

NEPAL

Annual Report

2025

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**NARAYAN ADHIKARI, DIRECTOR,
ACCOUNTABILITY LAB NEPAL**

2025 was a defining year for both Accountability Lab Nepal (ALN) and Nepal’s civic and political landscape. It tested our resilience, sharpened our purpose, and pushed us to rethink how we sustain accountability amid uncertainty.

2025 began with a major shock: the US aid freeze in January. This unexpected decision forced an immediate halt to ongoing programs, paused anticipated initiatives and disrupted key partnerships. For an organization rooted in strengthening civic leadership, this was more than a financial setback – it was a structural shock that required recalibration. We remained resolute, focusing on sustaining advocacy,

diversifying resources, and protecting civic space. Through the **#SharedStrength** campaign, we supported struggling organizations, expanded networks, and reinforced the principle that civic actors must lift one another, especially when systems falter.

Nationally, the “Gen Z revolution” marked a historic shift, as young people mobilized against corruption and challenged political impunity. The movement toppled the then-government and headed towards elections with the aim of building a nation grounded in democratic principles. We stood alongside these young reformers, supporting dialogue, safeguarding information integrity, and engaging constructively with policymakers. We are already seeing significant progress in youth inclusion in political processes, something we have

VISION AND MISSION

We envision a world in which resources are used wisely, decisions benefit everyone fairly, and people lead secure lives. Our mission is to make governance work for people through supporting active citizens, responsible leaders and accountable institutions. We focus on building what we call “unlikely networks” to create change; and “naming and faming” the people, ideas and processes that can build positive energy for change.

been advocating for. Further, ALN advanced anti-corruption action plans at the national level and promoted governance reforms.

Internally, 2025 tested our team’s resilience. Amid resource constraints and uncertainty, we adapted, stayed cohesive, and maintained momentum. The year reinforced our commitment to strengthening the accountability ecosystem, while keeping civic action locally rooted and collaborative.

2025 brought instability and political transition but it also brought courage, solidarity, youth leadership, and institutional learning. It became a year of collective choice to respond with integrity, resolve, and shared purpose.

Strengthening Responsive & Accountable Governance

INCREASING PROXIMITY, CENTERING CITIZEN VOICE

Through the Innovation Grant project, six community-based organizations across Nepal strengthened inclusive and accountable local governance by bringing democratic values closer to communities. Their initiatives engaged youth, people with disabilities, expanded access to information and demonstrated how transparency, participation, and accountability can improve everyday civic life.

The Innovation Grant initiatives strengthened responsive governance across multiple fronts. They advanced accessibility for persons with disabilities, promoted youth-led dialogue, advocated for stronger gender-inclusive provisions in two key national bills, and submitted evidence-based recommendations to reform the Right to Information Act (2064), informed by a nationwide youth datathon.

ALN Accountpreneurs 2024, Prince Shah and Subean Shrestha, through SpeakUp Nepal, are amplifying citizens'

voices and connecting directly with stakeholders to promote more responsive and accountable governance.

Through the ACCESS project, the ALN enabled 12 Civil Society Organizations (CSO) across Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim Provinces to strengthen inclusive and accountable local governance in the education sector. By applying the CivActs Model within their respective municipalities, these CSOs enhanced transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in education planning and in the implementation of the School Education Sector Plan (SESP). CSOs engaged closely with local communities to collect genuine feedback on needs and challenges related to inclusive education. Through 72 targeted mini-meetings with women, farmers, students, teachers, and other local groups, they created spaces for collective reflection on education issues and directly engaged more than 2,500 community members.





FROM BUILDING ROADMAPS TO REAL CHANGE

Country Director Narayan Adhikari serves as a member of the Good Governance Blueprint Preparation Committee, formed by former Prime Minister Mrs. Sushila Karki. The committee is tasked with preparing a roadmap for good governance, including recommendations to control corruption, promote good governance, and improve public service delivery in Nepal.



At the local level, partner CSOs organized [12 town halls](#) that brought communities and local governments together. These engagements resulted in 50 commitments from local governments in response to community-identified issues related to inclusive education. Commitments ranged from increased and dedicated education budgets to early screening mechanisms, EMIS subsystems for children with disabilities, improved school infrastructure and related support measures.



