

Annual Report

2067-2068

FREEDOM FORUM
Thapathali, Kathmandu
Nepal

1. Introduction of the Organization

Freedom Forum Nepal is a non-governmental organization, working for institutionalization of democracy, protection and promotion of human rights, press freedom and freedom of expression as well as the empowerment of development initiatives. This is a purely social organization registered with the District Administration Office of Kathmandu on 1 September 2005 with its renewal on 13 October 2006. Similarly, it has affiliated with the Social Welfare Council of Nepal (18518) and acquired Permanent Account Number (PAN) (302021332) from Inland Revenue Office. Its head office is in Kathmandu, Nepal.

There are some requests from regional centers and district for branch offices of Forum in respective areas. We have focal persons to coordinate our program in those areas and committees have been formed in Biratnagar, Ilam, Pokhara and Palpa, Surkhet & Nepalgunj, for branch office. However, the forum has not made any decision regarding institutional status of branch offices. Further, we have developed mutual working relationship with district/branch offices of professional organizations such as Federation of Nepalese Journalists and Nepal Bar Association.

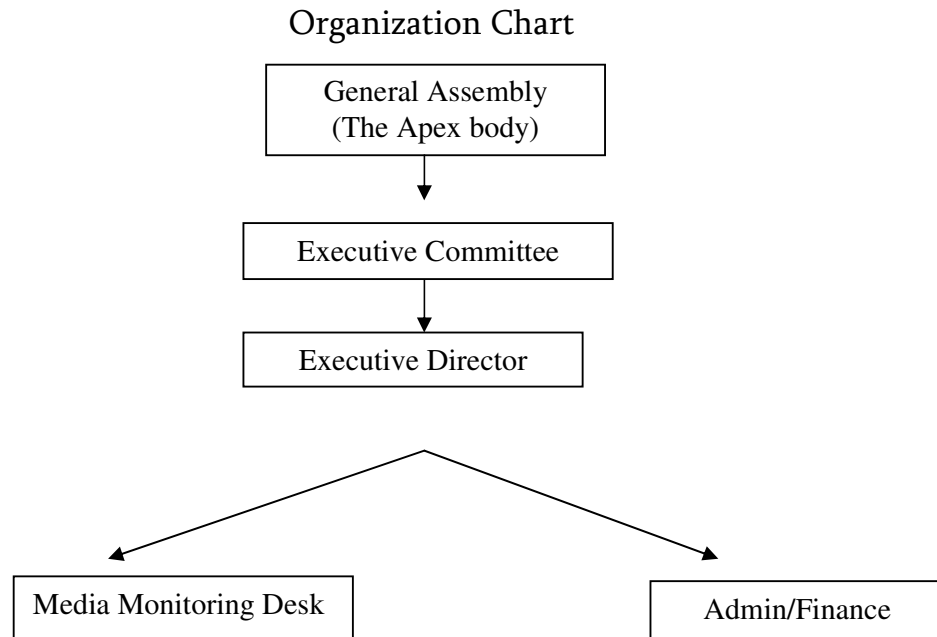
2. Organogram

General assembly composed of general members is the top most body of organization. The executive committee of Freedom Forum is constituted in accordance with the statute of the forum selected by general assembly. The tenure of the 11-member Executive Committee is five years according to the constitution of the organization. Membership of the organization is open to all Nepalese citizens. The current executive committee of the forum is as follows:

Chairperson	:	Mr. Taranath Dahal
Vice- Chairperson	:	Mr. Haribinod Adhikari
Secretary	:	Mr. Sanat Acharya
Treasurer	:	Mrs. Bishnu Sharma

Members : Mrs. Dharmendra Jha
Mr. Chiranjibi Kafle
Mr. Bin Kumar BK
Mr. Kamal Gurung
Mr. Kedar Dahal
Mr. Sanjeeb Ghimire

The management of the Forum is headed by the Executive Director. Following chart shows the organizational structure of the organization.



Executive Director:	Mr. Krishna Sapkota
Finance and Administration Officer:	Mr. Anirudra Neupane
Media Officer:	Mr. Narayan Ghimire
Receptionist:	Ms. Manju Dahal(Ojha)
Administration Assistant	Mr. Danbahadur Karki
Legal Advisor	Mr. Reeshi Ram Ghimire

There is no funding for the human resources. Volunteer contribution from well-wishers is used for the remuneration of staffs.

