

**Report on  
National Level Training Workshop on Writing, Adoption, and  
Implementation of Gender Policy for Trade Unions**

**10-11 April, 2025**

**Square Hotel, Lalitpur, Nepal**



### **BACKGROUND**

Gender inequality continues to be a pervasive issue in workplaces worldwide, impacting economic participation, job quality, and safety. Trade unions, as collective organisations advocating for workers' rights, have a critical role to play in challenging gender-based disparities and promoting equitable work environments. However, trade unions themselves often mirror societal gender inequalities, with underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and limited attention to gender-specific challenges faced by workers. Developing and implementing gender policies within trade unions is crucial for inclusive practices and advocating for gender equity in workplaces.

In the context of Nepal, the need for gender policies in unions is important. Women constitute a significant portion of the workforce, particularly in informal and precarious employment, where vulnerabilities are heightened. Despite their substantial contributions, their participation in union leadership remains minimal, and their concerns are often overlooked. Socio-cultural barriers, coupled with limited awareness of gender equity issues, further exacerbate the challenges.

Gender equality forms the basis of the ILO Convention 190. While ratification of the Convention 190 will bring about the much-needed changes in the social structures, it is important to bring in gender equality at the workplaces and within the union structures as well. This can happen when unions adopt a Gender Policy for their respective unions, ensuring all genders are equal and have representation not only within the union but at decision-making and leadership levels too.

Therefore, SARTUC, in coordination with South Asia Gender Platform (SAGP), and Mondiaal FNV, conducted a two-day training workshop on “**National level Training Workshop on Writing, Adoption, and Implementation of Gender Policy for Trade Unions**” in Kathmandu, Nepal on 10-11 April 2025. The primary aim of the workshop is to emphasise the significance of gender policies for trade unions and outline their transformative potential in addressing workplace inequalities.

### OBJECTIVES

- To capacitate the trade union’s representatives on writing the gender policy and its implementation at all levels in trade unions in Nepal;
- To discuss the global best practices and share best practices of gender policies in Nepali trade unions and their implementation;
- To understand the gender inequalities and gender specific challenges, particularly in terms of the persistent wage gap, job precarity, and workplace discrimination experienced by women in the world of work in context of Nepal;
- To strengthen the advocacy campaigns from trade union perspective for the ratification of ILO C190 in Nepal;
- To co-create draft gender policies suited to participants’ own union contexts;
- To foster inclusive leadership and build practical strategies for policy implementation.

### OPENING REMARKS

**Brother Laxman Basnet**, General Secretary of SARTUC, welcomed all the participants and



stressed the urgent need for trade unions to develop a gender policy and advance it to parliament. He explained that the reason for inviting Honourable Members of Parliament (MPs) to the programme was to ensure that women's voices were heard and taken to the parliament. He highlighted the importance of achieving 33 per cent representation of women in parliament and guaranteed participation at local levels, emphasising that true equality must start within unions. Moreover, he also noted that participants' active engagement in the training would be valuable in shaping the gender policy. He shared his experience of advocating against unequal pay for women workers in Nepal’s tea estates and expressed the strength of women in collective bargaining and

negotiation processes. Finally, he urged a change in the prevailing mindset that undervalues women’s work at home, reaffirming the need for equality in the workplace and the voices of LGBTIQ workers to be heard and respected.



**Sister Nishi Kaphai**, Gender Expert and Coordinator, SARTUC/SAGP, warmly welcomed all participants and acknowledged the multiple responsibilities women carry at home. She reflected on her visits to Nepal since 1998, observing that despite the introduction of new laws, real progress for women has been limited. Likewise, she explained that this programme is part of a broader series addressing gender equality, equal opportunities for all, and inclusion of the LGBTIQ+ community. Highlighting the increasing male participation in gender programmes, she emphasised the need to discuss Nepal's ratification status

of C190 and urged every union and sector to adopt a gender policy that ensures equality in the world of work. She introduced JTUCC's gender policy and informed participants that facilitator Sister Radhika Dingra would gather their suggestions and contributions to incorporate into the final gender policy.

After the introduction of all the participants, facilitator Sister Radhika Dingra encouraged everyone to list out their expectations from the workshops in five words. Every participants took part in the listing and write down their expectation from the workshops. Mainly, they are listed below:

### Expectations

- Understand and improve gender policy
- What type of gender policy will be formed by trade unions, and as an MP, how can I speak on their behalf in the parliament?
- To know the gaps in gender policy and the implementation at the grassroots levels.
- To learn the international practices
- To deal with the violence and harassment at the policy level
- Laws have been formed, but implementation is poor; thus, to explore the efforts from our side to implement in the workplace.
- LGBTIQ+ community at the workplace
- Gender issues are more prevalent in urban areas, but issues shall be discussed in rural areas as well.

