



NEPAL ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Accountability Lab Nepal (ALN) marked its 10th anniversary this year by reflecting on the past decade and building on the existing networks and efforts to strengthen democracy in Nepal. The country saw the second local and federal elections this year and ALN played a significant role in organizing different levels of convening, knowledge production, and youth engagement to reflect on the first five years of decentralization. We maximized our engagement with leaders from within and outside government to promote co-creation and collaborations in promoting accountability. We also took steps to equip young local leaders with knowledge, skills, and network to push for climate justice.



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INTEGRITY ICON

ALN celebrated the 9th year of Integrity Icon this year by celebrating five honest government officials who have gone beyond the call of duty in public service. They were selected from 410 nominations of individuals from all levels of government positions across all seven provinces of Nepal. The Integrity Icon alumni network was also formed this year, and have been meeting regularly to discuss societal shifts for greater accountability. The network has been a platform for support, co-creation, and collaboration for past Icons.

NUMBERS OF INTEGRITY ICON

410

nominations

25

volunteers

31,78,173+

online reach

70

districts covered

60+

news items covered
by media

2000+

offline reach

OUR WINNERS

This year's winners are Kalpna Adhikari, Engineer, Department of Road, Lalitpur; Mohan Krishna Maharjan, Senior Food Research Officer, Department of Food Technology and Quality Control, Kathmandu; Rajesh Sah Jaiswal, Head Constable, District Police Office, Sarlahi; Roshani Devi Karki, Under Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population, Kathmandu; and Sujan Kumari Bardeewa, Section Officer, Border Administration Office, Namche, Solukhumbu.





Integrity School

Integrity School brought together 15 young government officials striving to build integrity within the bureaucratic system through creative ideas, innovative tools, and shared real-time experiences. The school provided a peer-learning platform for these officials to build integrity and resilience within the public service.

The scholars went through:

– Leadership school: This outdoor, practical-based learning allowed scholars to reflect on their personal values and challenges they encounter. They also practiced team building, problem-solving, coordination, empathy, and communication

– Webinars/ Quarterly meetings: These covered Democracy and Governance, Federalism, Integrity in Action, Effective and Efficient Service Delivery, and Building Resilience. The theory was built out practically by recognized government officials, practitioners, and leaders, based on their experiences.



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

- Manmaya Pangen (Integrity Icon 2021), Secretary, Office of Chief Minister and Council of Ministers, Gandaki Province, was honored with the Gandaki Province Best Civil Service Award this year. She was recognized for her efforts to enhance existing policies by incorporating a gender perspective and to hold the provincial government accountable for its actions.
- Bhishma Kumar Bhusal (Integrity Icon 2016), joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, is spreading his values of integrity in every department he goes to. He developed a rigorous comparative performance management system to monitor the performance of the Chief District Officers of Nepal. Similarly, he is also a reformer in banning anti-money laundering efforts.
- Chandrakant Chaudhary (Integrity Icon 2021), Agriculture Officer at Makawanpurgadhi Rural Municipality, Makawanpur, has dedicated himself to supporting local farmers and promoting the raw products harvested in Makawanpur. This year marks the one-year anniversary of the agreement that was established in his leadership with Nepal-Bangladesh Bank for Farmers' Credit Cards to assist farmers in starting their own small agricultural businesses. It has already helped 71 farmers begin their farming endeavors in the municipality. With this, Chandrakant earned the title of Excellent Agricultural Technician of the Province.

Integrity School was one of the best opportunities that I have received till now, where I learned communication skills, team building skills, and values for positive outcomes. I have built my confidence level and risk-taking capacity which I started practicing in my daily work.

Bikram Subedi, Integrity Scholar 2022



Highlights

The dialogues helped participants to understand the challenges and opportunities presented by decentralisation.

Participants echoed that “The alternative to Federalism is only improved Federalism.” Although there were reflections around the challenges including irregularities, lack of coordination of three tiers of government, and mismanagement in the government, participants at concluded that the learning of the first five years of decentralization can be used to improve it in future.

