



नेपाल उद्योग परिसंघ

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Women Leadership Summit 2023 Declarations are based on two days of intense discussions and deliberations with diverse stakeholders from local, national, and regional levels.

Synopsis:

Women are powerful agents of change, and the far-reaching benefits of diversity and gender parity in leadership and decision-making are increasingly recognized. Yet, women continue to be vastly underrepresented in decision-making in politics, businesses, and communities. Women as leaders and decision-makers at all levels are critical to advancing gender justice and gender equality, and to furthering economic, social, and political progress for all. Becoming a leader involves much more than being put in a leadership role, acquiring new skills, and adapting one's style to the requirements of that role. It comes with hidden barriers and costs. A significant body of research shows that for women, the subtle gender bias that persists in organizations and in society disrupts the learning cycle at the heart of becoming a leader.

Women Leadership Summit 2023, organized by the Confederation of Nepalese Industries 'Women Leadership Forum' envisions to address, deliberate, and find solutions to three key areas of women's leadership in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is designed as an opportunity for gender equality champions and women leaders to exchange ideas, share strategies, celebrate successes, be encouraged, and learn from each other in a two-day summit that will challenge and inspire.

The 2023 Summit will discuss, deliberate, and debate on the three core themes:

1. Women in Leadership
2. Women in Economics
3. Women as Change Agents

The Summit envisions to accelerate conversations, policies, and agendas that put women at the forefront of decision-making and leadership. **With 400 and more women leaders and thinkers** participating from the diverse field, the Summit focuses on the following declarations that will center stage women's meaningful participation and representation in leadership spaces, with a vision to achieve gender parity by 2030.

Declarations:

- I. States must develop intersectional and inclusive mechanisms, policies, and systems to increase women's meaningful participation in political spaces. The 33 percent is a minimal threshold for women's participation in political spaces. In order to achieve gender parity in political spaces women's representation should be at least 50 percent. There must be a reservation for women's participation in policymaking so women's voices and



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- narratives are equally represented and translated into actions. Moreover, 33 percent should not only be limited to the parliament but also in the ministerial positions to ensure authentic representation of women's leadership that is beyond tokenism.
- II. Women's independence is directly correlated to their access to finance. To ensure women business entrepreneurs can optimize their knowledge and skills, access to loan thresholds needs to be increased. Despite the legal provision now that allows women to access lineage wealth it is poorly translated in action due to the deeply rooted systemic patriarchal structures. The current loan structures for women in micro, small, and medium enterprises need to be expansive in Nepal so that women can freely make financial decisions for their businesses.
 - III. Men should be at the forefront to accelerate the discourse on mindset change to transform social and behavioral change, engage in unpaid care work, and participate in dialogues that foster a conducive environment for women to optimally participate in leadership spaces. Men must recognize their privileges and the systems of oppression that allow men more power share. Men must recognize that women now and historically do not have the same access to power and resources as them, and must take on the responsibility to create spaces for women, share their power and spaces with women, and if needed also give up their spaces so women can safely and authentically lead. The start of gender parity is with men being aware of their power and privilege, and the change toward gender parity is only possible when this awareness is translated into actions and behavior.
 - IV. Climate change disproportionately impacts women and marginalized groups. Their representation is critical in curbing climate change. However, women's participation in the discourse needs to be compensated so it is not another unpaid engagement. Women-led climate initiatives need to be recognized and championed by the community, state, and international partners and give them the funds, skills, and tools to combat it.
 - V. Women need more access to financial and digital literacy to tap into global trade, Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), and inter-regional alliances and networks.
 - VI. Digital spaces are mostly created by men and for men. Hence, women-led digital spaces or digital spaces that center stage the need and accessibility for women are important. Many women still don't have access to digital spaces whether it be devices, connectivity, or time. The digital knowledge gap needs to be bridged through education in STEMS, internet affordability, and accessibility to devices and skills that encourages women to engage in digital spaces. Moreover, the digital spaces need to be safe for women to access and engage in without fear, stigma, and harassment.
 - VII. Media houses can be more mindful in creating spaces for women's storylines and news. More women need to be in the editorial rooms, newsrooms, boards, and trustees, ensuring that their narratives are represented meaningfully and their sense of agency is recognized.



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Women also needed to be cited as experts on issues that go beyond women's issues. Movies can contribute to changing the existing social inequalities through women-centric storylines where women are portrayed in roles where they exercise their sense of agency.

- VIII. Gender parity does not only mean the ratio management of men and women. It means:
- To enable a safe space where women can participate safely and meaningfully in leadership spaces.
 - Women can voice their opinion and be heard without judgments and stigma.
 - Women take up leadership spaces, are a key part of policy making, and are primary decision-makers in the interventions designed for them and their communities.
 - Equal pay needs to be centered in all fields and should be based on efforts and contributions women make regardless of their gender identity.
 - Unpaid care work needs to be recognized, reduced, redistributed, and represented.

In conclusion, WLS 2023 environs to achieve greater steps and tools for gender parity in all sectors by 2030.