



NPF

Image: Unsplash/ Iñaki del Olmo

**NATIONAL POLICY FORUM
(NPF)**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2024**

Message from the Founder



To each of us, for whom the nation and the purpose of nation-building come first, our hearts undeniably ache for the loss of every hour, every opportunity, every idea, or every conversation that could have taken us forward, even by an inch, towards our ultimate aspiration for shared prosperity and an awakened future. In search of passion, vision, and partnerships for enduring success in our cause and mission of a prosperous nation, the National Policy Forum (NPF) was established to bring minds together, spark meaningful conversations, institutionalize networks through value, and inspire reforms.

In a competitive world, Nepal has struggled to assert its presence in a way that is seen, heard, and valued. For too long, we have failed to find a new identity, a new hope, and a new idea of Nepal—not merely characterized by the natural wonders bestowed upon us by the heavens or illuminated by the grandeur of our august history, but rather defined by our united strength, global competence, scientific brilliance, and a self-created destiny manifested through hope, honesty, hard work, and, most importantly, an indomitable spirit of progress.

Today, as we stand, before us lies unimaginable potential with an impressively young population, exponentially advancing technology, a diversified diaspora, and neighboring economies that are magnificently growing. The nature of reward is such that it does not come to those who wait, but almost exclusively to those who persevere. Nepal stands at the crossroads of profound hope and prolonged despair, and we must choose hope—and we must choose to be rewarded.

The barricade that stands before us and our ultimate aspirations is our ill-informed policies, a lost congruence of vision, and a series of poor governance.

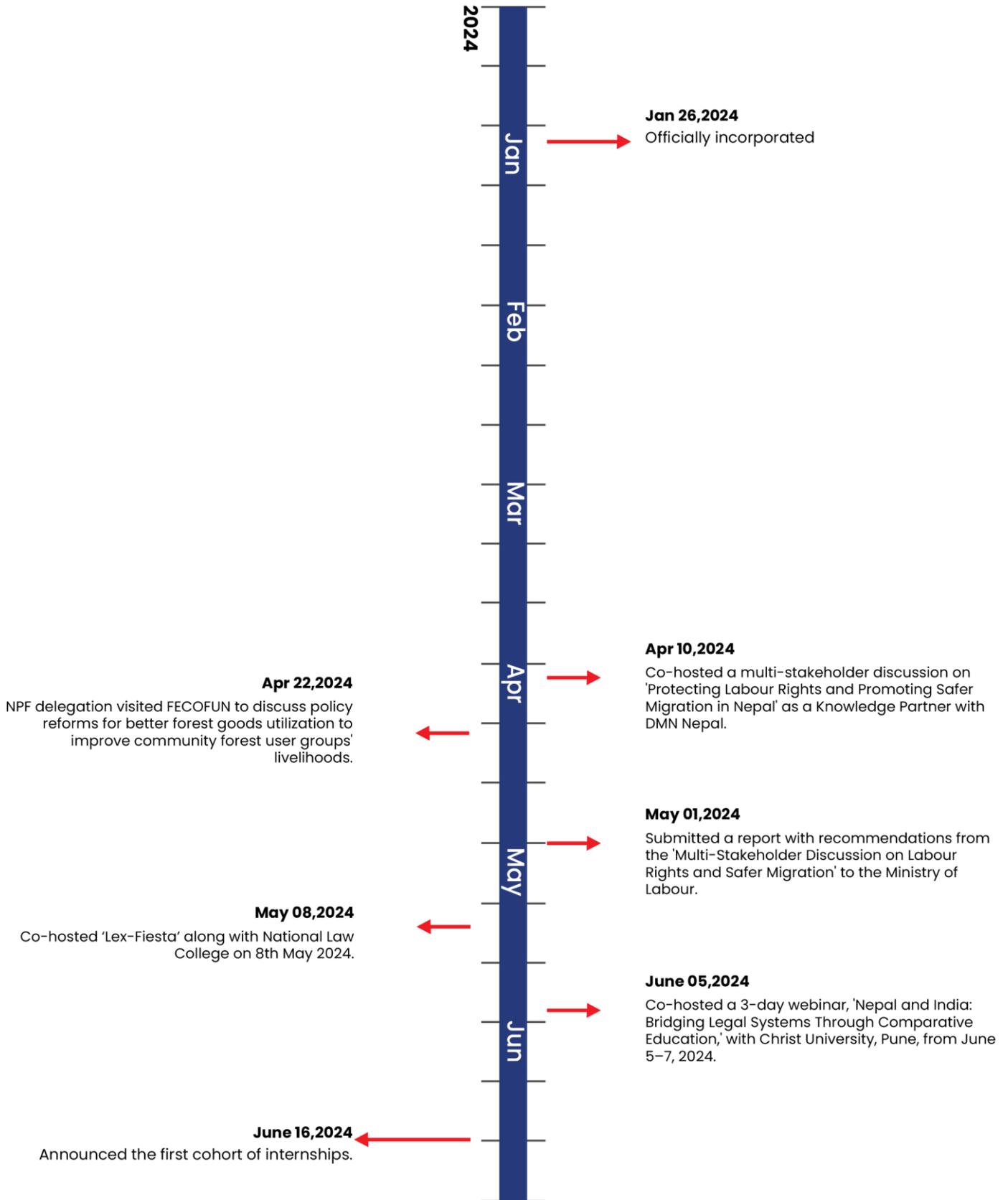
Since its inception, NPF has sought to harmonize national objectives with public perceptions. We have endeavored to link policy visions with practical realities and reap outcomes of national significance through transboundary collaborations. Our organization seeks to build the much-needed bridges that will connect us with one another and with the outer world that is yet to truly discover us. For the future that Nepal awaits—and the Nepal that future demands—NPF strives to stand as a force for good that truly educates, enlightens, and elevates.