90% of the participants shared that the learnings from the dialogue will be useful in their practice in the future. Further, 94.3% of the participants found the resources provided to them relevant.

CIVIC ACTION TEAMS

Decentralization Dialogues

We conducted a series of dialogues to support sub-national government representatives from Koshi, Madhesh, Lumbini, and Karnali provinces with a better understanding of political economy factors that impact effective political decentralization. We also ran online and offline forums for civil society to participate in and promote citizen-centric governance in these areas. The program's overarching goal was to bolster federalization by supporting sub-national governments to navigate decentralization effectively and encourage citizen feedback in decision-making and promoting accountability.



IMPACT BY NUMBERS

4

provinces

9

districts

12

local government
units

465

direct
reach

12 535

indirect reach

Highlights

- Climate Inclusion Fellows developed their leadership by collecting and discussing community feedback with the concerned authorities.
- Through inclusion fellows and film fellows, the Gov-HER-Nance initiative has provided feedback to the local and provincial government representatives of Pokhara Sub-Metropolitan City and Gandaki Province based on real-time feedback from the ground.
- The provincial government committed to prioritizing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in drafting the Province Adaptation Plan for Action.
- Fellows produced 5 short [visual stories](#) covering gender and climate change as advocacy tools for further dialogues and conversations on the issue.



GOV-HER-NANCE

Building on the learning of our Gov-HER-Nance initiative, we worked with a group of women leaders from Pokhara Metropolitan City to advocate for urgent climate actions with the government and concerned stakeholders.

The team used three approaches:

- Inclusion Fellowship: where the women collected voices from different stakeholders on the effects of climate change and its impact on women,
- Film Fellowship: the inclusion fellows and aspiring film-makers received hands-on training and mentorship to reveal stories of vulnerabilities and resilience, and
- Advocacy and Outreach: advocacy efforts which included policy dialogues based on the visual stories, films, and community voices via inclusion fellows.

“This was one of my first fellowships, and I am glad that I connected with so many people, learned to reach out to the community, convince them, and discuss their issues with concerned stakeholders. Moreover, I learned how to use gender lens in government decision making, which I was completely unaware of before this fellowship”

– Pratistha Karki

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

13

inclusion fellows

10

film fellows

5

films

649

direct reach

103 298

indirect reach

Highlights

Collaborating to create a larger impact:

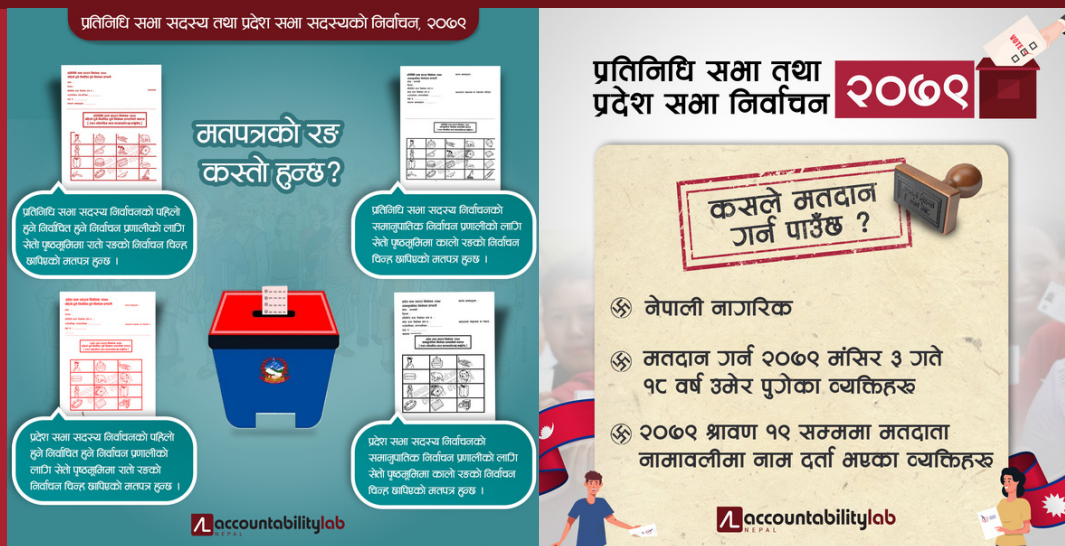
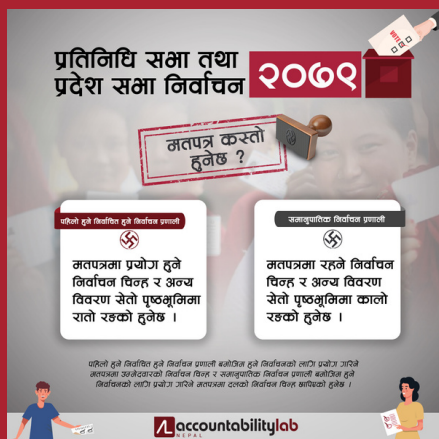
ALN collaborated with different organizations and individuals prior to the elections to achieve a greater impact. We partnered with Ujyalo Foundation to hold mock elections, and collaborated with Radio Sagarmatha to broadcast 32 episodes of a radio program promoting voter education to their 250 000 strong listenership. These episodes included a direct conversation between responsible stakeholders and communities.

