

Diversity in Dialogue II

An equal and inclusive society demands the recognition of voices from all backgrounds and experiences. It requires that we look beyond the loudest and most visible voices and recognize the diverse expertise and experiences across our society.

Women and girls and those from historically marginalized groups continue to be underrepresented in public forums. They are discriminated against based on factors such as geographical location, gender, sexual orientation, disability, caste, ethnicity, or age. Panels that are often homogenous, often all men and of similar socioeconomic backgrounds, perpetuate the under and misrepresentation of women and girls and other marginalized groups. It results in the silencing of multiple voices and expertise, reinforcing singular narratives and beliefs. It also diminishes the diversity of role models the public sees as legitimate experts.

Ending discrimination and exclusion is core to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Leaving No One Behind. **Now is the time to make a conscious choice for better representation.**



Australian Government



British Embassy Kathmandu



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland



Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Kathmandu



Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu



Checklist for organizers

Selecting Participants:

- 01 Increase women and girls' representation from diverse backgrounds in panels by saying no to 'manels' (all-men panels).
- 02 When planning events, increase representation among both speakers and participants. Some of the aspects for consideration are:
 - Gender
 - Caste, ethnicity, and indigenous community representatives
 - Socio-economic status
 - Persons with disabilities, including from underrepresented diverse disability groups
 - Age
 - Geographical location
 - LGBTIQ+ people, people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics
 - Religious minorities
- 03 When an event caters to a specific group, then the representation should ensure diversity within the group. For example, an event focusing on older women does not need to include young men. Still, it should ensure that the women participating are diverse in caste, indigenous origin, socioeconomic status, and more.
- 04 Look beyond immediate networks to find ways to bring diverse voices and perspectives. Consider individuals who have limited access to public platforms. This might take more effort, but it will make the event more meaningful.
- 05 Long Term: Develop a database of experts in different fields to improve gender balance and diversity and update regularly.
 - Recognize lived experiences of individuals as expertise.
 - Make conscious efforts to include names of individuals with intersectional identities.
- 06 Be conscious about seating and how it may confer authority or impact the atmosphere in the event.

Creating an environment for meaningful participation:

- 07 Ensure accessible venues for events. See the detailed checklist [here](#).
- 08 In all event invitations, include a question on [reasonable accommodation](#) requests and address such requests as required.
- 09 Use accessibility services as required. These could include Computer Assisted Realtime Translation, Close Captioning and more.



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Ask speakers what might facilitate their easy participation in the event. Some tips below:

- When planning the event's timing, exercise flexibility and accommodate individual needs such as care responsibilities.
- Offer any needed support to access meetings, such as providing technical support and data packages to access online meetings or organizing transport to the venue.
- Speaking in public forums can be intimidating. Offer speakers support. Having the opportunity to practice and being familiar with the event flow may make the discussion more fruitful.

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Promote diverse national languages (such as indigenous and sign language) to enable meaningful participation in panels, conferences, and meetings fostering inclusivity both in panels and the audience.

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Use [gender-sensitive, non-ableist language](#) and correct pronouns. When in doubt, ask the person for the correct pronouns.

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In all communication materials, ensure women, girls and people from marginalized groups have dignified and fair representation. Ensure that materials do not perpetuate discriminatory norms or stereotypes.

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To the extent possible, compensate speakers for their expertise.

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Prioritize procurement of services and goods from businesses owned by women and representatives of marginalized groups. Ensure all the services are disability-inclusive.

Checklist for panelists

01

If a panel does not promote diversity, encourage organizers to bring diverse voices and perspectives to enrich discussions. Point out resources and tap into your network to identify diverse speakers.

02

Consider withdrawing participation from an event if actions are not taken to achieve diversity.

03

If required, use your voice to point out the lack of diversity in the forum and caution the audience on how the discussion will not be holistic without fair representation.

04

Use [gender-sensitive, non-ableist language](#) and correct pronouns. When in doubt, ask the person for the correct pronouns.