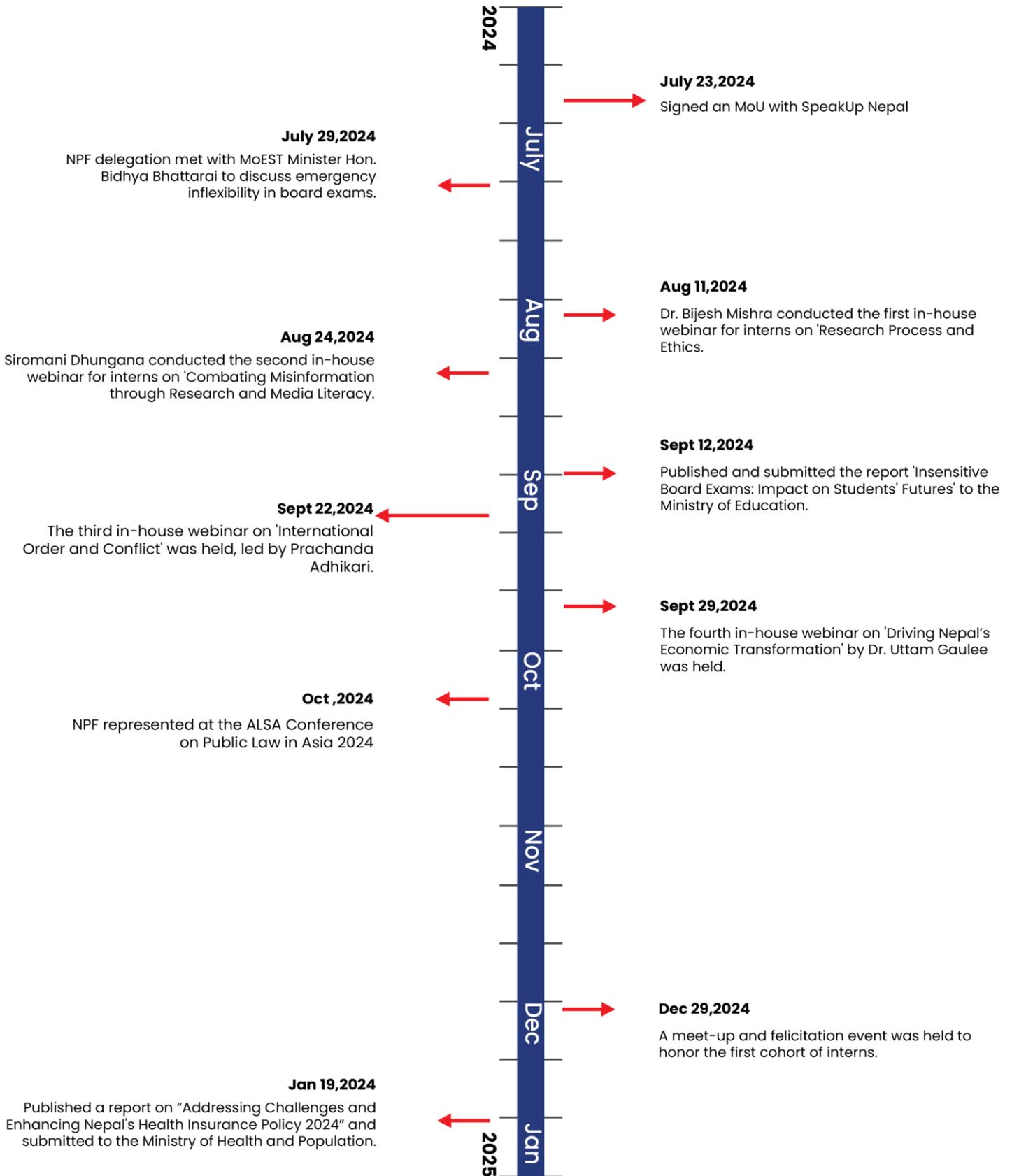
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Key Events