Resources contributing to fair and inclusive voter education:

The resources, including podcasts and bulletins, have significantly addressed the issues of gender, inclusion, and dignified access to elections.

The right time to discuss the role of Civil Society:

The participants of Civil Society Conclaves highlighted that there are not enough peer-learning platforms to reflect on their roles to contribute to fair elections. The platform supported them in doing so.



INCLUSIVE AND OPEN ELECTIONS IN NEPAL

We engaged with a range of stakeholders, including youth, media, activists, and marginalized communities, promoting voter education to ensure meaningful and inclusive public participation in the Province Assembly and House of Representatives elections in Nepal. We optimized our knowledge, platforms, and resources to make voter education materials more accessible to all.

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

8

Fair Facts
bulletin

5

Elections
podcasts

35

radio
programs

2

PSA on national
television

3

educational
videos

6

civil society
conclave

10k

direct reach

5 mil

indirect reach



Highlights

- Rakshya Bam, an RTI activist from Kathmandu, conducted various sessions on RTI after the RTI Youth Camp, sharing the importance of RTI and the process of filing the RTI. She has conducted over five sessions for more than 400 students in different colleges and communities in Kathmandu, Kaski, and Kailali districts.
- Yosha Guragain, an RTI activist from Biratnagar, filed 3 RTI applications; one of which was to the District Administration Office of Sunsari asking for contact details of all the Information Officers of the Sunsari District. The purpose was to hold the District Administration Office accountable for Right to Information Officers based in the Sunsari district.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION YOUTH CAMP

Right to Information (RTI) was a youth-focused space to learn, share and explore RTI, open government, and accountability issues as a tool for strengthening democracy. The activists were provided hands-on training and mentorship on using RTI through both theoretical and practical experiences.

The RTI youth camp is very fruitful for youths as this camp has generated more interest in public affairs among young generations. This also has contributed to the habit of seeking information to understand the problem rather than blaming the government.

Yadab Raut, District Administration Office, Ilam

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

8

Fair Facts
bulletin

5

Elections
podcasts

35

radio
programs

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PSA on national
television

3

educational
videos

6

civil society
conclave





Highlights

- The youth-centric survey suggested that only 25.5% of the respondents were aware of the Summit for Democracy (S4D), hinting that the majority of the population is not aware of it and there needs to be more dialogues and engagements around the topic
- Tracking Nepal's progress in Summit for Democracy can be seen [here](#)



ADVANCING DEMOCRACY

We conducted a series of consultations with Youth, CSOs, and the government on Summit for Democracy (S4D) to inform them about Nepal's participation in the S4D process, including commitments made and implementation mechanisms, and set their expectations from the government ahead of the S4D that took place in March 2023. In addition, ALN also surveyed 1000+ youth to understand their perspectives on the Summit for Democracy.