ECOSYSTEM BUILDING: CONVENING AND EQUIPPING FOR CHANGE

This year, 7 Accountpreneurs advanced diverse ideas ([more about them here](#)) including climate action, digital rights advocacy, inclusion and civic-tool.

The Accountpreneurs were supported through virtual engagements and hands-on mentorship to grow their initiatives. Most of them are now in the process of formally registering their projects, including Digital Kala and [Biruwa](#). Biruwa, led by Garima Bista, connects and engages children in climate dialogues and action.

Building on the scholar-activist collaboration between Dr. Nimesh Dhungana of the Humanitarian and Conflict

Response Institute, University of Manchester and ALN, we conducted a reflective workshop on disaster accountability. The workshop critically examined state-driven narratives of disaster response and recovery, exploring governance gaps, good practices, and practical alternatives for more accountable and inclusive systems. The workshop convened 30 participants, including disaster practitioners, rights activists, politicians, investigative journalists, youth organizers, researchers, and representatives from National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority and local governments. (Read the full report [here](#))

Disaster recovery efforts often focus on large infrastructure and technical fixes, overlooking how disruptions to small, local infrastructure deeply affect communities. As decision-making becomes increasingly centralized, recovery fre-



quently stops at restoring basic services, leaving little space for community voices or bottom-up demands that connect rebuilding to real human well-being.

Through scholar-activist research, ALN explored the link between infrastructure politics and human well-being, especially as climate-related disasters continue to disproportionately impact disadvantaged communities. The preliminary findings were presented in the [Asian Geography Conference](#). The in-progress paper from this research will also be presented at the [Development Studies Association Conference](#) in University College Dublin, Ireland on July 9, 2026. Nimesh Dhungana is leading the paper, "The Politics of Infrastructural Disruption Following the 2024 Floods," with Oshin Maharjan and Narayan Adhikari as the co-authors.



ALN also conducted a scoping study of Nepal's energy sector, largely driven by hydropower. While rich in potential, the hydropower industry faces significant ecological, social, governance, and legal challenges. The study explored these dynamics and identified ways civil society can better support affected communities. It assessed current practices, alternative approaches, and actions needed to strengthen independent monitoring, promote accountability, and ensure fair compensation and rights protection within a complex legal and political landscape.

Following the sudden US presidential decision to cut foreign aid, ALN carried out an impact assessment to understand its effects on youth-led organizations across Nepal (Read full report [here](#)). This work was part of the #SharedStrength campaign, which created space for affected groups to convene, reflect, and collaborate.

Open Co Hub provided a safe space for dialogue among impacted groups, including the queer community, youth-led organizations, and those working on climate action and HIV-related issues. At the same time, we continued strengthening the broader ecosystem by convening intentional and at times difficult conversations on the aid freeze, health rights, elections, democracy, and other pressing issues. These engagements were grounded in #ShiftThePower principles, prioritizing locally led dialogue, redistributing voice and agency, and building trust-based collaboration.

Open Co Hub

#Shared Strength

सबल सिमिल सोसाइटी

Join 'SharedStrength' collective for sustainable and resilient civil society movement in Nepal.





Open Co Hub continues to serve as a safe space and an ecosystem builder, fostering a community of change-makers and local leaders committed to positive social impact. The Hub has become a central venue for convening [friendraiser](#) and events such as [Spin the Spectrum](#), discussions on queer health, [menstrual health](#), queer rights and environmental advocacy and justice. It also hosts critical dialogues on pressing issues from the aid freeze to the Gen Z movement and its aftermath.

Building on the momentum of equipping young people with accountability tools such as the Right to Information (RTI), ALN developed user-friendly infographics explaining the RTI process. These materials helped young people understand and exercise their right to information effectively and in the correct format.

By the end of 2025, ALN published 198 episodes of Nepal Governance Weekly, including 47 issues in this year alone. This weekly newsletter provides comprehensive updates on current governance issues in Nepal, compiled through media mining and supplemented with analytical insights. The newsletter expanded its role to actively support information integrity for the elections in March.

