPERIENCES & COMMITMENTS

##### BABITA BASNET

Ms. Basnet started the session by reiterating the meaning of civic education. It is informal education. It makes the citizen accountable by giving necessary information. For civic education, it is not necessary to visit school, college. There is no age limit for gaining education, civic education varies according to



country. It is implemented to all irrespective of social, economic, gender and political differences.

She shared many examples of other countries where people value and practice civic education more and briefly informed about the practice of civic education in African countries during election of the Constitution Assembly.

Ms. Basnet gave a brief history update regarding civic education by saying that it was started in Nepal 100 years back by King Jay Prithvi Bahadur Singh. He had drafted a document on civic education. Then after renowned poet Laxmi Prasad Devkota wrote a book on civic education, which was published lately by Ratna Pustak Bhandar. Ms. Basnet further state that the Nepalese citizen does have the feeling for country and government but they are unhappy towards the political instability. Civic education can help them to get involved in the policy making and government as it also makes the citizen asks themselves 'what has the country given me and what have I done for my country'.



*Pic 6: Ms. Babita Basnet facilitating the training*

She also added that media persons are special and should be well-informed as the people believe that journalists know everything. So, to keep updated the journalist should read books related to literature, politics and others, and have day-to-day information. Journalist should at least have basic journalism training.

### **FEEDBACK COLLECTION:**

The participants expressed their gratitude to the organizers and the resource persons for conducting the training on wider perspective of civic journalism. The participants' enthusiasm of acquisition in the training was applauding. The participants said that they learnt about the importance of civic education in journalism and have committed to implement the learning in practice.

### **CERTIFICATE DISTRIBUTION AND CONCLUSION**

Certificate of participation was distributed to each participant. Finally, Ms. Babita announced the closing of the program and thanked all the participants for their active involvement in the program. She also extended her gratitude towards the resource persons and the logistics management on the successful completion of the training. She requested the participants to broaden their knowledge and skills in journalism and stated that MAG & FES Nepal team will always be ready to extend their assistance to the participants in future.



*Pic 7: Certificate distribution to the participants*

Annex 1: Program Agenda

**Day 1**

**2nd Apr 2016 / 20 Chaitra 2072 (Saturday)**

08:00-09:00	Tea/Registration <b>Opening of the Training Session</b>
9:00-9:30	Welcome note, Program modalities/Objectives Highlights, Introduction round by <b>Ms. Babita Basnet</b> (Facilitator, Resource Person and President of MAG)
9:30-10:15	<b>Session 1:</b> Civic Education: Principles & Theories in Global perspective and Nepali Context. Presentation: <b>Mr. Chandra Dev Bhatta, FES Nepal</b>
10:15 -10:30	Open Floor Discussions
10:30-13:00	<b>Session 2:</b> Civic Journalism: Principles and Practices in Nepali Media Presentation: <b>Dr. Mahendra Bista, FNJ, President</b>
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00-15:30	<i>Continue Session 2</i>
15:30-16:00	Floor Discussions
16:00-16:15	Tea Break
16:15 – 17:00	Assignment , Wrap up/Closing of the first training session Facilitator: <b>Ms. Babita Basnet</b>
18:00-20:00	Debriefing Meeting with Participants

**Day 2**

**3rd April 2016 / 21 Chaitra 2072 (Sunday)**

08:00-09:00	Tea & Breakfast
09:00-09:15	Brief Recapitulation of the previous day's session
09:15-10:15	<b>Session 3:</b> Feedback/comments on the previous day's Reporting assignment Civic Journalism: Responsibilities & Challenges during editing, publishing, broadcasting, program production and follow up By <b>Ms. Babita Basnet / Dr. Mahendra Bista</b> Floor Discussions
10:15-11:00	<b>Session 4:</b> Reporting on Civic issues and expectations of Civil Society and Citizens with Media Presentation – <b>Dr. Mahendra Bista</b> Floor Discussions