For the energiser and group formation, the facilitator used the idea of a game – “**Fire in the Mountain – Run, Run, Run**”

The exercise reflected:

- You have to work with anybody.
- Enhance communication skills.
- Confidence to work with others.

### GROUP WORK

**Instructions:** [1 facilitator and 1 note taker from each group; and 3 questions for group discussion (each group discussed on single question)]

1. Positive and negative experiences of gender equality in trade unions
2. Contextual factors that impact gender equality in trade unions
3. Key recommendations for achieving gender equality in trade unions

The group discussion happened in 3 rounds with discussion over all the questions based on the rotation of groups, but the facilitator and note taker were the constants in the group.



#### Group A – Positive and negative Positive

- Legal provision ensured by the constitution and laws/policies of 33 per cent representation of females from the central level to the local level.
- Participation in international platforms and we have the ability to raise gender equality in such platforms as well.
- Women have reached leadership and decision-making positions.
- Capacity building of women members/leaders in the trade

unions.

- Constitutional and legal provisions: maternity facilities, equal pay for equal work, breastfeeding rooms, toilets, OSH, and child care centres in workplaces.
- All the women leaders are working together for gender equality.

#### Negative

- Though we have laws and policies, implementation is very poor.
- 33 percent representation, but still we are unable to address our thoughts to male counterparts.
- Male counterparts do not give importance to women's speech and thoughts.
- No acceptance of women's leadership in trade unions.
- Right and capable women leaders have not taken to the decision-making level, though the constitution provided the representation rights of women. Mostly, the positions are politically appointed rather than based on merit-based criteria.
- Social security has been introduced, but needy people are not into that, and informal sector workers are not properly entered into it.
- We and the government are unable to register our informal sector workers.

#### Group B – Contextual factors

- Socio-cultural factors
- Less opportunities for females
- Though there's the "equal pay for equal work" policy, in reality it's different.
- Lack of implementation of laws and policies.
- Trade unions are discussing gender policies, but political parties are indifferent to these issues.
- Major political positions are given to males, whereas deputy positions are given to females.
- Awareness shall be spread to the grassroots level.
- The achievements shall be properly implemented.

#### Group C – Key recommendation

- There should be Equal participation and opportunities for all.
- Gender inclusive policy making and its implementation
- Political parties should prioritize the workers' unions



- Acceptance of Women’s leadership within Trade Unions
- Women need to be present in decision making level.
- Women empowerment (Economic independence of Women) and Leadership skill training for women is found to be most essential in Trade union as we don’t have enough women who have real capacity to be in leadership.
- Fair wages and decent work
- Decent behaviour in workplace (There should not be discriminatory behaviours between gender {Male, Female, LGBTQI+})
- For ILO conventions ratification, Lobbying should be done by Trade Unions)
- There should be Safe workplace for all (safe workplace in terms of violence, abuse and discrimination)
- ILO C190 should be ratified.
- Change in Patriarchal thinking (awareness to Male/ Gender sensitization)
- For Social Protection, Registration by Local Government for Social Security fund

### **Ideal story game - “AND THEN” Game**

Story-making of trade union women by imagination.

#### **Output:**

- Participated in by all
- More than imagination, they have described the story according to their real-life status and affiliation, and were more focused on their personal experiences.
- Some of the participants were confused about the rules of the game.
- They had the flexibility of imagination but could not exit out of their practical experiences.
- They focused more on organising and gender equality.

### **GENDER POLICY FOR A TRADE UNION**

**Sister Nishi Kaphai**, Coordinator, SAGP and Gender Expert, SARTUC, started her presentation with a few questions to make interactions with the participants:

- Who makes policies, the policy-maker (parliament) ????
- Why do we make policies???

The presentation highlighted the importance of implementing a comprehensive Gender Policy within trade unions to create workplaces that are safe, dignified, respectful, and empowering. She clarified that gender equality at work involves equal opportunity and treatment in employment, fair pay for equal work, safe working conditions, access to social security, a balanced work-life dynamic, and equal participation in decision-making. According to her, the need for a gender policy includes addressing inequalities faced by women and marginalised groups, protecting rights through anti-discrimination measures, promoting representation in leadership, strengthening union membership, and aligning with ILO Convention C190. Furthermore, she highlighted equal representation, safe and inclusive workplaces, work-life balance, inclusive advocacy, capacity building, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Additionally, she explained the key components of a strong gender policy, including defining commitments and scope, setting quotas for gender representation, establishing grievance mechanisms, and providing gender-sensitisation training. She stressed the importance of equal



opportunity through non-discriminatory recruitment, gender-inclusive language in agreements, pay audits, and committees to oversee policy implementation. According to her, gender audits were introduced as a participatory self-assessment tool, identifying best practices, gaps, and challenges in gender mainstreaming, and promoting organisational learning and capacity building. She concluded the presentation by focusing on interactions on equal opportunities and good practices, including recommendation for gender mainstreaming in trade unions.