Our Team



Milan Jung Katuwal

Founder, Director



Sadichcha Silwal

Legal Researcher



Shaksham Shahi

Research & Communication
Associate



Yogesh Dhungana

Researcher



Amit Khanal

Researcher

January 2024

With the aim of fostering evidence-based decision-making, promoting good governance, and enhancing civic awareness, the National Policy Forum (NPF) was officially registered under the Companies Act on 25th January 2024 as a private entity under the sole ownership of Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal. At present, the company has a team of 5 members and 2 advisors with a community of 9 interns and over 2300 social media followers across all our platforms.

April 2024

1. Multi stakeholder Discussion on “Protecting Labour Rights and Promoting Safer Migration in Nepal”.

Hosted by Democracy Media Network (DMN) Nepal on April 10, 2024, at Aranya Boutique Hotel in Naxal, Kathmandu, NPF served as a knowledge partner, contributing to drafting the recommendations arising from the discussions. The event featured Hon. DP Aryal, the then Minister of Labour, Employment, and Social Security, as the Chief Guest and Dr. Sameer Khatiwada, Senior Economist at the Asian Development Bank as the keynote speaker. Stakeholders from 24 organizations dedicated to the rights of migrant workers actively participated, sharing insights and experiences.



Image 1: Multi stakeholder Discussion on “Protecting Labour Rights and Promoting Safer Migration in Nepal” held on 10th April 2024 at Naxal, Kathmandu.

The discussion highlighted key challenges faced by migrant workers and proposed actionable solutions to address their concerns including ratification of International Convention on Rights of Migrant Workers and paving the way for collaborative advocacy and policy reform.

2. The NPF Delegation visited the Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN) and discussed policy reforms to improve utilization of forest goods to enhance living standards of community forest user groups.

FECOFUN oversees a forest area spanning 2,425,392 hectares and works with 23,026 user groups across Nepal, highlighting its pivotal role in community-driven forestry initiatives. Being mindful of this, Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal met with Mr. Thakur Bhandari, President of FECOFUN, to engage in meaningful discussions about sustainable forest management and community empowerment.



Image 2: Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal represented NPF in a joint meeting held with the team of FECOFUN on 22 April 2024.

May 2024

1. Publication and submission of a comprehensive report with recommendations on the “Multi Stakeholder Discussion on Protecting Labour Rights and Promoting Safer Migration in Nepal” to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security.

A comprehensive proceeding [report](#) on the multi stakeholder discussion conducted in April 2024 was prepared by NPF which was submitted to the Minister DP. Aryal on 1st May 2024 on the occasion of International Labour Day.



Image 3: NPF alongside a team from DMN News at a joint meeting held at the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Singhadurbar, Kathmandu on 1st May 2024.

Hon. Minister DP Aryal expressed his deep appreciation for the report, which encapsulated key takeaways from the event along with recommendations for various stakeholders. He affirmed his commitment to advancing these recommendations in collaboration with Dr. Gopal Krishna Siwakoti, emphasizing the importance of collective efforts to address the issues faced by migrant workers.

2. Co-hosted ‘Lex-Fiesta’ along with National Law College.

To commemorate this year's National Law Day, the National Policy Forum (NPF) proudly partnered with the Student Welfare Council of National Law College as an event collaborator for their annual signature program, "Lex Fiesta 2081."