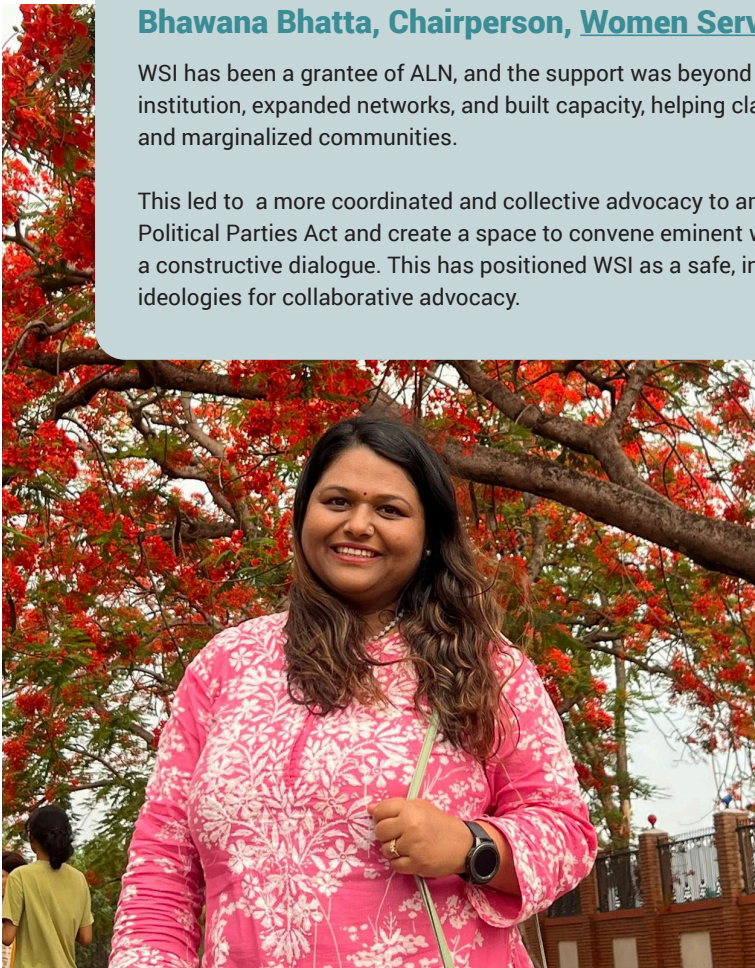


Insights From Our Network

Bhawana Bhatta, Chairperson, Women Service Institute-Nepal (WSI-Nepal)

WSI has been a grantee of ALN, and the support was beyond financial assistance. It strengthened our institution, expanded networks, and built capacity, helping clarify shared priorities across youth, women, and marginalized communities.

This led to a more coordinated and collective advocacy to amend the Integrated Election Bill and the Political Parties Act and create a space to convene eminent women leaders from major political parties for a constructive dialogue. This has positioned WSI as a safe, inclusive platform that bridges diverse political ideologies for collaborative advocacy.



Bam Bahadur, Safal Nepal, Dhangadi

Through ALN's Innovation Grant, Safal Nepal worked in Dhangadhi to develop accessible digital websites for persons with disabilities. That support was instrumental in helping Safal Nepal grow as an organization and expand our work across sectors.

Throughout the project, we gained valuable learning experiences and built strong coordination with the provincial ministry, local governments, and private media. These relationships helped us connect not only with persons with disabilities but also with young people, creating opportunities for further collaborations.

As we worked on digital accessibility, we began to see how closely it connects to transparency and digital democracy. It was an important realization for us. We aimed to engage around 500 persons with disabilities and were able to reach the target across multiple sectors.

