

ACTIVITY LOG SHEET¹

PO Name: Access Planet Organization		Project Number	
Activity conducted:	Immediate objective (select one) Activity code and name of activity: “Enhancing Economic Rights of youths with visual impairments (From Charity to Investment)”		
Place of activity	Zoom, virtually Meeting		
Persons involved:	Gargi Nepal Srijana Dhakal Laxmi Nepal Nilu Maharjan		
Date of event:	30 th July 2021		
Number of participants:	Total number of participants= 45		
Summary on the event/process/content	<p>Access planet organization in collaboration with Nepalese young entrepreneurs forum and in the funding support of Japan Foundation and Japanese Society for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (JSRPD) has successfully conducted advocacy interaction program entitled “Enhancing Economic Rights of youths with visual impairments (From Charity to Investment)” on 30 July 2021.</p> <p>The program had the presence of various employers and disability right activists where they shared their views and commitment towards inclusive employment opportunities for blind and visually impaired youths.</p> <p><u>Welcome and Objective sharing by President, Ms. Gargi Nepal</u></p> <p>Ms. Gargi Nepal shared the organizational objectives and ongoing activities of access planet. She stated that the main objective of the organization is uplifting the current situation and empowering women with disabilities. Since the origin of the organization it has been involved in techno based training for women with disabilities, advocacy for the rights of the women with disabilities and leadership program for women with disabilities. She highlighted the objective of this advocacy interaction program as “to enhance economic rights of youths with visual impairment by collaborating with various organizations.</p> <p><u>Paper Presentation entitled “Employment status of blind and visually impaired youths in Nepal and the Way Forward” by Executive director Ms. Laxmi Nepal.</u></p> <p>In this interaction program, there was a paper presentation made by Executive Director of Access Planet, Ms. Laxmi Nepal on the topic, Employment status of blind and visually impaired youths in Nepal. The major topics highlighted in the paper were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available employment statistics of people with disabilities. • Policies and system related to employment provided by government for people with disabilities • Limitations and improvement needed for uplifting the economic status of people with visual impairments. • Collaborative approach for improvement of economic status from government, organization of Persons with disabilities, employers and blind and visually impaired youths. • The Way forward <p>Pannel Discussion, “Diversity in Workforce: Opportunity for Inclusive Social Progress”.</p> <p>This panel discussion was moderated by Mr. Khom Raj Sharma, Senior Vice- President of Nepal Association of the Blind (NAB).</p>		

The panelists where:

Dr. Rajesh Dhoj Joshi, Director of Kathmandu Model Hospital (employer)

Mr. Nabin Lama, CEO of Gandaki Dohori Sanjh (employer)

Ms. Sharda Adhikari, Helen Keller International (visually impaired employee)

Mr. Chiranibi Poudel, CEO of Seeing Hands Nepal massage center (visually impaired entrepreneur)

Mr. Mitra Lal Sharma, President of National Federation of Disabled- Nepal (NFDN)

The panel discussion aimed to know the motivating factor of hiring blind and visually impaired youths from the employers including Dr. Rajesh from Model Hospital and Mr. Nabin Lama from folk music restaurant. Similarly, the accommodations and attitudinal behavior from colleagues were tried to be examined from speech by Sharada Adhikari from HKI. Aspect of entrepreneurship was tried to be examined from the speeches by Mr. Chiranjibi. Finally, having Mitralal Sharma, president of NFDN as panelist tried to examine the policies provisions of employment for blind and visually impaired youths from the rights based perspective.

Major points that can be drawn out from panel discussion:

- Employers who already has set example by hiring blind and visually impaired youths provided good rating to these employers and do not see any such major challenges in hiring them as workforce but rather added asset of inclusiveness to their companies.
- The employee need positive attitude, working environment and minor reasonable accommodation to work effectively. Just like any other employees, they need skills to be fit for particular job.
- There are blind and visually impaired entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial activities should be promoted by government and private sector.
- From the policy perspective, there should be positive discrimination and reservation in both government and private sector for the employment of blind and visually impaired youths.

Speech and Commitment from Nepalese young entrepreneurs forum(NYEF), Co-organizer

Highlights of the work conducted by the NYEF were explained by Mr. Pavitra Bahadur Gautam, a senior member of NYEF and CEO of Karkhana.

- New employment opportunities suitable for people with disabilities will be created.
- Collaboration with organization of the persons with disabilities will be focused in future from the point of view of entrepreneurs and employers who are member in NYEF.
- Proper sensitization about the disability should be given to the employers and entrepreneurs so that the work environment can be created.
- NYEF will work as pool for uplifting the economic status of people with disabilities.

