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Joint Press Release

Nepal's Largest All-Female Hackathon 2025: Shequal Foundation and EWPN Unite to Empower Women Through Innovation

Kathmandu, July 11, 2025 — [Shequal Foundation](#), in partnership with the EU-UN joint programme, Empowered Women Prosperous Nepal (EWPN), has successfully concluded Nepal's Largest All-Female Hackathon, a groundbreaking three-day event with the thematic focus on women's economic empowerment that brought together innovation, inclusion, and impact in one platform dedicated entirely to women in technology.

The residential hackathon brought together 16 all-women teams of 48 participants selected from across the country to address some of Nepal's most pressing social and economic challenges through technological solutions. The hackathon, themed "*Hacking for Empowered Women*," focused on key issues such as unpaid care work, access to financial services, digital literacy, and gender-responsive health.

From July 9-10, participants engaged in intensive collaboration, coding, mentorship, and problem-solving, supported by 20 expert mentors and industry professionals. The event culminated with a final pitch day by six teams who presented their innovative tech solutions to a panel and following three teams were announced as winners:

1) **Winner:** SewaDit

They developed an innovative digital platform that empowers women by tracking unpaid care work through task-based points, verification, and monthly reports making invisible labor visible for recognition, support, and economic inclusion. They were from Butwal, comprising Ms. Roshni Neupane, Ms. Aakritee Parajuli, and Ms. Supriya Shrestha

2) **First Runner-Up:** Healing Hands

They created a solution titled "Care Bridge", which is a web platform that connects female caregiving students with those in need of unpaid care, matching based on skills and availability, while tracking experience in a verifiable Care Portfolio to provide real-world training, community support, and resume-level recognition. developed by a team from Jhapa, comprising Ms. Aiswarya Pokharel, Ms. Ayushma Pokhrel, and Ms. Hemkala Thapa

3) **Second Runner-up:** June

They developed a solution called HeritEdge which is a personalized, gamified cultural storytelling platform like Netflix for heritage that empowers local artists, engages youth with AR and AI-driven experiences, and enhances immersion through regional language support

developed by a team from Kathmandu, comprising Ms. Kritika Acharya, Ms. Astha Ghimire, and Ms. Simran Gurung

The teams presented solutions addressing real-world challenges, including care gaps, low female employment, skilling and employment opportunities, digital finance and budgeting tools, gender-responsive healthcare, digital inclusion and accessibility to e-commerce platforms, to cultural preservation using AR, and recognition of unpaid care work. These ideas, developed with empathy and purpose, which aimed to drive long-term change for women in Nepal were judged by esteemed judges, Mukesh Regmi, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Bhawani Rana, Former President, FNCCI, Aashish Dhakal, Global Equity Fund, Pramila Acharya Rijal, South Asian Women Development Forum, Mona Sherpa, Care Nepal, Tripti Rai, Oxfam, Rajendra Luitel, IFC, Salina Nakarmi, f1soft, Pranisha Shrestha, NMB and Sahana Bajracharya, Media Personality who represented different government institutions, development agencies, and the private sectors.

Quotes:

Her Excellency Veronique Lorenzo, Ambassador of the European Union to Nepal:

"At the European Union, we firmly believe digital innovation plays a vital role in economic growth, particularly in women's economic empowerment. Yet, this innovation must be accessible and affordable to everyone, especially to the most marginalised communities amongst us. We have supported the hackathon because it provides a platform for women to design and lead digital solutions that reflect their real-life experiences. By investing in women's participation in the tech sector, from Kathmandu to rural Nepal, we are not only addressing gender disparities but also unlocking powerful engines for economic and social transformation."

Patricia Fernandez-Pacheco, Country Representative, UN Women Nepal:

"When women design the future, the future becomes more equal, creative, and powerful for all. This Hackathon is not just about technology, it's about rewriting the rules, closing the gender digital divide, and ensuring every girl and woman has a voice in shaping tomorrow."

Melisha Ghimire & Astha Sharma, Co-Managing Directors, Sheqal Foundation:

"This hackathon is more than a competition; it's a movement. A movement to place young women at the center of innovation, leadership, and impact. We're not just building tech solutions; we're building belief, visibility, and power."

The hackathon followed a series of impactful pre-events, including IDEATHON 2025, a Human-Centered Design Workshop, and Hack the Narrative, which engaged over 1000 young women in ideation, storytelling, and user-focused innovation. UN Women provided technical leadership to design and execute the Hackathon on the theme 'Women's Economic Empowerment, including unpaid care work.

This initiative marks a bold step in building inclusive digital ecosystems where women can lead, innovate, and thrive.

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About Organizers:

About EWPN

Empowered Women, Prosperous Nepal (EWPN) is a four-year joint initiative (2023–2026) by the Government of Nepal, the European Union, and the United Nations to advance gender equality and inclusive economic growth. The programme is implemented by four UN agencies (ILO, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women) across Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim Provinces, in close partnership with all levels of government.

Shequal Foundation

Shequal Foundation is a youth-led, women-driven non-profit organization committed to building an inclusive, equitable, and just society. Shequal Foundation works across all 7 provinces of Nepal, engaging individuals, especially girls and women between the ages of 9 to 40, through its diverse programs and initiatives. With a strong focus on gender equality, economic empowerment, and community transformation, Shequal creates safe spaces and opportunities for girls and women across Nepal to lead, learn, and thrive. From grassroots initiatives to national campaigns, Shequal blends innovation with advocacy to challenge norms, shift narratives, and spark systemic change.