Image 4: Students and participants of National Law College with the official banner for Lex Fiesta 2024

As part of the event, NPF provided essential resources to participants in the ‘Legal Hackathon,’ where teams tackled pressing issues in the e-commerce bill. The event culminated in an engaging crisis management round, challenging participants to address a hypothetical scenario involving foreign e-commerce companies, local protests, and data privacy concerns. This final segment highlighted the participants' strategic thinking and problem-solving expertise, making the event a resounding success.

June 2024

3-Day Webinar on Nepal and India: Bridging Legal Systems Through Comparative Education

As a joint initiative between Christ (Deemed to be) University, India, and the National Policy Forum (NPF), a 3-day certificate webinar was organized from 5th to 7th June 2024.



Image 5: Official Banner of the 3-Day Webinar

Esteemed speakers from Christ University, including Prof. Dr. Anto Sebastian, Prof. Sugan Shine, and Prof. Prabhpreet Singh, contributed to the sessions. The webinar received 120 registrations, with 84 participants from over 30 different colleges and universities attending across all three days. The program aimed to foster comparative studies in legal education, facilitate knowledge exchange, and explore opportunities in India for Nepali students.

Additionally, NPF also opened a call for its first cohort of interns on 16th June 2024.

July 2024

1. Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the SpeakUP Nepal.

NPF and SpeakUp Nepal jointly signed an MoU on 23rd June 2024 marking the inception of a shared journey for fostering evidence-based research and magnifying the concerns of Nepalese citizens on issues that matter most to them.

SpeakUp Nepal is a digital platform that empowers Nepalese citizens to voice their concerns on pressing issues. It champions the principles of transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration, providing an avenue for all individuals, irrespective of their background, to express their views while also aiming to simplify the process of creating and supporting petitions, sharing narratives and ideas, and fostering connections among those with shared passions.



Image 6: Representatives from NPF led by Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal and from SpeakUp Nepal Mr. Subean Shrestha sign a joint MoU on 23rd July 2024.

With the above background, NPF and SpeakUp Nepal have set forth a shared vision for envisioning plans, dialogues and actions for national prosperity and nation-building. NPF and SpeakUp Nepal aim to foster institutional collaboration, enhancing the capacity of both organizations. Both organisations plan to facilitate a vibrant exchange of ideas, knowledge, and best practices. The joint efforts will bolster the impact of both entities in their respective domains. NPF and SpeakUp Nepal both are committed to working together on mutually agreed-upon goals and agendas. Furthermore, there are plans to share volunteers for events and activities of shared interest.

2. Meeting with the Minister of Education, Science and Technology Hon. Bidhya Bhattarai to discuss the issue of inflexibility in emergencies during board examinations.

On 29th July 2024, the delegation of NPF led by Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal had a brief meeting with the Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Ms. Bidhya Bhattarai. Discussions on problems faced by students during ‘board exams’ in cases of medical emergencies and other unforeseeable circumstances were carried out.



Image 7: Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal led NPF in a joint meeting held with the Minister of Education, Science and Technology Hon. Ms. Bidhya Bhattarai in Singhadurbar, Kathmandu.

A comprehensive report was made after this discussion which was published on 12th September 2024.

3. Meeting with the Minister of Health and Population of Nepal Hon. Pradip Poudel to discuss the need for reforms in the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) and the organization’s support to the Ministry and the Government of Nepal in policy research.

The discussion emphasized strengthening NHIP to enhance healthcare accessibility and affordability. NPF also offered its expertise in policy research to support the Ministry and the Government of Nepal in achieving these goals.



Image 8: Mr. Milan Jung Katuwal led NPF in a joint meeting held with the Minister of Health and Population Hon. Pradip Poudel on 29th July 2024.

The meeting also delved into the current status of the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) and the operational challenges faced by the National Health Insurance Board. Discussions focused on identifying strategies to expand insurance coverage, improve service delivery, and ensure equitable access to healthcare across Nepal. The NPF delegation highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing these gaps and advancing the program's efficiency and inclusivity.

A detailed report was made after this discussion which was published in January 2025.

August 2024

1. First in-house webinar on “Research Process and Ethical Considerations” by Dr. Bijesh Mishra.

Dr. Mishra, as an esteemed advisor and mentor, led this session and was attended by the inaugural cohort of interns and marked a significant step in fostering a robust research culture within the organization.



Image 9: Snapshot from the webinar.