### **Energizer - Facts/Myths**

- Participants have shared their experience of facts vs myths.
- Mostly, they were limited to traditional beliefs.
- Also, participants shared the myths about gender inequality.
- Mostly myths are made for the limitation of women to their traditional roles.

## **GROUP DISCUSSION (DAY 1)**

### **GROUP 1**

#### **INCLUSIVE ADVOCACY AND BARGAINING**

- Trade unions should include everyone regardless of their background (i.e., gender, caste, ethnicity, and class).
- Equal access to rights as per laws & regulations.
- Trade Unions should advocate with stakeholders for Social Security Funds.
- Minimum wage advocacy with the Government and Employers.
- Collective Bargaining for maternity paid leave, fair wages, payment for overtime (i.e., more than 8 hours), and a transport facility.
- Advocating for a safe work environment for women.
- Advocating for Ratification of ILO C190.
- Advocating for a childcare facility in the workplace.
- If the advocated and bargained demands are not implemented by stakeholders, we will then strike.

### **GROUP 2**

#### **CORE COMPONENTS OF GENDER POLICY**

- Equal Representation.
- 50 per cent representation of women at the policy-making level (ethnic Group).
- Education Access - All backgrounds.
- Equal wages.
- Equal Leadership Development.
- Flexible work Arrangements (3 M = Menstruation, Maternity, Menopause).
- Gender Sensitivity Training.
- Diverse Representation.
- Monitoring and Accountability.

### **GROUP 3**

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Training on Subjects (Gender-equality, policy of trade unions - Constitution/Act).
- Leadership Training.
- Interaction - sharing Experiences.
- Dissemination of Research/Study Reports.
- Facilitation Training.
- Mobilisation (Identity) is the expertise of trade unions.
- Develop a common understanding of all TU's members.

- Exposure programmes.
- Orientation on ILO C1907.

#### GROUP 4

##### SAFE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

- OSH.
- Arrangement of decent work.
  - Safe workplace
  - Trade union rights
  - CBA
  - Equal pay for equal work
- Awareness programs and incentive arrangements.
- Equal opportunity.
- Clarity and timely amendments to policies and laws.
- Labour Audit.
- Gender policies and Code of Conduct.
- Ratification of ILO C190.

#### GROUP 5

##### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Monitoring of the gender policy at the Federation, National Committee and enterprise levels – whether they have or not; is the workplace gender friendly?
- To monitor whether the state has made or not made a gender policy, and check whether the monitoring committee is tripartite or not?
- Evaluation of the inclusive participation and representation of gender at decision-making levels from the federation to the enterprise levels.
- To evaluate whether there is a representative of the genders at the CBA election.
- Conduct gender audits (in all levels of government).
- To assess the implementation of the Labour Act, the Trade Union Act and the Gender Policy.
- Regularity of monitoring and evaluation.



#### GROUP 6

##### WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Equity of work.
- Change in the thoughts of patriarchy.
- Distribution of domestic work (primarily care work).
- Gender responsive policies and practices (maternity leave/paternity leave).
- Emphasis on the practical implementation of relevant policies.
- Flexibility of working hours, e.g., Work from home.
- Set boundaries (challenging gender norms).
- Health-oriented policies in the workplace (mental and physical health).
- Changes in the attitude and behaviour towards single women workers.
- Respect for maternity.
- Child care centres in the workplace.



## DAY 2

### **Sister Nishi Kaphai's exercise of stereotypes in the workplace**

She narrated an interesting story about the engineer and his dream with an interactive storytelling exercise. The storytelling encouraged participants to reflect on their personal biases in visualising professional roles and highlighted the need to break down gender stereotypes in the workplace. The finding showed that most of the participants reflected biases on professional roles or jobs as gender-based on gender stereotypes.