11:00-11:15	Tea Break
11:15-12:15	<b>Session 5:</b> Coverage of civic issues in Local Media: Experiences & commitments Ms. Babita Basnet Floor Discussions
12:15-13:00	Final Wrap-up - Feedback/collection of recommendations, note of thanks and suggestions from Trainer and Resource Persons
13:00-14:00	Lunch & Departure

*Annex 2: Participants lists*

S.N	Name	Sex (M/F)	Organization/ Designation	District	Phone	Email
1	Amar Sunar	M	Reporter/ UNN	Dailekh	98580504555	<a href="mailto:sunar.amar@gmail.com">sunar.amar@gmail.com</a>
2	Prem K.C	M	MargaRekha Dainik	Banke	9858022656	<a href="mailto:pkprankc@gmail.com">pkprankc@gmail.com</a>
3	Dil Prakash Gautam	M	Nepal Television/Bardiya Co respondent	Bardiya	9858021196	<a href="mailto:gautam43dp@gmail.com">gautam43dp@gmail.com</a>
4	Bimala Chaudhary	F	Bageshwori F.M	Banke	9848002213	<a href="mailto:bimala.chdry@gmail.com">bimala.chdry@gmail.com</a>
5	Sabitri Koirala	F	Radio Bhuitful	Surkhet	9868101888	<a href="mailto:sbtaa.svt@gmail.com">sbtaa.svt@gmail.com</a>
6	Bhabuk Yogi	M	Ujyaalo90 Network/Radio Bheri F.M	Bardiya	9858050961	<a href="mailto:bhabuknews@gmail.com">bhabuknews@gmail.com</a>
7	Priyasmuit Dhakal	M	Radio Krishnasalforo MPJ	Banke	9848152324	<a href="mailto:pdhakal.dang@gmail.com">pdhakal.dang@gmail.com</a>
8	Pusp Raj Joshi	M	Nagarik Daily	Banke	9858029855	<a href="mailto:pukarg2009@gmail.com">pukarg2009@gmail.com</a>
9	Sudip Adhikari	M	Rajdhani Daily Reporter(Bardiya)	Bardiya	9858030333	<a href="mailto:sudip.fm@gmail.com">sudip.fm@gmail.com</a>
10	Deepak Shrestha	M	Mountain T.V Reporter(Bardiya)	Bardiya	9851164054	<a href="mailto:dkbardiya@gmail.com">dkbardiya@gmail.com</a>
11	Dashrath Ghimire	M	Nayayugbod	Dang	9847834935	<a href="mailto:dasharathghimire5@gmail.com">dasharathghimire5@gmail.com</a>
12	Sunita Panta	F	R.S.S	Surkhet	9848165410	<a href="mailto:sunitapanta15@gmail.com">sunitapanta15@gmail.com</a>
13	Rammtrida Yadav	F	Surkhet patra Daily	Surkhet	9848834242	<a href="mailto:bulbulkhadka17@gmail.com">bulbulkhadka17@gmail.com</a>
14	Saraswati Lamichhane	F	Radoramgyanu F.M	Bardiya	9848111628	<a href="mailto:saraswatilamichhane@gmail.com">saraswatilamichhane@gmail.com</a>
15	Sabitri Giri	F	Radio Krishnasar F.M	Banke	9848298078	<a href="mailto:sabitri.giri7@gmail.com">sabitri.giri7@gmail.com</a>
16	Ranjeeta D. Thapa	F	Radio Express F.M	Banke	9849480839	<a href="mailto:ranj.dthapa@gmail.com">ranj.dthapa@gmail.com</a>
17	Manju Roka Magar	F	Radio Nayayug F.M Dang Lamahi	Dang	9809714036	<a href="mailto:ritikamagar71@gmail.com">ritikamagar71@gmail.com</a>
18	Parbati Basnet	F	Dang/Ghorahi	Dang	9847976089	<a href="mailto:palisabasnet@gmail.com">palisabasnet@gmail.com</a>
19	Lila Shah	F	Radio Highway	Dang	9847821866	<a href="mailto:lilashah.dang@gmail.com">lilashah.dang@gmail.com</a>
20	Khem Raj	M	JFM, Surkhet	Surkhet	9848220179	<a href="mailto:khemrajwali@gmail.com">khemrajwali@gmail.com</a>