This workshop provided our interns with essential research fundamentals and enhanced their writing skills, which will significantly contribute to their future academic and professional endeavors. We extend our gratitude to Dr. Mishra for his impactful session and continued support of our mission.

2. Second in-house webinar on “Combating Misinformation: The Power of Research, Fact-Checking and Media Literacy” by Siromani Dhungana.

On August 24, 2024, NPF organized its second in-house webinar titled “Combating Misinformation: The Power of Research, Fact-Checking, and Media Literacy,” led by Siromani Dhungana. A seasoned journalist, chairperson of the Democracy Media Network (DMN), and former editor of *Nepal Live Today*, Mr. Dhungana brought over a decade of expertise in analyzing Nepal's political, economic, and social landscape to the session.

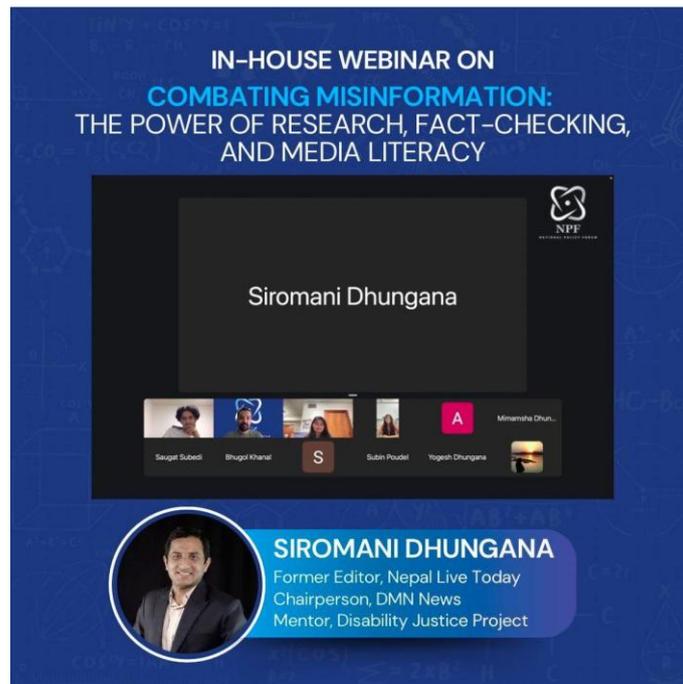


Image 10: Snapshot from the webinar.

His insightful session equipped interns with essential tools to navigate the complexities of misinformation and develop critical skills in research, fact-checking, and media literacy. By empowering participants to counter misinformation, the webinar enhanced their ability to contribute meaningfully to informed public discourse.

September 2024

1. Publication and submission of a report on “Insensitive Board Exams and Evaluation Policies: Negative Impact on Students’ Future” to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

On 11th September 2024, NPF held a joint virtual meeting with the Hon. Bidya Bhattarai, Minister of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST), alongside officials from the Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD). During this meeting, NPF presented its latest report titled "Insensitive Board Exams and Evaluation Policies: Negative Impact on Students’ Future." The Honourable Minister expressed her optimism about the impact of the findings and recommendations presented by the NPF and acknowledged the significance of the report, stating that it would serve as evidence to establish the well-being of thousands of students. She committed to taking necessary actions, noting that she would do everything within her capacity to crystallize this into a policy across all educational levels in the country.



Image 11: Joint meeting with Hon. Bidya Bhattarai, MoEST.