### **ADDRESS BY SENIOR TRADE UNION LEADERS**

- **Brother Raman Kanan, Regional coordinator, PSI**
- **Brother Jagat Simkhada, President, JTUCC/ANTUF**
- **Brother Binod Shrestha, President, GEFONT**
- **Brother Yogendra Kumar Kunwar, President, ITUC-NAC/NTUC**
- **Brother Prabhu Rajendran, Regional Consultant, Mondiaal FNV**

#### **Brother Raman Kanan**

Brother Kanan thanked the SARTUC for inviting him to the important meeting and stressed that global unions place high importance on gender equality and gender policies. He highlighted that PSI, where he has been engaged for over 20 years, was likely the first among global unions to adopt a gender policy, widely known as the “50-50 policy,” which mandates a minimum of 50 per cent women’s participation across staffing, leadership, and representation. Moreover, he acknowledged the difficulty of finding women leaders within trade unions but proudly expressed that in their last Congress, 52 per cent of the leadership from South Asia were women. He further emphasised that gender discussions must also include the LGBTQI+ community, as well as youth, to build inclusive policies. Finally, he stressed that through collective effort, unions can develop stronger and more effective gender policies.

#### **Brother Binod Shrestha**

Brother Binod expressed that in Nepal, unions are working to advance women’s leadership and equal participation at the national level. He urged participants to reflect on whether the goal should be representation or meaningful participation, noting that equal representation does not necessarily guarantee equality, but equal participation ensures women’s voices in decision-making leadership. As President of GEFONT, he proudly highlighted the increase of women’s membership from zero to 40 per cent, calling it a significant achievement. Additionally, he explained that JTUCC, through TUKEP, has actively engaged women workers in union movements and prepared gender policies and codes of conduct, but stressed that effective implementation is now essential. He further pointed out that gender-based violence is not limited to women and may also affect men, thus requiring unions to approach gender from a broader perspective. He concluded by urging the enhancement of gender rights from a leadership lens and wished the programme success.

#### **Brother Yogendra Kumar Kunwar**

Brother Yogendra appreciated SARTUC for organising a timely and relevant workshop, underlining that the goal is to achieve decent work and fair workplaces, which requires eliminating violence and harassment. He emphasised the need to consider participation, representation, and empowerment together in building gender equality. Referring to Nepal’s constitutional guarantees,

he said that while the 50-50 principle exists in political structures, its impact is weak in practice as women are often confined to deputy positions. He criticized patriarchal socialisation processes that privilege boys with more rights and opportunities, arguing that providing more opportunities for girls would foster female leadership. While Nepal has laws and policies for gender equality, he stated that a change in mindset is crucial to promoting women's leadership. He concluded by affirming that Nepal is on track to ratify ILO Convention 190 by 2026.

### **Brother Jagat Simkhada**

Brother Jagat expressed the importance of developing gender policies for trade unions, especially within Nepal's deeply patriarchal socio-cultural setting where achieving gender equality in practice remains difficult. He said that while positive changes have emerged in policies, workplaces, and the legal framework, progress is still insufficient in reality. He argued that unions must push for strong gender equality policies to safeguard the rights of women workers. Reflecting on Nepal's history, he observed that much of the progress in gender equality came as an outcome of the civil war and Maoist insurgency, which opened doors for women in political and administrative leadership roles. He emphasised the need to reform socialisation



practices to advance gender equality and called for workplaces free of violence and harassment, adding that the ratification of C190 would be a key step in ensuring safe and dignified workspaces.

### **Brother Prabhu Rajendran**

Brother Prabhu explained that FNV represents workers' resources dedicated to supporting workers globally, but expressed concern about the current global scenario where the term "gender" has become politically toxic, including in South Asia. He observed that the rise of "alpha male, right-wing leaders" worldwide has created a regressive trickle-down effect, making it more difficult for unions to advance gender equality. While acknowledging that Nepal has made notable progress, he warned that sustaining such progress in the future may be challenging. He stressed the need for unions to develop concrete strategies to ensure women's involvement at every level of union work and insisted that the LGBTIQ community must also be meaningfully included in these discussions.

Sister Nishi thanked all for their speech and valuable time.

### **ACTION PLAN (DAY 2)**

- **Introduction: Why?**
- **Why gender policy?**
- **Purpose - what?**
- **What are the basic components of gender policy? (Highlight the six basic elements in detail and include the things that were not covered yesterday)**
- **Implementation**



## GROUP 1 Introduction

### Why?

- For the recognition of the common workers engaged in the trade unions, including LGBTIQ+

### Why gender policy?

- To eliminate all kinds of gender-based discrimination and ensure the rights of workers

### Purpose:

- Equal opportunity, equal access and equal pay without any discrimination

To maintain gender equality in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation processes

### The 6 main components of gender policy:

- Equal participation: Equal access to information technology and resources
- Safe and inclusive workplace: clear policies regarding harassment and violence at workplaces; workers' selection through an inclusive process
- Equality in work and empowerment with gender sensitivity: management of regular requirements (child care rooms, toilets and breastfeeding rooms)
- Inclusive Advocacy and Bargaining (including all genders, castes, ethnic groups, and religions): equal participation in institutional policy making
- Capacity building (training and skill development): training on IT and access to IT
- Evaluation and monitoring (by the labour office and related agencies)

### Explanation:

- Empowerment through capacity building.
- Equal participation and opportunity.
- Equal participation at the leadership level.
- Monitoring and evaluation for a safe workplace and a gender respect workplace.

