



**AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
KATHMANDU**

Press Statement

7 March 2017

Discussion on inclusive education for girls/women with disability held to mark International Women's Day 2017

On 7 March 2017, the Australian Embassy in partnership with Nepal Disabled Women Association and Sancharika Samuha, Nepal, hosted a panel discussion on “Inclusive Quality Education: What it means for girls/women with disabilities” to observe International Women's Day 2017.

The discussions explored the current education of girls/women with disabilities and on the ways to improve the quality and access to education for girls/women with disabilities.

Opening the discussions, Australia's Ambassador to Nepal HE Glenn White said:

“Education and skill development play crucial roles in women's economic empowerment — a significant driver of national economic growth and personal prosperity.

Multiple barriers prevent women from entering the formal economy. There is a significant cost to maintaining these barriers, which prevent women's full and equal participation in the economy.

Women with disabilities face even more barriers and therefore, every effort must be taken to remove these obstacles to enable girls and women with disabilities to gain formal and informal education.”

“Gender equality is central to economic and human development and Australia is committed to be at the forefront of efforts promoting gender equality and empowerment of girls globally,” Ambassador White said.

He said that Australia's campaign for a seat at the United Nation's Human Rights Council (HRC) for the term 2018-2020 is a measure of our longstanding commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, both in Australia and around the world. The pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment is one of its key pillars.

Making a key note presentation on the topic, Professor of Inclusive Education, Basu Dev Kafle, said:

Perception towards people with difficulties and disabilities is changing and there is a greater understanding, acceptance and respect to people with differences and diversities. Identification, recognition, realization and celebration of diversities as basic tenets of society have now been lifting the face of humanity from a drudgery of segregation to a world of inclusion with a dignified living for all.

Mr Ganesh Prasad Paudel, Deputy Director, Inclusive Education Section of the Ministry of Education presented the government's policy on inclusive education.

Nirmala Dhital, President of NDWA stressed the need for improving the number and quality of special needs education experts and effective implementation of government policies on inclusive education.

Anita Bindu, vice president of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists; Nirmala Sharma, President of the Sancharika Samuha, Mr Rajkumar Trikhatri of Plan International spoke as members of the panel in support of empowerment of women and girls through education.