Questions and views shared by the participants in the open floor session:

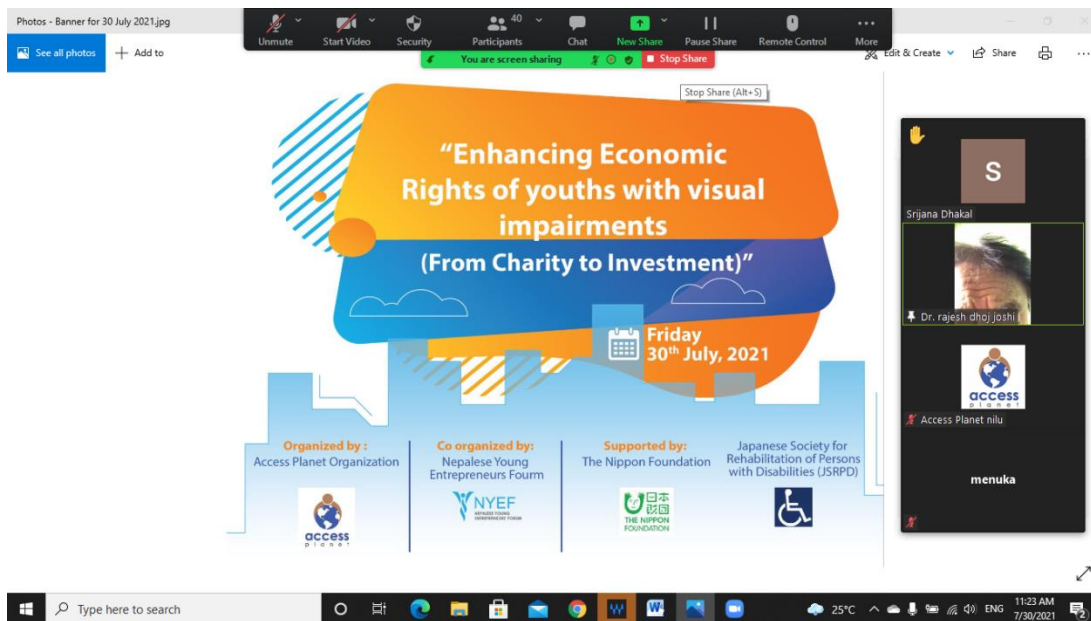
- Mr. Udip Shrestha representative from Panchakanya Group and President of NYEF shared his views that the HR agencies should be sensitized on the matter since many companies seek support of these HR service agencies for hiring employees.
- Mr. Ramesh Tharu, blind and visually impaired youth from Kailali shared, blind and visually impaired youth are facing difficulties in finding job opportunities, suitable website, application should be developed for sharing the job opportunities where they can navigate using technology.
- Pabitra Bd. Gautam: the various job portal available in online platform should establish different bulletin for people with disabilities only, where they can search the job vacancies suitable according to their nature of disability.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Puspa Raj Rimal one of the deaf-blind impaired participants present in the program suggested to create a suitable position paper about the present scenario of employment of blind and visually impaired. <p><u>Speech by Yoshihiro Mitsuoka Japanese society for rehabilitation of Persons with disabilities</u></p> <p>Mr. Yoshihiro Mitsuoka shared his views towards the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education is the main factor for the employment Negative perception and lack of acceptance is the main problem. The employment opportunities are available but due to lack of proper sensitization an unfriendly nature of job people with disabilities are not able to be properly employed. Proper advocacy should be done for providing the economic rights of people with disabilities from private, government and organizations for persons with disabilities, only then the people can be sensitized and people with disabilities economic status will be uplifted <p>Conclusion</p> <p>This advocacy interaction program for economic rights has become fruitful in sensitizing the issues of accessibility and attitude related challenges for employing blind and visually impaired youths by private companies. The co-organizer NYEF has given commitment for introducing friendly work opportunities for people with disabilities in general and blind and visually impaired youths in particular. We would like to thank Japan Foundation and JSRPD for supporting for this initiative.</p>
Output:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Various employers present in the interaction program were sensitized about the economic status of people with disabilities. Commitment of accessible work environment and acceptance was made by the concerned economic stakeholders and employers. New and accessible job opportunities for people with visual impairments were discussed.
Follow up plans (if any) with responsibility:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The commitment made by the economic stakeholders will be reviewed and followed up in near future.
Key learning's for next similar event	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> More economic stakeholders should be included who can provide commitment from their level. HR agency representative should be invited in such events.