### When to implement?

- Within 2026
- Awareness programmes from the unit and enterprise level to federations.
- Coordination with local levels
- Gender audit
- To introduce and implement gender policies in affiliated unions, and it shall be taken to the enterprise levels through the formation of committees.
- Discussion through JTUCC.
- Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

## GROUP 2 Gender policy

**Introduction:** Gender policy is a policy designed to end gender discrimination.

### Why???

- A gender policy is needed for equal opportunities.
- A comprehensive gender policy is needed for marginalised groups that have been left behind due to various circumstances.

### Purpose:

For equality with awareness and equal opportunity for a discrimination-free environment

### Basic components of gender policy:

- Equal participation
- Safe and inclusive workplace
- Balanced workplace
- Inclusive advocacy and bargaining
- Capacity building



- Monitoring and evaluation

**Date and procedure for the implementation:**

S.No.	Date (B.S.)	Programme	Particular
1.	2081-12-31	Central structure	Subject of Gender Policy
2.	2082-01-25	Committee and structure	Affiliates and provinces
3.	2082-03-15	Training	Central, provincial, and local committees
4.	2082-10-28	Monitoring and research	Monitoring at workplaces where there is discrimination
5.	2082-12-07	Suggestions and feedback	Workplaces where there is discrimination
6.	2083-01-05	Delegation	State and related bodies and pressurise for the ratification of ILO C190

**GROUP 3**  
**Why gender policy?**

For equality

**Purpose:**

Building an egalitarian society

**Basic components of gender policy:**

- Equal participation – at least 50 per cent of participation at the policy level
- Equal wages
- Access to education
- Representation in development and construction
- Easy task
- Positive discrimination

**Capacity building:**

- To run awareness programmes
- To provide knowledge and education on labour rights based on Labour Law/policies/acts/ILO conventions.

**Workplace safety and inclusion:**

- OSH
- Decent work arrangement
- Safe workplace
- Trade union rights
- CBA - Collective Bargaining
- Equal pay for equal work
- Labour inspection system

**How to implement a gender policy?**

- To implement policy by making long-term and short-term action plans
- Monitoring and evaluation

**Work Life Balance:**

- The Maternity Protection Act mentioned in the Constitution shall be implemented.
- Maternity leave.
- Facilitation at work.
- Awareness programmes on the distribution of household chores.
- Baby care room and breastfeeding room.
- To provide scientific education.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- Monitor whether trade unions have a gender policy or not.
- Monitor whether the workplace is gender-friendly or not.
- Check whether the state's gender policy has been adopted or not
- Check whether participation for all memberships is equal or not.
- Pressurise for making CBA mandatory



- Conducting a gender audit
- To take the initiative to implement the Labour Act/the Trade Union Act/ Gender Policy.
- To end the recruitment of workers through outsourcing.
- To conduct a campaign programme to increase membership.

**Implementation and evaluation:**

- Pressurise for implementation
- Campaigning

**GROUP 4**

**Why Gender Policy in Trade Unions?**

- Equal participation
- Participation at the leadership level
- Safe and dignified workplace
- Equal opportunity
- Access to financial capital/resources and means
- Work-life balance
- Transparency
- Equal opportunities in education, health and employment
- Personality development

**What is the purpose?**

- Gender Empowerment
- Ending violence and discrimination in trade unions
- Equal pay for equal work
- Decent work and a safe workplace
- Grievance Management
- To create equal opportunity in leadership

**Basic components:**

**1. Equal representation**

- a. The work of women, men, and others must be valued.
- b. Equality at the decision-making level
- c. Equality at the leadership level
- d. Equal participation

**2. Safe and inclusive workplace**

- a. The OSH strategy should be implemented
- b. Decent work arrangements
- c. Awareness programmes and incentive arrangements
- d. Pressure to ratify ILO Convention C-950

**3. Work-life balance**

- a. Gender Friendly Programmes
- b. Flexibility in working hours
- c. Gender Responsiveness Policies and Practices

**4. Inclusive Advocacy and Bargaining**

- a. Maternal and infant care
- b. Equal pay
- c. Advocate for ratification of ILO Conventions

**5. Capacity Building**

- a. Interactions on the ILO Conventions
- b. Leadership orientation and training
- c. Dissemination of the study and research reports

**6. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- a. Monitor whether trade unions have gender policy or not.

- b. Regularise the monitoring and evaluation policy
- c. Gender audit

#### When and how to implement?

- Passed by the Federation's Central Committee Meeting.
- Orienting training for members.
- Establish a good governance mechanism committee.
- Form a committee for monitoring and supervision.

