



COMMUNIQUE: CAMPAIGN HACKATHON 2025 ON CLIMATE JUSTICE AND DECENT WORK

2025

ORGANIZED BY:



YOUTH ADVOCACY NEPAL
युथ एडवोकेसी नेपाल

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Introduction

ActionAid International Nepal (AAIN), in collaboration with Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES) and Youth Advocacy Nepal (YAN), successfully organized the Campaign Hackathon 2025 on May 5–6 at Pragya Pratisthan, Kathmandu, with the participation of over 1,000 individuals across the two days. Participants represented youth, women, people with disabilities, informal workers, marginalized communities, civil society organizations, media, academia, and government stakeholders.

Led by grassroots activists and movement leaders, the hackathon created a vibrant, inclusive, and creative platform for dialogue, collaboration, and action. It brought campaigns together in solidarity, focusing on Nepal's intersecting crises of climate-induced disasters and the precarious conditions of the informal labor sector. The event served as an urgent space to strategize for long-term, systemic change anchored in social justice.

Key Achievements of the Hackathon



Rooted Advocacy to the Ministries

The activists personally submit demand letters to key ministries. For the declaration of the Decent Work Campaign, they held a dialogue session with the Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Security, sharing their lived struggles as they called for both the implementation of existing policies and policy change. They also submitted the declaration to the Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens.



Climate Justice Demands Delivered

Climate activists submitted their demands for Climate Justice to the Ministry of Forest and Environment emphasizing community-centered policy which puts conservation of common resources, climate financing and agroecology while highlighting the urgency of the climate crisis.



Inclusive Dialogue with Government

During the hackathon, activists, CSOs, and stakeholders invited by government representative to provide input on the ongoing formulation of the Climate Change Act and Labor Act amendments which signaled a rare and meaningful engagement between government and grassroots voices.



A Convergence Space for Movements

The hackathon created a space where youth, movement leaders, and allies came together to connect, strategize, and co-create solutions which worked in strengthening solidarity across climate and labor rights movements.

Message from Executive Director, ActionAid International Nepal



During the opening plenary of the event, Sujeeta Mathema, Executive Director of ActionAid International Nepal, emphasized that communities most affected by climate change particularly marginalized groups and informal sector workers are often the least responsible for contributing to the crisis. She further stressed that despite their vulnerability and essential contributions to the national economy, these groups continue to be overlooked in major decision-making processes. She highlighted the urgent need to amplify their voices and ensure their meaningful participation in policy formulation and governance. Only through inclusive and justice-centered approaches, she noted, can climate action truly reflect the realities and needs of those on the frontlines.

Key Commitments from Policymakers

Activists and community representatives engaged directly with policymakers through tribunals, panel discussions, roundtables, and the formal handover of demand letters to government ministries. Key engagements included:

Hon. Nawal Kishor Sah, Minister for Women, Children, and Senior Citizens

- Delivered the keynote address during the Opening Ceremony.
- Highlighted the critical gaps in implementation of labor policies, especially for informal workers.
- Emphasized the disproportionate impact of climate change on the informal labor sector and the need for urgent state intervention.



Hon. Sharat Singh Bhandari, Minister for Labor, Employment, and Social Security

- Participated in a formal dialogue in the ministry with informal labor activists, during which a demand letter was submitted.
- Committed to the formalization of the informal labor sector and pledged to strengthen enforcement mechanisms through municipal-level initiatives and the development of an online labor rights portal.

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The voices of informal workers have been heard through this dialogue today. We are committed to strengthening their rights through formalization, local-level enforcement, and digital mechanisms that bring dignity and recognition to their labor.”

Mr. Kalanidhi Devkota, Executive Director, Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN)

- Spoke at the Closing Ceremony, underscoring MuAN's commitment to nationwide labor monitoring efforts through local governments.
- Reiterated support for local-level systems that ensure the visibility and protection of informal workers.

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We commit and will drive our efforts to the registration of laborers across Nepal in the municipal level. Also taking into account the current amendments in the Labour law we hope to further give focus to the Labor monitoring guidelines in both the local and provincial government.





Rupa BK, State Minister for Forests and Environment

- Addressed the audience during the Closing Ceremony.
- Invited feedback from communities and stakeholders on the Climate Change Act, currently in the drafting phase.
- Welcomed suggestions on the amendment of the Labor Act, encouraging inclusive consultation processes.



With the current Climate Change Act in the process of formulation, we welcome suggestions from the communities and stakeholders to make it more just and representative.

Key Takeaways from Sessions

Climate Justice

Expert Presentation and Dialogue on Development Paradigm in Nepal & Climate Justice

- Focused on the intersection of climate justice and Nepal's development trajectory.
- **Panelists represented:** International development sector, National policy and planning institutions and grassroots indigenous and disability rights activist
- **Key Takeaway:** Climate justice must be community-defined and led—placing marginalized groups at the center through intersectional and people-owned approaches.
- **Consensus:** Nepal must adopt a unified, justice-based stance in global negotiations, demanding grant-based climate finance and integrating climate justice into national planning and governance.



Panel Discussion on Community Struggle: Best Practices and Government Accountability

- Focused on grassroots environmental struggles, community-led conservation, and gaps in government accountability.
- **Panelists represented:** Community forest user networks, Grassroots activists and conservation leaders, Environmental journalism and media & Air pollution and environmental policy expertise
- **Key Takeaway:** Local communities—especially women, Indigenous peoples, and marginalized groups—are at the forefront of environmental protection, yet remain excluded from decisions and vulnerable to state and corporate negligence.
- **Consensus:** Development must respect Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, ensure legal protection for environmental defenders, and center community knowledge and monitoring in all national environmental plans.



