



Sankalpa Women's Alliance for Peace, Justice and Democracy

April 2013, Issue

April Newsletter

During the month of April, Sankalpa team focused basically on activities related to Hon. Margaret Hodge Visit, British Parliamentarian and Ex-Minister. Two management committee meetings (15th April & 26th April) were held in this month to support the Sankalpa's operation. The executive board meeting held on 22nd April formed Constitution Amendment Committee to revise Sankalpa's Constitution. The meeting also decided to organize Special Annual General Meeting on 16th May. Sankalpa Executive Director Ms Chanda Devi Shrestha Rai & Organization Development Advisor Ms Lula Belinfante visited Para Legal Committee and Adolescent Girl Group at Sangachowk VDC of Sindhupalchowk district on 23rd April.

Hon. Margaret Hodge Visit (British Parliamentarian and Ex-Minister)

Sankalpa organized series of programs during the visit of Hon. Margaret Hodge, British Parliamentarian and Ex-Minister as well as gender expert from 31st March -5th April 2013 in coordination with VSO. As per planned, Hon. Margaret Hodge was on a two weeks visit under the parliamentary volunteering scheme of VSO to help women rights advocates to address the issues of domestic violence and the participation of women in politics in Nepal. VSO played vital role for organizing all arrangements for her visit and also supported Sankalpa to organize different programs with Hon. Margaret Hodge. Besides VSO, British Embassy, European Union, DFID also supported to arrange meetings with different Government agencies.

Following programs were organized by Sankalpa during Hon. Margaret Hodge Visit:



Meeting of Margaret with western regional network committee members of Sankalpa and other women activists



Sankalpa organized meeting with western regional network committee members of Sankalpa and other women activists at hotel Landmark in Pokhara on 31st March. Chief District Officer of Kaski was invited as chief guest for this meeting said that the presence of Hon. Margaret Hodge who has been working for women's movement and their rights has given an additional motivation for women of western region to fight for their rights. On behalf of Sankalpa, Treasurer Shobha Basnet was also present to brief on Sankalpa and its activities. Margaret shared her experiences about the women's rights campaign during her different political appointments and political career. She mentioned that women have always been struggling for women's rights

and suggested that women should always continue to raise their voice collectively for women's rights.



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Meeting of Margaret with Sankalpa Board, Advisors and Staff

Sankalpa team heartily welcomed Hon. Margaret at Sankalpa on 1st April. Welcome note was presented by general secretary Sangeeta Lama. She expressed that we are delighted to share Sankalpa's activities and its relation and contribution to Nepali women's movement. Executive Director, Chanda Devi Shrestha Rai presented the presentation about Sankalpa. Board members also briefed about their organizations and their contribution towards women's movement. Founder member and advisor Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba presented the presentation on "Situational Analysis of Nepali Women". The presentation helped Margaret to understand situation of Nepali women in a deeper way. In the meeting, VSO county director Arlene Mahiney, VSO program



manager Smriti Bhattarai and media persons were also present. The overall meeting was facilitated by board member Dr. Chhatra Amatya.

Meeting of Margaret with Inter Party Women's Alliance (IPWA)

Sankalpa coordinated to organize meeting of Margaret with Inter Party Women's Alliance on "How political women can work with people of civil society" on 1st April 2013. Chair of Inter Party Women's Alliance, Ms. Urmila Pandey welcomed Margaret, VSO team and Sankalpa team for the meeting. Ms. Pandey gave brief introduction on IPWA and its objectives to establish IPWA. IPWA members shared that in the last election there was 33% representation provided to women on the basis of direct and proportionate electoral system but this time we are not sure to get 33% representation. So, IPWA is continuously lobbying and advocating for 33% representation by submitting memorandum to different parties. On this note, Margaret suggested to submit memorandum by developing strategy with plan and proposal to ensure 33% representation in upcoming election collectively which shows women's networking powerful. In the meeting, Sankalpa team also revealed that Sankalpa is planning to support



and capacitate women candidate to get elected in the upcoming election. Hence, Sankalpa requested IPWA to share their need so that we can plan and support women candidate in a solid way. During the meeting, political women from different political parties as well as Margaret shared about their experiences while working for women's rights. The meeting was facilitated by Sankalpa board member Ms. Stella Tamang.



