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# Legal Registration of the World Food Forum Nepal Youth Chapter:

REGISTRATION PROCESS AND LESSONS LEARNED



The World Food Forum (WFF) Nepal Youth Chapter is a formally registered non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) in Nepal. This document outlines the Chapter's registration experience and the lessons transferable to other WFF National Youth Chapters pursuing legal recognition.

## WFF Nepal legal milestones

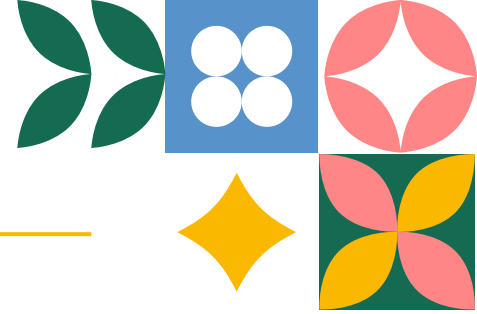
1. Legal registration (October 2024): Registered as a non-profit organization under the Companies Act, 2063 (2006) with the Office of Company Registrar, Nepal.
2. NGO accreditation (January 2026): Accredited with the Social Welfare Council (SWC), the government body responsible for authorizing registered entities to operate as NGOs and for overseeing NGO and INGO activities in Nepal.

## WHY REGISTER?

Legal registration and NGO accreditation unlock critical operational capacities.

- **Grant eligibility:** Access to local and international funding opportunities.
- **Legal compliance and partnerships:** SWC accreditation is mandatory in Nepal for non-profits to receive foreign funding and enables formal partnerships with INGOs, United Nations (UN) agencies and government institutions.
- **Financial operations:** Ability to open an organizational bank account and receive domestic and international transfers.
- **Credibility:** Stronger standing when engaging communities, partners, donors and public institutions.





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# The registration and accreditation process (Under Nepali law)

## **Step 1: Prepare organizational documents**

Before applying, the Chapter completed the following groundwork:

- Agreed on the official name: World Food Forum Nepal
- Drafted the Memorandum of Association (MOA) and Articles of Association (AOA), defining the organization's objectives, governance and operational mechanisms
- Identified a minimum of five founding members, as required for non-profit registration
- Designated a registered office address in Nepal and obtained proof of address (e.g. rental agreement).

## **Step 2: Obtain a Permanent Account Number (PAN)**

Following the issuance of the Registration Certificate, the Chapter registered with the Inland Revenue Department to obtain a PAN, required for banking, tax and financial operations.

## **Step 3: Open an organizational bank account**

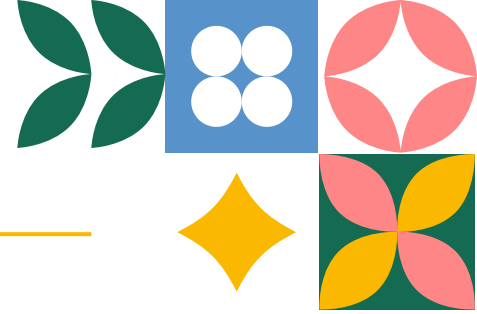
The Chapter opened a bank account in the name of World Food Forum Nepal.

## **Step 4: Apply for tax exemption**

Non-profits in Nepal may apply to the Inland Revenue Department for tax exemption on donations and income used strictly for organizational purposes, subject to ongoing compliance requirements.

## **Step 5: Obtain NGO accreditation**

The Chapter applied for SWC affiliation, submitting the required legal, financial governance and programmatic documentation.



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# Key Considerations

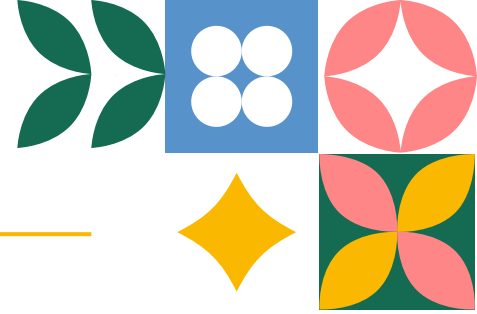
While legal frameworks differ across countries, the Chapter's experience highlights several transferable insights:

- 1. Choice of legal form:** Chapters should assess which legal structure best aligns with their governance needs, partnerships and anticipated funding sources. In Nepal, most NGOs are membership-based associations and are commonly used for community-based and grant-funded work. Non-profit registration, when combined with SWC accreditation, effectively merges corporate structure with NGO regulatory oversight.
- 2. Legal and financial expertise:** The MOA and AOA form the long-term legal foundation of an organization. Engaging a legal advisor, at least for initial drafting is strongly recommended.
- 3. Office space and registered address:** Proof of a physical office is required and may be provided by a founding member or a host institution under a rental or equivalent agreement.
- 4. Registration and administrative fees:** Registration involves statutory fees and professional service costs that should be budgeted in advance.
- 5. Governance and membership:** A clear governance and membership structure is essential. WFF Nepal's MOA and AOA explicitly include provisions for national and sub-national expansion and the relevant coordination mechanisms.
- 6. Compliance and renewals:** Registration entails ongoing obligations – annual reporting, audits, tax compliance and periodic renewals – that should be monitored closely and budgeted annually.
- 7. Banking and financial management:** Maintaining transparency in financial systems is both a legal requirement and a prerequisite for donor confidence, fund eligibility and long-term sustainability.

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**Note:** FAO Nepal provides office space to WFF Nepal at no cost under a formal agreement; the Chapter's registered address is therefore located within FAO Nepal's extended office.

Legal consultancy costs for drafting the MOA and AOA, and for supporting the registration process, were also covered by FAO Nepal.



# Lessons Learned

- 1. Assess readiness first:** Legal registration introduces ongoing administrative, legal and financial responsibilities. Before initiating the process, Chapters should evaluate necessity, member commitment and the operational capacity required to sustain registration.
- 2. Invest in expertise early:** Understanding the local registration process and engaging legal and financial professionals at the outset reduces delays and compliance risks.
- 3. Build sound financial governance:** Establish clear financial by-laws, accounting systems and internal controls from the start.
- 4. Learn from peers:** Reviewing the governance structures and operational models of similar organizations can inform and strengthen a Chapter's own documentation and institutional design.