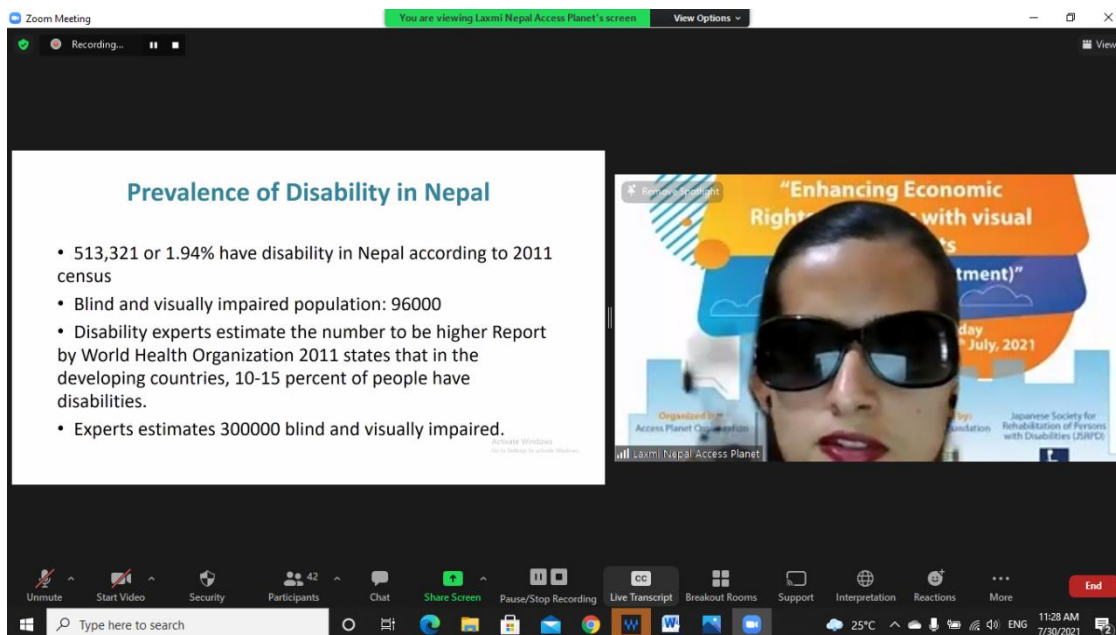
Reported Prepared by (Name/position/date):
Nilu Maharjan
Program Officer
Date:1st August 2021

Photos:

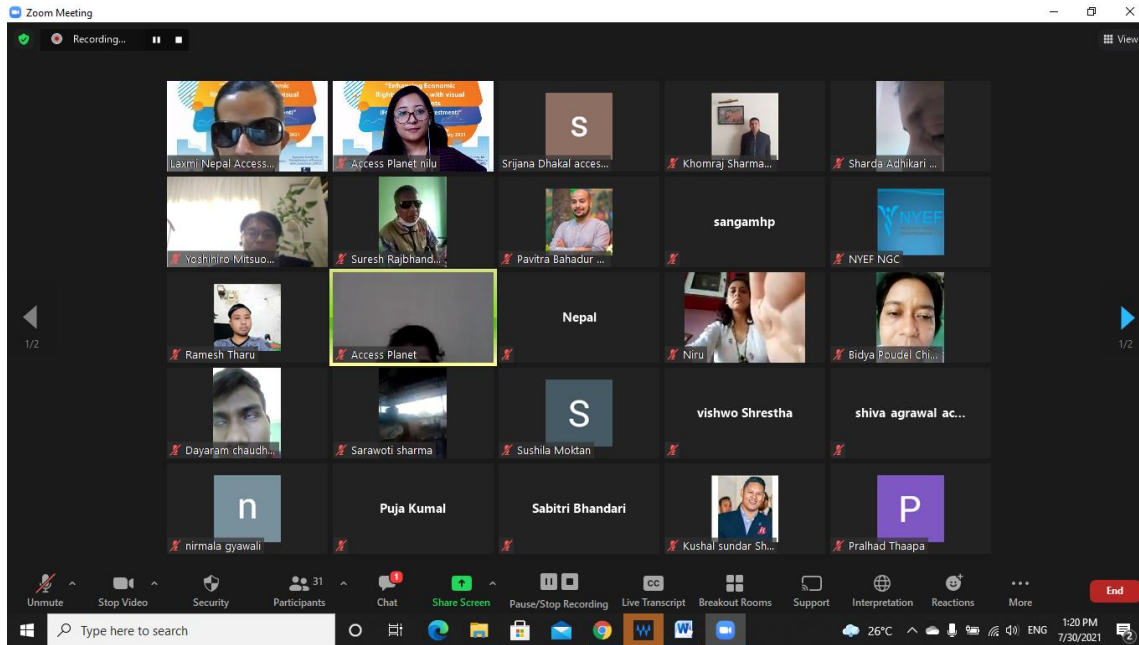
Pic 1: Banner of the Program



Pic 2: Paper Presentation by Ms. Laxmi Nepal



Pic 3: Group photo with the participants



Pic 4: Speech by the chief guest