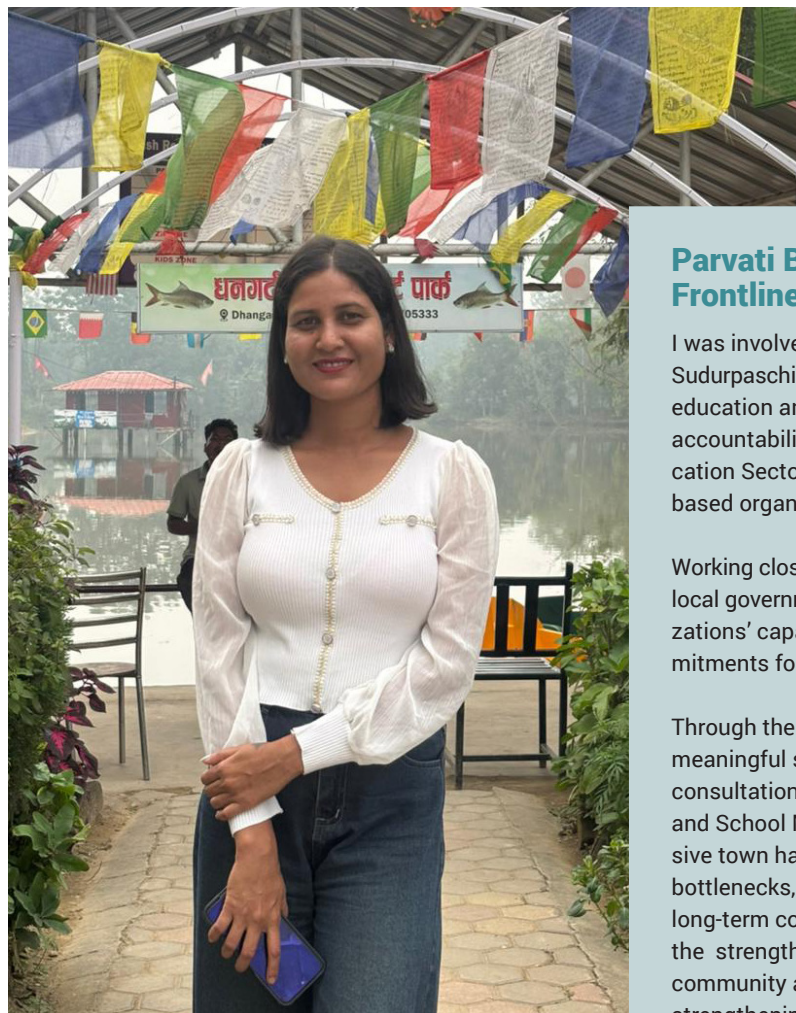
The project ran for seven months, and with ALN's support, we voluntarily extended it by additional three months. The experience deepened our knowledge and opened doors for new initiatives.





Nanda Raj Bhatta, Sudurpachim, HDDS

ALN, throughout the CivActs process, has helped us shift our approach. Instead of taking recommendations from the municipality to design the programs that aligned with their priorities and community needs, we reached out to the communities first. We gathered their concerns, collectively identified key issues, and then engaged the local government, which kept the [community connected](#) throughout, addressed immediate issues like school access to deaf students, and secured long-term commitments on inclusive education.



Parvati Baraili, Community Frontline Activist, Sudurpaschim

I was involved in ALN's ACCESS project in Sudurpaschim, which aimed to advance inclusive education and strengthen local government's accountability in implementing the School Education Sector Plan (SESP) through community based organizations (CBOs).

Working closely with four CBOs, we sensitized local governments, strengthened partner organizations' capacity and secured concrete commitments for improved education governance.

Through the CivActs model, we ensured meaningful stakeholder engagement— from consultations with parents, students, teachers, and School Management Committees to inclusive town halls. This process helped everyday bottlenecks, leading to immediate actions and long-term commitments. A notable shift was the strengthened sense of commitment of the community and local governments, including strengthening or establishing groups like GEIN and school management committees where they were previously inactive or absent.

While much work remains, I am encouraged by the trust we built, the positive response we received from those involved."

Narratives of Change

TITLE

- [Quest and Queries: Youth Pulse Check on the Post-Gen Z Movement Political Landscape](#)
- [Youth Voices from Sudurpaschim](#)
- [Youth Interaction on Gen-Z Protest: Reflections from Janakpur. A Field Excerpt](#)

BLURB

Following the 2025 Gen Z movement, we convened dialogues with young people where they are. These conversations explored how Nepal's youth are influencing the country's politics and governance, and captured their perspectives. The blogs provide insights into the views of young Nepalis in the aftermath of the Gen Z movement.

- [Nepal's E-governance Journey: Current Landscape, Key Challenges and the Road Ahead](#)
- [Digital Democracy, a New Ecosystem of Delivering Democracy in Nepal](#)

Nepal is building a digital ecosystem to modernize public service delivery and strengthen civic participation. However, realizing its full potential requires urgent bridging of critical gaps in infrastructure, cybersecurity, institutional coordination and accountability measures.