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Meeting with Sankalpa MOs & RNE



The meeting was held on 2nd April 2013 at Nagarik Aawaz. Nagarik Aawaz chairperson and Sankalpa treasurer Ms. Shobha Basnet welcomed Hon. Margaret Hodge, VSO team and representatives from Sankalpa's member organizations and Sankalpa team. Representatives from ten member organizations excluding NCARD presented brief presentation about their respective organizations mentioning introduction of organization, working areas, geographical coverage and collaboration with Sankalpa.

Representative from RNE, Ms. Kamla Bhist also briefed about RNE relationship with

Sankalpa and also mentioned support from RNE to WAPPDCA / Sankalpa for its establishment. After the presentation, Margaret shared her forty years of political career and struggle of British women for women's rights. Margaret appreciated Sankalpa for uniting diverse women's group for common purpose.

Meeting with Women, Children and Social Welfare Ministry

Hon. Margaret Hodge, VSO team and Sankalpa board member Dr. Chhatra Amatya had a meeting with Women, Children and Social Welfare Minister Hon. Hrididi baba Shrestha on 3rd April.



Meeting with National Women Commission



Hon. Margaret Hodge, VSO team and Sankalpa advisor Ms. Mohammadi Siddiqui had meeting with Chairperson Ms. Sheikh Chandtara and spokesperson of National Women Commission Ms. Mona Ansari on 3rd April.

Meeting with National Social Welfare Council

Hon. Margaret Hodge, VSO team and Sankalpa Executive Director Ms. Chanda Devi Shrestha Rai & operation manager Ms Merita Kansakar had a meeting with member secretary Mr. Rabindra Kumar, director Mr. Madan Prasad Rimal and deputy director Mr. Ram Sharma of Social Welfare Council on 3rd April.



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Panel discussion on Nepali Women's Movement and Peace Building



Sankalpa organized panel discussion on Nepal Movement and Peace Building on 4th April 2013 at Naxal Banquet. The panelists of the program were Pranika Koyu - Occupy Baluwatar, Mohana Ansari - Women Commission, Bishnu Pokharel - Gender Study Department and Mohammadi Siddiqui – Advisor of Sankalpa.

Around hundred participants were present in the program including civil society members, Government officials, representatives from International organizations, donors, police officers, media persons, human right defenders, women

activist etc. In the program, British Parliamentarian, Margaret Hodge said that the cases related to violence against women should be treated as crimes and be prosecuted by the government and also added that many women were victims of violence against them and many were losing their lives at an early age. She said that treating violence against women cases as crime, it is also important to educate women to get rid of such violence against women cases.



Participants of Panel Discussion



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Press meet with media led by Sankalpa supported by British Embassy

Press Meet was organized by Sankalpa with the support of British Embassy on 4th April 2013 at Hotel Greenwich. During the press meet the purpose of Margaret visit in Nepal was informed.

Debrief with Sankalpa team Board, Advisors and Secretariat staff

Debrief meeting was organized at Sankalpa on 5th April with the presence of Hon. Margaret Hodge, VSO team, Sankalpa team. Margaret thanked Sankalpa for introducing strong and powerful women who are continuously struggling for women's rights and representation. She also expressed that she will support Sankalpa in future as well. Sankalpa team thanked Margaret Hodge for her valuable and constructive input and ideas for women's rights and representation. Sankalpa team also thanked VSO for all the arrangements for her visit and also supporting Sankalpa for organizing important meetings and different programs with Margaret.

Sankalpa Field Visit: Para legal Committee and Adolescent Girls Group

DFID representatives, UNICEF representatives, Sankalpa Organization Development Advisor Ms Lula Balinfante and Executive Director Ms Chanda Devi Shrestha Rai visited Para Legal Committee and Adolescent



Girls Group at Sangachowk VDC of Sindhupalchowk district on 23rd April. DFID is funding UNICEF to implement a programme support PLC's development in 1026 VDC's in 59 districts, directly involving 15,000 women volunteers. These Para Legal Committees deal with cases raised by the local community such as; physical violence, mental violence, sexual abuse, rape, polygamy, child marriage, property dispute/division, social violence and other related cases. Now the Para Legal Committees are being restructured with the support of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. Committees are being restructured into ward level domestic violence watchdogs, to address the issues

of domestic violence more closely.

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