3. Programs:

The year 2067/68 has been very successful in terms of its engagement in the activities and output. The forum has seen significant success this year. We are continuously providing inputs for the constitution drafting process focusing on freedom of expression and right to information. Similarly, we played a vital role in building RTI friendly environment in Nepal through historical national convention on Right to Information in Nepal. The summary of activities conducted during 2067/68 is described below

1. Legal support to Journalists: Forum is continuously supporting journalists for their cases at different courts against owners for violating working journalist law and with government against its action against press and media workers especially during King's direct rule. The legal support is being provided through Press Freedom Grand Jury Nepal in coordination of Forum's chairperson.

2. Media Monitoring: Freedom Forum has its media monitoring desk. The desk performs the task of event and policy monitoring related to journalists and media. It publishes regular reports and newsletters on three-monthly basis. It is running separate website www.nepalpressfreedom.org to record incidence and policy changes having direct indirect impact to the press freedom and freedom of expression.

Freedom Forum got full membership of IFEX (International Freedom of Expression Exchange: The global network for free expression) this year. Freedom Forum sends globally the alerts on the issues of press freedom violation through this network and gives its statement on global press freedom violation issue.

3. Human Rights: Freedom Forum is continuously monitoring the events of human rights violation throughout the nation through its human rights desk in coordination of its secretary. Freedom of

expression and opinion as fundamental human rights is the main focus of Freedom Forum.

4. Budget Transparency: Freedom forum completed study of documents that are key to insure transparent budget practice in Nepal. Report of 2010 was published through official website of Freedom Forum www.freedomforum.org.np and through the press conference with economic journalists Association (SEJAN). Freedom Forum is lobbying by it's for better documentation and disclosure of budget related matters

5. Right to Information: Freedom Forum organized the first convention on Right to Information Nepal from 28 till 29 March 2011 in Kathmandu to contribute in creating massive wave for the effective implementation of RTI. More than 150 distinguished participants in Nepal and ten regional experts were participated at the convention inaugurated by President of Nepal Dr. Ram Baran Yadav.

Participants discussed in the ten different thematic areas that have greater influence on RTI implementation. The major objective of the convention was to make environment for effective implementation and use of Right to Information by fostering RTI supportive legislature framework and execution of those framework. The convention was conducted with the slogan -"**Enabling environment for the effective practices of right to information in Nepal**".

The theme papers were developed papers highlighting the role of government, NIC, civil society organizations, political parties, including other stakeholders so that the convention would present a trajectory of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of RTI development in Nepal. International experts from India and other countries of the South Asia region will be invited to facilitate an environment of sharing RTI experience in the region. The convention was concluded with 46-points Kathmandu Declaration 2011.

In addition to National convention freedom forum is conducting promotional activities to support RTI law implementation in Nepal. Information request campaign is one among them.

6. Election and media: Freedom Forum is working on the website www.nepalelectionchannel.org with the aim of promoting quality of election journalism and free and fair election in Nepal. The website - nepalelectionchannel.org - is a common platform, connecting media, election experts, policy makers and advocates, opinion makers, academics, international community, other stakeholders and the general public. The website works as a channel to compile the reports on media situation in the general election which are received from the journalists from across the country through phone, email, and SMS. The website also functions as an interactive social network where they can interact on the subject matter. In addition, it archives the matters related to election, election laws, journalists' code of conduct, election monitoring laws and related opinion of the experts and other references from the country and abroad. INTERNEWS is supporting for the program.

7. Public Service Broadcasting in Nepal

Freedom forum in support of UNESCO, Kathmandu conducted a study on need and feasibility of Public Service Broadcasting in Nepal. After series of discussions, thematic workshops and meeting with different stakeholders Freedom Forum has drafted Public Service Broadcasting Bill by the team of Experts. The draft bill has been published through the website.

8. Training on Gender Issue

Freedom Forum conducted 5-day training on Gender Issue at Dhulikhel to capacitate the women to advocate their rights. Legal and institutional framework was the key issues of training. Training had been provided to 15 Participants. Helvetas Nepal had support to the program.