S4D CONSULTATIONS BY NUMBERS

1

perception
survey

5

democracy
dialogue series

2.5k +

total reach

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

We concluded the first phase of "Supporting Public Private Partnership Development" in Koshi and Lumbini Province by bringing together key leaders from the private sector, local and provincial governments, and civil society to strengthen mechanisms for strong Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) in Nepal this year. As an outcome, we developed four policy recommendations based on the stakeholder feedback, which can be accessed [here](#)





Highlights

- Pabitra Khada, who is keen on promoting gender and inclusion, supported us as the mentor for Accountability Film School: Gender, Climate Change, and Accountability.
- Dharma Raj Rimal has brought out the stories of young migrant workers by connecting to our network built through our work on labor migration and accountability.

ACCOUNTABILITY INCUBATOR

We had six accountpreneurs as a part of the 2022 cohort. Their ideas covered gender, inclusion, and youth participation. The accountpreneurs by the end of the year, have refined their ideas, tested them, and built a strong network.

Even small support is very important for those who think, plan, and work hard. The support, suggestions, and mentoring received through this program added more motivation to my work in bringing out voices of youth from the ground.

– Dharma Raj Rimal

Overall, I had a great experience. Unlike other programs where you are taught and provide the training, I feel the incubator has helped me believe in myself and bring the best out of me.

– Shrisha Nepal

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

9

meet up with incubator,
including physical
meetup

bi-monthly

one-to-one meetings





OPEN GOV HUB/ CONVENING WORK

- **Friendraisers:** ALN conducted two friendraisers this year (one in Pokhara and one in Kathmandu). The events were networking events where we also showcased the films that were produced by our film fellows from Accountability Film Schools, followed by a networking event. These events have brought a diverse network to our programs.
- **Collaboration with Digital Rights Nepal:** ALN has collaborated significantly with Digital Right Nepal (Open Gov Hub Member) in the past year. They have supported us with knowledge and resources on Digital Rights as trainers and facilitators during our various programs, including RTI Youth Camp.
- **Policy Parks:** ALN convened a series of policy parks on defending and strengthening democracy in collaboration with the Nepal Institute of Policy Research. 500+ individuals directly participated in it, whereas 2500+ viewed it through our live platforms.
- **Space to support youth and innovations:** Many youth-led initiatives have used Open Gov Hub as a space to convene and discuss diverse social issues in Nepal, including politics, health, labor migration, etc. This has led to the expansion of our likely and unlikely networks.

OTHER CAMPAIGNS

Governance Weekly:

ALN launched Governance Weekly – an analytical update of Nepal's current affairs based on media and real sources mining, to sensitize the communities on hot news on various governance issues from the perspective of accountability this year. A total of 50 Governance Weekly editions were published in 2022 and circulated to 10,000+ individuals.

Research and Evidence-based Advocacy:

ALN is also conducting qualitative research on Demanding a "just recovery" from below. The role of grassroots accountability activism to safeguard labor migrants' rights during the pandemic. The research is built upon the lab's work on labor migration and its accountability. The results of the research will be published in 2023.



AccountabiliTea Podcast

ALN has published 13 podcasts this year, including two dedicated series Defending Democracy and Election. These series cover themes regarding gender, inclusion, and disability. The podcast provides diverse insights into democracy in the context of Nepal.



LOOKING TOWARDS 2023

- Facilitating alumni networks and encouraging collaborations
- Ecosystem building organization on Accountability issues in Nepal: Collaborations with local, provincial, and national level stakeholders within and outside government to promote accountability
- Increasing regional learnings and collaborations with other like-minded organizations including with network Labs globally
- Equipping youth leaders within and outside government to push for accountability
- Knowledge-sharing and resource organization in the accountability sphere
- Centering the well-being and professional development of our team members in everything we do

BUDGET & STAFF

\$383,495

total grants

16

core staff

3

consultants

2

international fellows

\$393,560

total budget

8

CFA

13

inclusion fellows