

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**
POWERED BY YOUNG PEOPLE

Nepal

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

April– June, 2020

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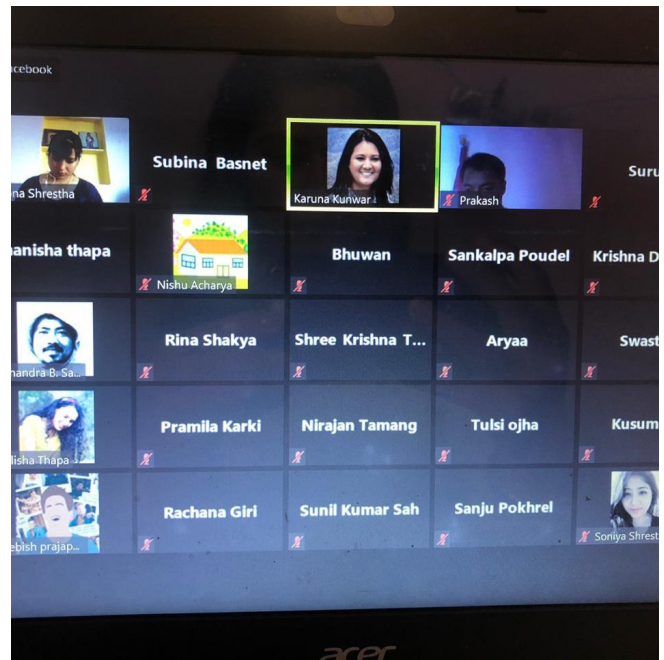
International Service Citizens (ICS) volunteers were only one month into their placement communities when the program was abruptly halted due to Covid-19 and the volunteers headed back to their homes due to safety concerns. Making an opportunity out of this unfortunate event, we mobilized four of our ICS volunteer returnees- Alisha, Nishu, Sona and Subina as a part of 'Alumni Engagement Committee' (AEC) - a committee that brought together young leaders to address the various concerns brought about by the pandemic with innovative and inspiring solutions. Here are some highlights of the impactful initiatives these young girls undertook.

Digital Campaigning

- Led by Sona Shrestha and Subina Basnet

AEC members utilized the digital platform to generate awareness and offer support to communities in response to the outbreak of the pandemic by fighting misinformation, generating awareness concerning mental health and well-being of young people, and empowering young people to act and lead the battle against the ongoing crisis. They were active in creating digital contents to promote safe hygiene practices, and call out fake news and myths widespread in the public regarding the virus. They shared powerful stories of youth working in the front lines to inspire and create a strong sense of solidarity among young people.

One of such digital programs was a webinar on "Stress Management during and after the Pandemic". With the recognition that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused extensive stress among people, this workshop was organized with an objective to create awareness regarding stress management and promote better mental health practices. The webinar was led by Ms. Karuna Kunwar, psychologist and certified stress counselor, currently working as an external stress counselor in UNDSS Nepal.