[Gaps in Democracy](#)

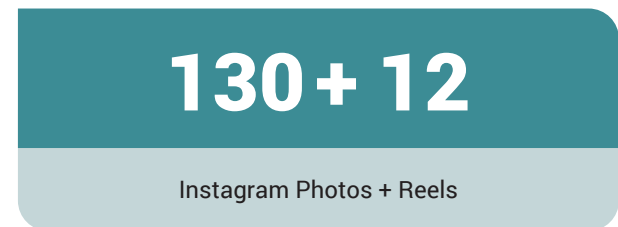
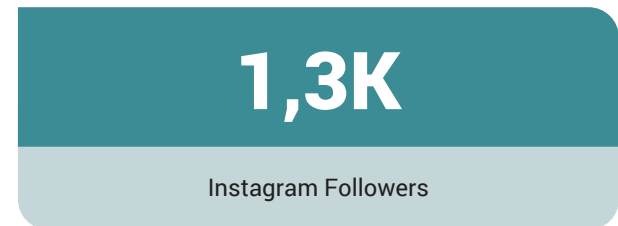
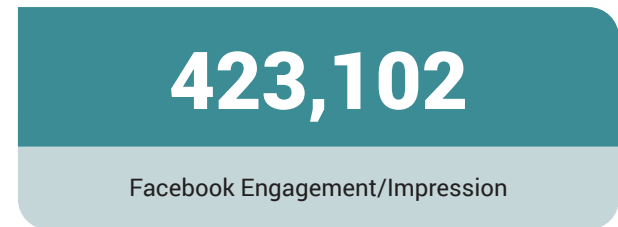
The article highlights the gaps of Nepal's parliamentary democracy and how they have fueled public frustration. It underscores the government's failure to pass crucial bills, such as the Federal Civil Service Bill and Education Bill, while prioritizing partisan interests over pressing national concerns like corruption and public welfare.

[Rethinking Climate Action at the Community Level](#)

The article highlights the disconnect between high-level climate finance and the realities on the ground in Nepal, where communities face severe climate impacts but lack the necessary understanding and resources. It calls for a shift from top-down policymaking to inclusive, community-driven approaches that empower local youth and governments to lead effective adaptation and mitigation efforts.

ALN was subjected to accusation by a (controversial) political figure, claiming our direct involvement in organizing the Gen Z movement in Nepal. This accusation was primarily intended to undermine the authenticity of the self-organized Gen Z movement and frame it as serving a particular vested interest of civil society. The claim briefly surfaced in social media, and gradually faded. This experience prompted reflection on the trust and transparency we have cultivated within our networks and with stakeholders: the supportive allies far outweighed the isolated voices of criticism. While we do not seek for revolution or violence of any kind, engaging a critical and active youth audience was always central to our mission. Facing this challenge reaffirmed our commitment to empowering youth voices and strengthened our focus on meaningful impact.

SOCIAL MEDIA REACH AND HIGHLIGHTS



Our People and Governance

NAME	POSITION
Narayan Adhikari	CEO
Suvechchha Chapagain	Program Manager
Prekkshya Bimali	Program Manager
Thukten Lama	Business Development/Manager
Suresh Chand	Associate Director
Sunil Poudyal	Finance and Administration Director
Oshin Maharjan	Senior Project Officer
Ashok Pariyar	Design and Communication Associate
Swastika Basnet	Project Officer
Shubha Raj Karki	Intern
Roshan Kapali	Intern
Anuj Bhushal	Intern
Killian Ramsey	Intern
Joe Gorton	Intern
Zoe Lang	Intern
Shreyas Potnuru	Intern



CFAs:

Parvati Baraili
Kaiyum Rain
Sirjana Budhathoki Dangi

BOARD MEMBER NAMES

Anil Shrestha
Rewati Gurung
Rabina Rasailey
Pratibha Rajbhandari
Prema Thapa

Staff Highlights:

- Oshin Maharjan has been selected for the Young South Asian Leaders Initiative (YSALI), a platform that brings together changemakers from across South Asia.
- Thukten Lama completed the CSP fellowship, which he will leverage to support youth in areas of technology and leadership.
- Suvechchha Chapagain is a youth leader for Communities of Democracy
- Prekkshya Bimali summed up Sandra N. Smithey Fellowship for Equity and Accountability in Development Finance.

Supporters

DONORS



KNOWLEDGE AND ACADEMIC COLLABORATORS



Financials

\$216,076

Total Budget

\$50,646

Staff Costs

\$140,430

Programming Cost