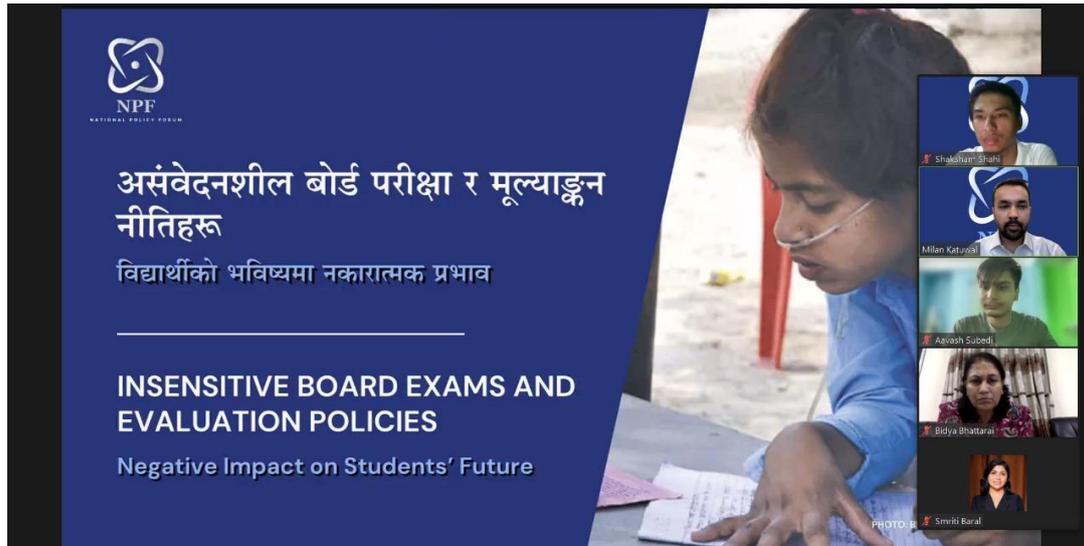


Image 12: Presentation of the report before the Minister.

The [report](#) sheds light on a critical gap in Nepal's education system across all levels where students are forced to take exams despite medical emergencies, family crises, or mental health issues. With no provision for emergency rescheduling, students often face detrimental consequences, such as risking their health or losing an entire academic year. This lack of flexibility leaves many without support during their most vulnerable moments.

During this, NPF also initiated a [petition](#) on SpeakUp Nepal's platform to garner wide engagements from where 98 signatures were collected.

2. Third in-house webinar on “International Order and Conflict” by Prachanda Adhikari was held on 22nd September 2024.

On September 22, 2024, the National Policy Forum (NPF) hosted an enlightening in-house webinar on “International Relations and Affairs,” led by Prachanda Adhikari, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Mississippi. The session provided our team with a deeper understanding of international relations, offering valuable perspectives on global affairs and their implications for policy-making.



Image 13: Snapshot from the webinar.

Mr. Adhikari’s expertise and mentorship have been instrumental in enriching our approach to promoting informed and thoughtful dialogue. We extend our gratitude for his contributions to advancing our mission of raising awareness and elevating the standards of policy discussions.

3. Fourth in-house webinar on “Driving Nepal’s Economic Transformation: Harnessing Academic Leadership, Brain Gain and Community Colleges” by Dr. Uttam Gaulee.

On September 29, 2024, NPF had the privilege of hosting an insightful webinar titled “Driving Nepal’s Economic Transformation: Harnessing Academic Leadership, Brain Gain, and Community Colleges,” led by Dr. Uttam Gaulee, Professor at Morgan State University and President of the STAR Scholars Network.



Image 14: Snapshot from the webinar.

This engaging session highlighted how Nepal can harness academic leadership, tackle the challenge of brain drain, and leverage community colleges to spur economic growth. Dr. Gaulee’s profound expertise offered invaluable guidance on education-driven reforms for fostering development and progress in Nepal.

October 2024

Representation of NPF at the Asian Law Schools Association (ALSA) Conference on Public Law in Asia 2024.

On 24-25th October 2024, Mr. Saksham Shahi, Research and Communications Associate at represented NPF at the Conference on Public Law in Asia, jointly organized by the National University of Singapore, the Asian Law Schools Association (ALSA), and Jindal Global Law School (JGLS), alongside Tribhuvan University.



Image 15: NPF's Research and Communications Associate Shaksham Shahi presenting his draft paper at the Conference on Public Law in Asia

At the conference, Shahi presented a draft paper titled "Serving with honor, Struggling in Silence: The Problems and Challenges faced by Singapore Gurkhas". The event brought together renowned professors and scholars from globally respected institutions, offering invaluable opportunities for dialogue and knowledge exchange.

January 2025

Submission of report on “Addressing Challenges and Enhancing Nepal’s Health Insurance Policy—2024”

On January 19, 2025, the NPF delegation, represented by Ms. Sadichchha Silwal and Mr. Shaksham Shahi, held a joint meeting with the Chief Advisor to the Minister of Health and Population (MoHP) Dr. Raghu Raj Kaphle, along with the legal advisor to the Minister, Advocate Pramish Khanal. During the meeting, the delegation officially handed over the report titled "Addressing Challenges and Enhancing Nepal’s Health Insurance Policy—2024."