Pic: Zoom webinar on stress management

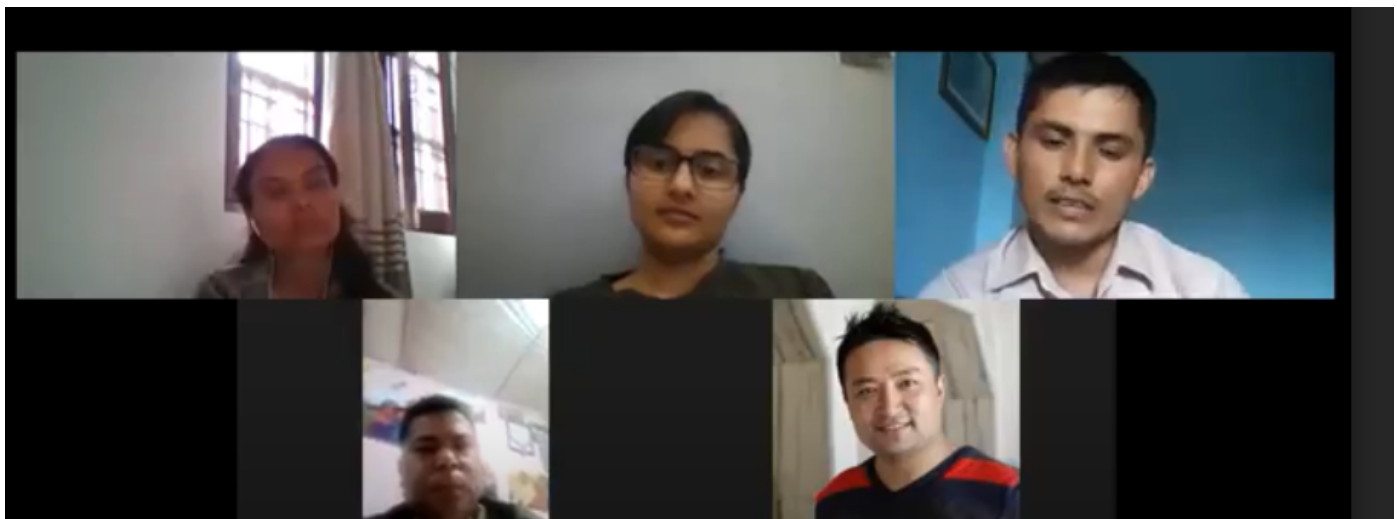
**"AEC activities have kept me busy. I myself have got an opportunity to understand about mental health issues; and I have done things I've previously not done before. I'm learning new things."
- Subina, AEC Volunteer**

**"AEC activities have kept me engaged, my mind occupied during these stressful times. When everything is uncertain, there is something to look forward to and work on and that really helps. This experience is also valuable to me professionally; as a public health student, the experiences that I am gaining working amidst a public health emergency is definitely a great learning opportunity for me". -
Sona Shrestha, AEC Volunteer.**

Emergency Preparedness

– Led by Nishu Acharya and Alisha Thapa

Another AEC initiative has been gathering perspectives regarding better emergency response in disaster management, and the role of youth leadership in times of crisis. They held workshops and focus group discussions with people, especially youth, who have been involved in fighting against the pandemic in various ways, asking them to share their experiences and challenges, and gathering ideas and suggestions from them on how to better respond to the burning needs of their communities. Discussions on topics such as strategies for better youth mobilization in times of crisis and the importance of youth leadership at such times were highlights of these online interviews. They have documented experiences and suggestions shared by participants and will disseminate them to relevant stakeholders in the near future, to ensure these young voices get a space in any decision or action relevant authorities might take in response to the present or any upcoming future disasters.



Pic: Focus Group Discussion with Partner organizations on Youth Mobilization in Emergency Preparedness

'We suddenly went from doing something meaningful to being stuck at home. Moreover, with so much happening due to the pandemic, I wanted to do something. Initially, I felt a sense of helplessness; I wanted to get out there and serve the community in any way I can, but there was hardly any way to, because it was dangerous to even get out. And then I came across the opportunity to be a part of AEC.' –Nishu Acharya, AEC Volunteer

"Since we are working almost completely online, technical glitches and internet access problems are a major obstacle to our work. Sometimes our potential interviewees don't have access to reliable internet, or online discussions get interrupted due to power cuts. While we try our best to not let these hindrances affect our work, and learn from mistakes, they are definitely a challenge to us." – Alisha Thapa, AEC Volunteer

Youth Take the Lead

Youth Take the Lead (YTL), in partnership with the Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (NOREC), is an exchange program focusing on enhancing the youth leadership across three Restless Development Hubs: Nepal, Tanzania and South Africa. For 3 months, volunteers from each respective country moved to one of the other placements to work and learn. Our participants from Nepal, Sushma Bista and Binayak Khadka were hosted by Tanzania Hub and South African Hub respectively from January to March, 2020.