Policy Dialogue on Climate Justice

- Focused on strengthening Nepal's climate governance through inclusive policy reform and justice-centered frameworks.
- **Panelists represented:** Environmental research and policy organizations, Human rights and environmental law, Academia and development studies & Youth-led grassroots activism
- **Key Takeaway:** Nepal needs a comprehensive, rights-based Climate Change Act that guarantees Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, defines state responsibilities, and ensures meaningful inclusion of Indigenous, Dalit, and landless communities in all stages of climate governance.
- **Consensus:** To close the gap between national ambition and local needs, Nepal must adopt a decentralized climate governance model, improve data systems and early warning mechanisms, and shift from loan-based to justice-based climate financing that centers community resilience, agriculture, and local planning.



Decent Work



Round Table Discussion on Occupational Health and Safety

- Focused on the occupational health and safety challenges of informal workers.
- **Panelists represented:** Occupational Health and Safety Unit, National Trade Union Confederation & Grassroots labor rights activism
- **Key Insight:** Social security from the government is vital to protect informal workers.
- **Consensus:** The state must ensure proper worker registration, policy and guideline development for health and safety, and enforcement of the policies to guarantee protection and rights.



Tribunal on Women in Informal Sector Labor

- Women gave testimonies of workplace injustices such as unfair wages, health and occupational safety.
- **Jury panel included representatives from:** Labor and women's rights activism, Informal sector leadership, Legal sector & Trade union federation
- **Jury Statement:** The bravery of women workers must be met with systemic justice.
- **Call to Action:** Government, employers, civil society, and trade unions must collaborate to ensure dignity, justice, and equality for all workers, regardless of sector or gender.

Movement Convergence

Dialogue on Movement Convergence

- Focused on shared struggles, interlinkages, and the need for solidarity across rights-based movements.
- **Panelists represented:** Women's rights activism, Dalit rights advocacy, Youth-led movements & Trade Union
- **Key Takeaway:** While each movement faces unique challenges, all are rooted in structural injustice—collective strength and mutual support are essential to sustain momentum and resist systemic oppression.
- **Consensus:** Movements must move forward hand in hand, building intersectional solidarity to amplify demands, protect each other's spaces, and achieve long-term transformative change.



Voices from Rooted Campaign Activists



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Following our visit to the Federal Ministry and with the dialogue we had it feels like we have passed the exam, now we wait until we receive the results. Our campaign will continue as we go home and share the outcomes with our peers in the community.

Gita Kumai, Labor Activist, Doti

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The people from the communities are completely unaware of policies and laws related to climate change which deprives them from information and being included in the decision-making process despite facing huge impacts. This platform is a helped to educate while advocate for the climate justice.

Manika Shrestha, Youth Activist, Kathmandu



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Despite living close to community forests and natural resources, our rivers and ponds are drying up. We are farmers, deeply connected to land and water, but now wildfires and water shortages have slashed our productivity. Many are being forced to abandon their ancestral livelihoods. We are in a big crisis, fighting for survival, and we do not know where to seek justice-



Ms. Gita Sunar, Community member, Madi Municipality, Chitwan

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“All of us informal workers need to come together, only when we raise one strong, collective voice will they hear us only then will they see our struggles and recognize our rights.”



Soniya Saday, Labor Activist, Siraha

What else happened during the Hackathon?

Across the two days, parallel sessions were held throughout the venue, featuring dynamic displays of activism by the informal sector labor women, youth climate activists, small-holder farmers and movement leaders ensuring that participation remained engaging, reflective, and community-driven.

Activism Activities



Symbolic Rally:

Over 300 participants joined a rally symbolizing the convergence of movements for climate justice and labor rights. Informal sector women and climate activists marched together to showcase solidarity.



Live Art Installations:

More than 8 artists and 20 youth activists collaborated with women informal laborers and climate campaigners to create expressive visual pieces reflecting lived experiences.



Forum Theatre/ Drama:

Informal sector women performed a powerful drama depicting challenges such as unsafe working conditions, wage discrimination, and lack of social protection.

Traditional Folk Singing (Dohori):

Informal entertainment workers performed Dohori songs integrating themes of climate vulnerability and labor exploitation.

Education and Public Engagement Platforms



Podcast:

Podcasts featured experts from both the campaigns who shared their understanding and expertise.

Chiya Guff:

Featured group discussions over tea, encouraging raw conversations from youth groups on climate justice and decent work.

Speak Out Loud:

Captured voices through photos and videos from activists, artists, community leaders, and shared their firsthand narratives on social media.

Photo Stories and IEC Materials

The Photos Stories and Various IEC Materials were disseminated along with the launch of Various Publications



Who were a part of the Hackathon?



1000+ People



50 + Solidarity Agencies



Women, Youth and Farmer Networks



40+ Grassroot Leaders from movements



20+ Media Houses



20 + Govt. Representatives from Federal and Local Level



Direct representation from Agencies and Communities from across Nepal

Key Outcomes of the Campaign Hackathon

- I Enhanced Public Awareness and Advocacy:**
Raised widespread awareness on the conservation of common resources (climate justice) and the six core demands of the informal labor movement, fostering stronger, informed constituencies and nationwide media outreach.
- II Secured Government Engagement:**
Commitment from policymakers to engage in policy reforms and consultations, particularly around labor rights and climate legislation.
- III Solidarity Across Sectors:**
A collective pledge of support by 53 diverse organizations to advance the intersecting struggles of climate justice and decent work.

A few Glimpses from the program