#### Until when??

- From 6 months to 10 years

### A CHAT WITH THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (MPS) TO DISCUSS THE STATUS OF RATIFICATION OF ILO CONVENTION 190 IN NEPAL

Speeches by the Members of Parliament (all were female MPs from different political parties in Nepal)

#### **Honourable Rama Koirala Paudel, Member of the House of Representatives of Nepal**

Honourable Rama Koirala Paudel expressed her gratitude to SARTUC for inviting her to the significant event and noted the presence of four Members of Parliament, praising SARTUC's efforts to safeguard workers' rights in Nepal and across South Asia. Moreover, she highlighted JTUCC as a noteworthy example of union unity and solidarity. She recalled that in 2057 B.S., initiatives for women workers began through TUKEP's ten points, in collaboration with GEFONT, NTUC, and DECONT, and emphasised that Nepal's constitution recognised the right to association as a fundamental right achieved through the efforts of senior trade union leaders. She stressed the importance of implementing these rights effectively for women workers to ensure workplaces are free from harassment, violence, and threats. She shared the findings from her recent visit to Madesh Province, where she found a low participation of women in decision-making and planning at provincial levels, alongside their large presence in the informal sector with limited rights and protections. She observed that women's involvement in trade unions remains uncertain due to their dual household and workplace responsibilities, and reflected on her 28 years of trade union activism, noting that women often sacrificed more than men. She underscored the urgency of ratifying ILO Convention 190. She highlighted that many female workers endure harassment and violence, especially in the informal sector, while female civil servants are frequently denied promotions. Additionally, Nepali women are prohibited from engaging in foreign domestic work in GCC countries, which she condemned as a violation of human rights. She concluded by reaffirming her dedication to advancing workers' rights and committed to supporting the ratification of ILO C190, while calling for greater awareness and backing from parliamentarians.

She has also provided strategies and suggestions on ILO C190 ratification. ILO has introduced Convention 190 in 2019, but Nepal has to ratify it now, for which:





- Trade unions have to come together with a common understanding.
- We have to work together with employers through a tripartite committee.
- We need to raise awareness among members of parliament so lobbying with more MPs.
- Discussion and meetings with other MPs as well.
- Now, many MPs are thinking against the establishment of a trade union, so we have to expand the discussion with MPs from all the political parties.
- Many female workers are facing harassment and violence in the workplace, mostly in the informal sectors.
- To provide equality to women workers at the workplace and to ensure their rights are protected.
- Trade unions shall continuously lobby and advocate for the ratification of C190.

### **Honourable Gyanu Basnet Subedi, Member of the House of Representatives of Nepal**

Honourable Gyanu Basnet Subedi thanked SARTUC for the invitation and emphasised that the programme addressed a highly important and relevant issue for the current world of work. She acknowledged that the discussions had provided valuable insights on gender policies and ILO Convention 190, restating that as Members of Parliament, it is their responsibility to speak up and work for labour rights. She expressed that there are still a lot of things to be done for gender equality, where people's movements in Nepal have been central to advancing equality, representation, and inclusivity. She underlined the urgent need to ensure effective implementation of constitutional and legal rights for women, with particular attention to reflecting women's issues and rights in laws and policies. Making a commitment, she assured her support for the ratification of ILO C190, stating that her party is positive towards it, and urged trade unions to continue strong lobbying and advocacy efforts. She further promised to support coordination among MPs for deeper discussions on C190 and expressed solidarity with the ongoing efforts of unions in this cause.

### **Honourable Rekha Yadav, Member of the House of Representatives of Nepal**

Honourable Rekha Yadav expressed gratitude to SARTUC and participants, highlighting that while the Constitution of Nepal has guaranteed women's rights, the ground realities remain unchanged, with many women still facing workplace violence and harassment without their voices being adequately heard. She criticised the alignment of trade unions with political parties, pointing out that unions often remain silent when their associated parties are in power. She assured participants that she would be a strong voice in parliament, committed to advocating for safe, harassment- and violence-free workplaces for women.