Image 16: From the left: Adv. Pramish Khanal, Dr. Raghu Raj Kaphle, Adv. Sadichchha Silwal and Mr. Shaksham Shahi

NPF played an active role in collaborating with the Health Insurance Reform Task Force established by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP). The task force, comprising distinguished professionals such as Dr. Shambhu Acharya, Dr. Bhagwan Koirala, and Dr. Raghu Raj Kaphle, was formed to address critical challenges in Nepal’s National Health Insurance Program (NHIP). Together, the task force and NPF worked diligently to analyze the existing health insurance framework, identify gaps, and propose actionable reforms.

The task force, with input from NPF, submitted its comprehensive report to the Prime Minister, highlighting key recommendations, including increasing the insurance coverage amount from the current NPR 3,00,000 to NPR 5,00,000. In response, the Prime Minister directed the Ministry to prepare a detailed action plan within seven days to implement these reforms.

Internship at the NPF

Interns from the Cohort- I (August-November 2024)

On June 16, 2024, NPF announced its first round of internships, selecting nine research interns through a rigorous interview process. These interns, coming from various parts of the world, actively contributed to several research initiatives during their tenure.



Aastha Pokhrel
B.A., LLB
Kathmandu School of Law
Nepal



Asmita Yogi
International Economics & Trade
Hainan Normal University
China



Asmita Yogi
B.A. in Liberal Arts
Soka University of America
USA



Bhugol Khanal
MSc. In Construction Management
IOE Pulchowk Campus
Nepal



Mimamsha Dhungana
Journalism & English Literature
St. Xavier's College
Nepal



Pawan Raj Dallakoti
B.A. in Liberal Arts
Doshisha University
Japan



Sabita Sigdel
B.A. LLB
National Law College
Nepal



Saugat Subedi
B.A. LLB
Prithvi Narayan Campus
Nepal



Subin Poudel
B.A. LLB
National Law College
Nepal

Each intern was assigned with mentors and engaged in blog writing, drafting reports, policy and legislative research.

Name of the Author	Type of Work	Title
Sabita Sigdel and Subin Poudel	Blog	Choking on Progress: Kathmandu's Struggle for Cleaner Air
Sabita Sigdel	Blog	Boosting Voter Turnout in Nepal: Strategies for a more engaged electorate
Aastha Pokhrel and Mimamsha Dhungel	Blog	Marijuana in Nepal: Weighing costs and Benefits
Pawan Raj Dallakoti	Blog	Three Challenges of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) in Nepal
Pawan Raj Dallakoti and Amit Khanal	Blog	Lessons from randomized experiments: Lessons for Agriculture
Saugat Subedi	Blog	Status of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Nepal
Asmita Yogi	Blog	Economic Diplomacy through the Belt and Road Initiative: Navigating Nepal-China Economic Relations
Bhugol Khanal and Bidisha Kaphle	Blog	Why does Kathmandu's Public Transport need a Complete Revamp? A perspective from mass rapid transit promoting efficient urban mobility
Subin Poudel	Blog	राजनितिक उम्मेदवार दलको प्रतिनिधि कि जनताको? मतदातामा पर्ने अन्योलता
Pawan Raj Dallakoti	Blog	An Evidence- Based Analysis of Nepali Students Going Abroad For Studies
Bhugol Khanal	Blog	The Case of Legalizing Digital Currency in Nepal: An Exploratory Analysis
Saugat Subedi	Blog	Restriction on Freedom of Expression in Nepal: Mechanism to respect co-existing fundamental rights or a weapon of political elites
Pawan Raj Dallakoti	Blog	Global Progress Towards the Zero Hunger Goal: Where do we stand?

For their final project, the interns were divided into two groups to work on a report and a memorandum. Each intern demonstrated exceptional enthusiasm and professionalism throughout the process, showcasing their dedication and expertise in preparing their capstone projects.

Team	Type of Work	Title
Sabita Sigdel, Aastha Pokhrel and Subin Poudel	Report	Addressing Challenges and Enhancing Nepal's Health Insurance Policy 2024
Subin Poudel, Bidisha Kaphle, Bhugol Khanal	Memorandum	Addressing the situation of <i>Sukumbasi</i> Resettlement in Kathmandu
Pawan Raj Dallakoti, Asmita Yogi and Mimamsha Dhungel	Memorandum	Undernutrition among children under age 5 in Nepal

The first cohort of interns at NPF set a high standard for future programs, bringing fresh perspectives and valuable contributions to the organization's initiatives. Their hard work and commitment not only enriched NPF's research output but also laid the groundwork for impactful policy discussions. As they move forward in their academic and professional journeys, we are confident that their experience at NPF will empower them to drive meaningful change in their respective fields.