Meet our NOREC returnees



"One of my biggest lessons has been that one needs flexibility, patience, and compassion to excel in any new work environment." - Sushma Bista

Sushma shares that the YTL journey was an eye-opening experience for her; it challenged her way of thinking and broadened her perspectives. During her stay in Tanzania, Sushma, with her team, accessed 9 CSOs and provided them recommendations for organizational development. In the process of accessing CSOs, she also came across various innovative and inspiring initiatives being taken by these CSOs for community development that she hopes to replicate in Nepal in the future.

Sushma says after coming back, the idea of remote work was somewhat challenge but with the support of the Line Manager throughout they are conducting their activities efficiently.



"Entrusting youth with opportunities like these and giving them a chance today helps them refine their skills and gain knowledge which they can invest to create a better tomorrow."- Binayak Khadkiwada

Binayak says that his YTL journey has been very inspiring, and has taught him to think beyond the bounds of his culture and society. Although he regrets that they couldn't hand over the recommendation document they developed for CSOs after assessment and monitoring, due to COVID-19, he hopes that the assessment process itself has played a role in making them reflect on their work, and realize their strengths and weaknesses. He also shares that his work with various CSOs there have made him realise the importance of viewing things from a micro-level perspective while addressing problems, and looks forward to implementing his learnings in community development programs in the future.

Global Update

Youth Power Solidarity Meetup

In the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic, Restless Development's Youth Power Panel hosted 'The Youth Power Solidarity Meetup' - a virtual Meetup to discuss how Covid-19 is impacting young people around the world.

Each solidarity meet up covered different issues concerning young people which focused on: how Covid-19 is affecting young people around the world and the fight back plan; the different ways young people are taking action on COVID19; differences and similarities across countries, and their perspectives on how the government is handling the situation or how friends and family are experiencing the pandemic, etc.

How is Covid19 impacting you?
Join our global #YouthPower Solidarity Meetup

TUESDAY 7TH APRIL - OPEN TO ALL - REGISTER FREE TODAY

🕒 9am - New York 🕒 2pm - London 🕒 4pm - Nairobi 🕒 6.30pm - New Delhi 🕒 9pm - Beijing

ROUND 2

How are young people taking action on COVID-19?
Join our global #YouthPower Solidarity Meetup

WEDNESDAY 22ND APRIL - OPEN TO ALL - REGISTER FREE TODAY
cutt.ly/solidaritymeetup

🕒 10am - New York 🕒 3pm - London 🕒 5pm - Nairobi 🕒 7.30pm - New Delhi 🕒 10pm - Beijing

The idea was to support young people to meet with others around the world - others they wouldn't typically have the opportunity to connect with - so they can share ideas and learn from each other and the different ways they are being impacted by or are responding to the pandemic. Over 2000 people have engaged with the series so far, spanning over 100 countries across Europe, North America, South America, Asia, and Africa.

How should we recover and #buildbackbetter after lockdown?
Join the discussion at our next #YouthPower Solidarity Meetup

FRIDAY 22ND MAY - OPEN TO ALL - REGISTER FREE TODAY
www.cutt.ly/buildbackbetter

🕒 10am - New York 🕒 3pm - London 🕒 5pm - Nairobi 🕒 7.30pm - New Delhi 🕒 10pm - Beijing

Round 4

How can younger and older generations unite to respond to COVID-19?
Join the discussion at our Youth Power Solidarity Meetup
special inter-generational edition

WED 3RD JUNE
OPEN TO ALL
REGISTER FREE TODAY
www.cutt.ly/strongertogether

🕒 9am - Lima 🕒 10am - New York 🕒 11am - Rio 🕒 3pm - London 🕒 4pm - Harare 🕒 5pm - Nairobi 🕒 7.30pm - New Delhi 🕒 10pm - Beijing