### **Honourable Maina Karki, Member of the House of Representatives of Nepal**

Honourable Maina Karki also extended her thanks to SARTUC for organising the programme, appreciating the knowledge and insights gained, particularly on the importance of gender equality and the ratification of ILO C190. She assured participants that she would raise the voices of women workers and trade unions in parliament, while also sharing the knowledge with her political party colleagues for collective advocacy. Stressing the importance of collaboration, she requested



ongoing support and information from trade unions and stakeholders to strengthen parliamentary interventions, promising to actively advocate for the ratification of C190 in Nepal's parliament.

### CLOSING

**Brother Laxman Basnet**, General Secretary, SARTUC, expressed sincere thanks to all the participants for their active involvement and contributions throughout the programme and group work. Moreover, he thanked to facilitator, Sister Radhika Dhingra, coming from India to capacitate the trade union members in Nepal. He emphasised that the discussions, group work, and action plans reflected the commitment of trade union members to advancing gender equality in the labour movement. Additionally, he stressed that the adoption and effective implementation of gender policies are not only organisational necessities but also moral responsibilities to ensure fairness, dignity, and inclusion for all workers, regardless of gender or background. Thus, it is the duty of SARTUC-affiliated unions and their leaders to formulate and implement gender policies at every level of their unions. He urged affiliates to take the workshop outcomes seriously, integrate them into their union structures, and work collectively toward ratifying ILO conventions, particularly C190. Most importantly, he expressed his gratitude to all four honourable MPs available for the whole two days of the programme and expressed their commitment to support workers' rights and the ratification process of C190. Significantly, he thanked to Brother Kanan and Brother Prabhu for their support and addressed the participants. Finally, he thanked to all three presidents of SARTUC-affiliated trade unions (GEFONT, NTUC, and ANTUF) for their valuable time to address the participants and commitment to the implementation of gender policies and gender audits to their respective unions.

**Sister Nishi Kaphai**, Gender Expert and Coordinator, SARTUC/SAGP, thanked participants for their active involvement and honest sharing of experiences, which enriched the workshop's outcomes. Moreover, she expressed gratitude to the facilitator, Sister Radhika Dhingra, for her expertise on the subject matter. She emphasised that the practical recommendations and action-oriented strategies developed by the groups are assets for the gender policy formation to SARTUC and its affiliates in South Asia. She stressed that gender equality in trade unions requires continuous efforts and collective actions. Moreover, she encouraged participants to take ownership of the action plans, adapt them to their local contexts, and follow through with commitment and consistency. Finally, she thanked to all the honourable MPs for their commitments and availability throughout the programme and brother Kanan and Prabhu, including all three presidents of major trade unions from Nepal.

### CONCLUSION

There was a strong consensus among participants on the urgent need for gender policies in trade unions. Importantly, the commitments from the honourable Members of Parliament to support the ratification of ILO C190 were the key achievement of the national workshop. Participants, including MPs, collectively emphasised equal participation and leadership opportunities for all genders, safe and inclusive workplaces free from violence and discrimination, and proactive measures for gender sensitivity and behavioural change. Moreover, capacity building was identified as a crucial foundation, with calls for training in leadership, rights awareness, and

advocacy skills, alongside the integration of OSH, childcare facilities, and flexible work arrangements. Additionally, monitoring and evaluation emerged as a frequent topic among participants, highlighting the importance of regular gender audits, accountability mechanisms, and ensuring compliance with national laws and ILO conventions, particularly C190. Significantly, the action plans proposed specific timelines, steps for policy adoption, and coordination between trade unions, government, and stakeholders to ensure gender equity at all levels.

Based on discussions, group work, and commitments from honourable MPs, it is recommended that trade unions institutionalise gender equality through a structured framework encompassing policy formulation, capacity building, workplace safety, and continuous evaluation. Likewise, immediate priorities should include adopting gender policies at all organisational levels, ratifying and implementing ILO Convention 190, and ensuring gender-responsive governance through inclusive decision-making bodies. Similarly, capacity-building initiatives should target both women, men, and the LGBTIQ+ community to challenge patriarchal norms and equip members for leadership roles. Regular monitoring, supported by gender audits and transparent reporting, should be mandated to assess progress and address gaps. Collaborative advocacy with government, employers, and civil society should be pursued to secure legislative reforms, adequate resources, and cultural change toward a truly equitable and inclusive trade union movement to protect the workers' rights in the changing world of work.