Communications and Outreach of NPF

NPF remained active mainly across 4 major social media platforms, LinkedIn, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram. Additionally, the organization launched its official website in April 2024. NPF’s reach in numbers are as follows:

LinkedIn:

Total number of followers as of 20th January 2024: **1,592**

Highlights

Date: 1/19/2024 - 1/17/2025

- Total Impressions: 166,189

Engagement rate

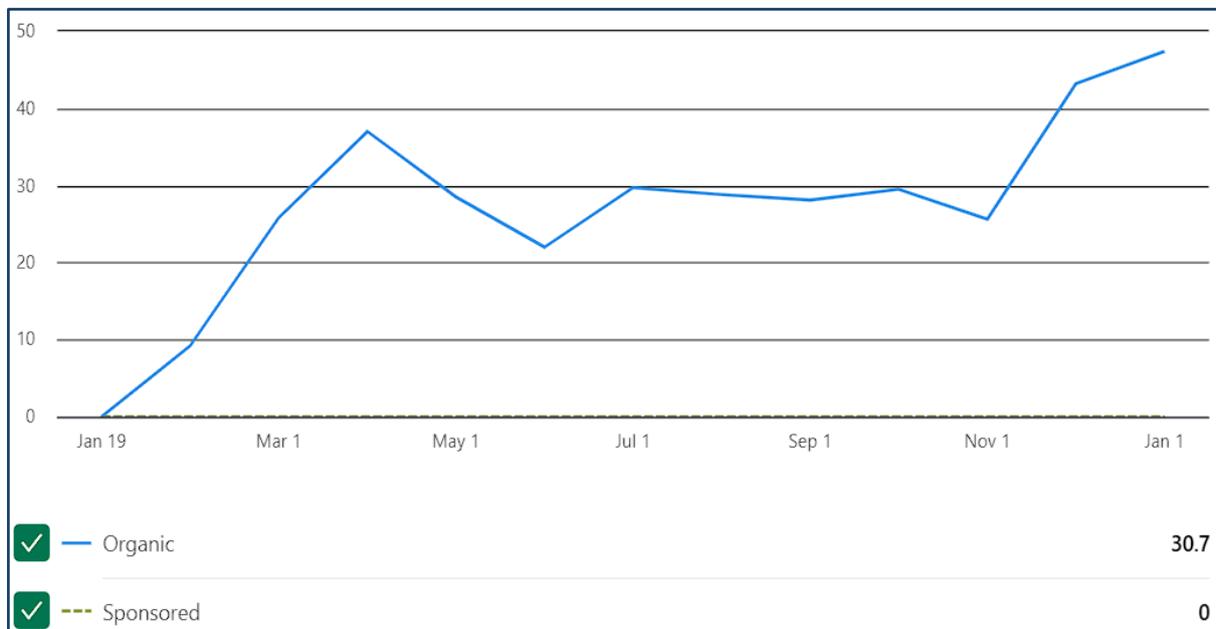


Fig. 1: Engagement rate of NPF in LinkedIn from January 2024 till January 2025.

As one of the vital and most followed social media platforms for the organization, NPF’s engagement rate in LinkedIn saw a sharp rise from January- April 2024. It is to be noted that all the engagements were purely organic i.e. the organization did not spend any costs in social media advertisements and page boosting facilities. Currently, the engagement rate stands at 30.7.

Instagram:

Total number of followers as of 20th January 2024: **453**

Highlights

Date: 10/21/2024 - 1/18/2025 (last available for only 90 days)

- Total Impressions: 43,168
- Accounts reached: 8,227
- Profile visits: 1,992



Fig 3: Accounts reached by NPF’s Instagram account from October 2024 till January 2025.

With no costs spent on paid promotions and advertisements, from October 2024 to January 2025, NPF's Instagram account reached a total of 8,277 accounts, with a remarkable 94.3% being non-followers. This highlights the organization's strong ability to attract new audiences through engaging content while also emphasizing the need to strategically encourage these viewers to become followers for sustained growth and deeper engagement. Notably, there was a 39.1% increase in reach among followers, demonstrating consistent growth in audience engagement within the existing follower base.

Facebook

Highlights

Last 28 days

- Views 2,905
- Watch time 3h 11m
- Reach 1,897



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