	Wali		Hamro Naya Nepal			
21	Niraj Gautam	M	R.S.S	Banke	9848023450	<a href="mailto:journalistniraj@gmail.com">journalistniraj@gmail.com</a>
22	Narendra Thapa	M	Image Channel	Banke	9848023662	<a href="mailto:bhaiyanpj@gmail.com">bhaiyanpj@gmail.com</a>
23	Rakesh Mishra	M	Krishnasar F.M	Banke	9858024119	<a href="mailto:mishrarakesh20@gmail.com">mishrarakesh20@gmail.com</a>
24	Krishna Khanal	M	Avenues T.V	Nepalgunj	9851021099	<a href="mailto:khanal.atv@gmail.com">khanal.atv@gmail.com</a>
25	Janak Nepal	M	Kantipur Media Group	Banke	9858022101	<a href="mailto:Janak.kantipur@gmail.com">Janak.kantipur@gmail.com</a>
26	Binod Poudel	M	Mission Today Daily	Kohalpur/Banke	9858023069	<a href="mailto:binodkhp@gmail.com">binodkhp@gmail.com</a>
27	Shukra Rishi	M	Radio Bageshwory	Banke	9858024709	<a href="mailto:shukra.npj@gmail.com">shukra.npj@gmail.com</a>
28	Rupa Gahatraj	F	Gorkhapatra	Banke	9848027702	<a href="mailto:rupa.npj@gmail.com">rupa.npj@gmail.com</a>
29	Bishwo Raj Pachhaldagya	M	Nayapatrika/Ritambhar	Banke	9848032299	<a href="mailto:Bishow.journo@yahoo.com">Bishow.journo@yahoo.com</a>
30	Yam Lamichhane	M	Radio Bheri Aaawaj /Station Manager	Banke	9866842930	<a href="mailto:lamichhaneyy@gmail.com">lamichhaneyy@gmail.com</a>
31	Tilak Gaunle	M	FNJ	Banke	9858029420	<a href="mailto:tilakgaunle@gmail.com">tilakgaunle@gmail.com</a>
32	Kamal Dangi	M	FNJ	Banke	9848041222	<a href="mailto:kamal.newsg@gmail.com">kamal.newsg@gmail.com</a>
33	Bhagat Ram Thami	M	Vision T.V	Banke	9848060542	<a href="mailto:brcripj@gmail.com">brcripj@gmail.com</a>
34	Uma Magar	F	WWJ	Banke	9858022076	<a href="mailto:magaruma@gmail.com">magaruma@gmail.com</a>
35	Govinda Sharma	M	FNJ	Banke	9858022660	<a href="mailto:lucky56@gmail.com">lucky56@gmail.com</a>
36	Siraj Khan	M	Gorkhapatra Dainik	Banke	9848023552	<a href="mailto:sikhan2006@gmail.com">sikhan2006@gmail.com</a>
37	Mahendra Bista	M	FNJ	Kathmandu	9851065938	<a href="mailto:mahendrabista7@yahoo.com">mahendrabista7@yahoo.com</a>
38	Rupani G.M	F	Radio Bageshwari F.M	Banke	9848e050861	<a href="mailto:rupanigm85210@gmail.com">rupanigm85210@gmail.com</a>

Annex 3: Name list of resource persons and organizer team members

Resource Persons

- Dr. Mahendra Bista, FNJ President
- Ms. Babita Basnet, President MAG

FES team

- Mr. Chandra Dev Bhatta, Program Officer, FES

MAG team

- Ms. Sushmita Lama, Rapporteur
- Mr. Prabin Basnet, Logistic Management Coordinator
- Ms. Bachchu Rai, Assistant Coordinator