**Participants' Details**

S.N.	Union	Name
1	<b>Member of Parliament</b>	Honourable Rama Koisala Paudel
2		Honourable Maina Karki
3		Honourable Gyanu Basnet Subedi
4		Honourable Rekha Yadav
5	<b>GEFONT</b>	Mr. Lila Raj Giri
6		Ms. Sunita Bhandari, Women's committee, Secretary
7		Ms. Mamata Hakuju Shrestha
8		Mr. Suman Parajuli
9		Ms. Sujana Joshi
10	<b>NTUC</b>	Mr. Bishnu Khadka
11		Ms. Pramila Dhungana
12		Mr. Santosh Giri
13		Paltan Thaker
14		Ms. Radhika Kuinkel
15		Ms. Ishwari Kathyath
16		Ms. Rajkali Singh Thakuri
17	<b>ANTUF</b>	Mr. Bishnu Thapa
18		Mr. Krishna Regmi
19		Mr. Lila Kumar Shrestha
20		Ms. Lal Kumari Pun
21		Mr. Milan Lama
22		Ms. Sangita Baniya
23	<b>NNSM</b>	Ms. Samikshya Panta
24		Ms. Chandani Rana
25		Ms. Bandana Sharma
26	<b>JTUCC</b>	Mr. Gauri Shankar Pd. Singh
27		Ms. Binit Malla Dudhakoti, Treasure, STVC
28		Ram Chandra Shrestha
29		Mr. David Lama
30		Ms. Radhika Shahi Shah
31		Ms. Karma Dolkar Gurung
32		Ms. Renu Jha
33		Mr. Rameshwar Sharma
34	<b>Interpreter</b>	Mr. Bijaya Shiwakoti
35		Mr. Ritesh Acharya
36	<b>Facilitator</b>	Ms Radhika Dingra
37	<b>SARTUC/SAGP</b>	Ms Nishi Kaphai
38	<b>SARTUC</b>	Ms. Shushila Ghimire (Women's Committee)
39		Mr. Bikey Shrestha (Youth Committee)
40		Mr. Kishor Bikram Shah
41		Ms. Sweanta Lama
42		Mr. Laxman Basnet



**AGENDA**

<b>Day 01 – 10/04/2025 (Thursday)</b>		
08:00 – 09:00	<b>Breakfast</b>	
09:00 – 09:15	<b>Registration</b> of participants	
09:15 – 10:00	<b>Opening remarks</b>  <b>Introduction</b> of participants	<b>Bro Laxman Basnet</b> , General Secretary, SARTUC <b>Sis Nishi Kaphai</b> , Coordinator, SAGP
10:00 – 10:30	Agenda and context setting Ice Breaker	
10:30 – 10:45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
10:45 – 12:15	Overview of Gender Equality in Trade Unions in Nepal	Facilitator: <b>Sis Nishi Kaphai</b> , Coordinator, SAGP and Gender Expert, SARTUC
12:15 – 12:30	Energizer - Facts/Myths	
12:30 – 13:30	Global knowledge to local context – Global best practices in gender responsive trade unions – Group Work – Case Studies	Facilitator: Ms Radhika
13:30 – 14:30	<b>Lunch</b>	
14.30 – 16:00	Recognising Gender Biases in union structures An Introduction of Gender Audits	Facilitator: Ms Radhika
16:00 – 16:15	<b>Tea Break</b>	
16:15 - 17:30	Setting Gender Equity Goals – Brainstorming followed by formulating SMART Goals	
<b>DAY 02 – 11/04/2025 (Friday)</b>		
09:15 – 09:30	<b>Recap of previous day</b>	
9:30 – 10:00	<b>Address by senior trade union leaders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bro Raman Kanan, Regional coordinator, PSI</li> <li>• Bro Jagat Simkhada, President, JTUCC/ANTUF</li> <li>• Bro Binod Shrestha, President, GEFONT</li> <li>• Bro Yogendra Kumar Kunwar, President, ITUC-NAC/NTUC</li> <li>• Bro Prabhu Rajendran, Regional Consultant, Mondiaal FNV</li> </ul>	
09:30 – 12:15	Essentials of Gender Polices in Trade Unions  Presentation on Core Elements; Draft policy using templates	Facilitator: Ms Radhika
12:15 – 13:15	Leadership Circles – Women leaders discuss challenges and strategies to promote inclusive leadership	Facilitator: Ms Radhika and Sis Nishi



13:15 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14:00 – 15:00	<b>Actions and Recommendations</b> – From Insight to Action	Facilitator: Ms Radhika
15:00 – 16:50	<p>A chat with the <b>Members of Parliament</b> to discuss the Status of Ratification of ILO Convention 190 in Nepal.</p> <p>Speeches by the <b>Members of Parliament</b> (all were female MPs from different political parties in Nepal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Honourable Rekha Yadav</li><li>• Honourable Rama Koirala Paudel</li></ul>	
16:50 – 17:00	Closing remarks and vote of thanks	<b>Sis Nishi Kaphai</b> , Coordinator, SAGP and Gender Expert, SARTUC