

A study on
Status of Youth with Disabilities in Civic Engagement
and Political Participation in Nepal

Submitted To
Blind Youth Association Nepal (BYAN)

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Executive Summary

This research report evaluates the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal through a two-phase approach: policy review and field investigations in Koshi Province and Bagmati Province, along with an online survey in Karnali, Madhesh, Lumbini, and Gandaki provinces. Key informant interviews were conducted with political party leaders, local government representatives, officials, persons with disabilities, and fraternal organizations of political parties. Additionally, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with representatives of NGOs and OPDs, providing insights into their practices.

In Nepal, the youth population constitutes 42% of the total population. According to the National Census of 2021, 2.2% of the Nepali Population have some form of disability and 2.0% have some disability.. In the local elections of 2022 in Nepal, 41.19% of elected representatives belonged to the age group of 21 to 40 years. However, specific data regarding youths with disabilities are not available, highlighting a significant gap in our understanding of their representation in local governance.

Key findings from the study indicate that while there are constitutional provisions and commitments from political parties to engage persons with disabilities, implementation remains limited. Political entities like the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) and Nepal Student Union have expressed intentions to prioritize youth mobilization and the inclusion of persons with disabilities, but actual participation levels are low. Fraternal organizations within political parties have also highlighted the mandatory reservation of seats for persons with disabilities, yet the implementation part of this provision is weak.

The Nepali Congress demonstrates commendable efforts to promote inclusivity within its party structures, with provisions for representation at various levels. At the local level, the Ward Committee allows for 20% representation through nomination, including persons with disabilities or minorities. Other parties like CPN (UML), CPN (Maoist Centre), and the National Independent Party however lack comprehensive provisions for the representation. Despite some progress, there remains a need for political parties to address discriminatory provisions and actively involve persons with disabilities as contributors and participants in society.

Additionally, the study identifies gaps in policies and practices at various levels of government and NGOs, with insufficient emphasis on youth with disabilities in program guidelines and a lack of awareness among stakeholders. Despite some positive initiatives by organizations like the

Karuna Foundation and NLR Nepal, there is a need for better policies and implementation guidelines to ensure the meaningful civic engagement of youth with disabilities into civil society organizations also.

The NFDN-Koshi Province reported the establishment of committees focusing on persons with disabilities, urging active involvement in advocacy efforts. Youth with disabilities were advised to be more proactive in asserting their rights. Through the advocacy by NFDN in the Koshi Province, Rural Municipalities have allocated NPR 150,000.00, and Municipalities have allocated NPR 200,000.00 annually for the empowerment of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, due to these efforts, changes have been implemented, including the provision of free education and scholarships distributed at schools. Ward-4 of Kathmandu Metropolitan highlighted a lack of available data on persons with disabilities, similar is the situation in other municipalities in the Kathmandu valley.

Recommendations include establishing mechanisms to actively engage persons with disabilities, particularly youths, at local, federal, and provincial levels. Political parties should prioritize mobilizing youth with disabilities and ensure accessibility in their processes. NGOs, governmental bodies, and other stakeholders need to raise awareness, develop specific policies, and allocate resources to support the political and civic engagement of youth with disabilities.

Furthermore, the report emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming disability rights in national and international policies, enhancing political awareness and training among individuals with disabilities, and promoting their active participation in decision-making processes. Overall, concerted efforts from all stakeholders are essential to create a more inclusive political landscape for youth with disabilities in Nepal.

In conclusion, while all political parties have provisions for involving youth with disabilities in political activities, the actual implementation at the grassroots level has been lacking. However, there remains ample opportunity to establish effective mechanisms for their engagement. Similarly, NGOs and other civil society organizations are yet to develop comprehensive policies and practices for meaningful involvement of youth with disabilities.

Based on the findings of this study, we recommend that BYAN and other OPDs take into account several suggestions for future actions aimed at ensuring the engagement of youth with disabilities. These recommendations include clarifying and standardizing civic engagement practices, aligning the National Youth Policy with inclusive objectives, addressing barriers within local, provincial

and federal government structures, amending constitutional and legislative gaps, advocating for the revision of international commitments, enhancing the implementation of existing policies, promoting awareness and education initiatives, establishing inclusive mechanisms within political parties, facilitating collaboration with external entities, and formulating policies for non-governmental organizations. These actions are crucial for fostering a more inclusive environment and promoting the active participation of youth with disabilities in civic and political processes.

List of Abbreviations

AAPD:	American Association of People with Disability
BPS:	Blind and Partially Sighted
BYAN:	Blind Youth Association Nepal
CBOs:	Community Based Organizations
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
CPN:	Communist Party of Nepal
CRPD:	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
GESI:	Gender Equability and Social Inclusion
GoN:	Government of Nepal
ICCPR:	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
IDA:	International Disability Alliance
KIIs:	Key Informants Interviews
NFDN:	National Federation of Disabled-Nepal
NGO:	Non-Government Organization
NLR:	Nederland Leprosy relief
OPD:	Organizations of person with disability
PwD:	Person with disabilities
RM:	Rural Municipality
RSP:	Rastriya Swotandra Party
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR:	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UN:	United Nations
WCO :	Woman Children Office
WID:	World Institute on Disability
WwD:	Woman with Disabilities
YOI:	Youth Organizing Institute

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction of BYAN

Blind Youth Association Nepal (BYAN) is a pioneering organization established by and for Blind and Partially Sighted (BPS) youth in Nepal. With a vision of fostering an inclusive society where BPS individuals lead dignified lives, BYAN is actively engaged in a range of initiatives that span policy advocacy, education, employment, disaster risk reduction, civic engagement, political participation, and the promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for persons with disabilities, especially BPS individuals.

In alignment with its mission, BYAN has launched a significant project titled "*Encourage and Facilitate the Active Involvement of Young People with Disabilities in Mainstream Youth Movements, Political Parties, and Local Planning Processes in Nepal.*" This initiative, supported by the European Union under the Youth Democracy Cohort of the Women and Youth Democracy Engagement (WYDE) Youth Grant scheme, aims to empower young persons with disabilities. The project's core objective is to enhance their civic engagement and participation in democratic processes, political parties, and local governance. Furthermore, it seeks to integrate the agendas of young people with disabilities into the broader youth movement in Nepal.

To achieve these ambitious goals, the project will mobilize youth with disabilities from various regions of Nepal, equipping them with the necessary skills and platforms to advocate for their inclusion in mainstream youth movements, political discussions, and governmental forums. Key activities include national and provincial level dialogues with youth-led civil society organizations to ensure the participation of disabled youth in mainstream movements, advocacy dialogues with youth parliamentarians and political youth leaders, local advocacy efforts for inclusion in planning processes, and workshops focused on democracy and civil and political rights for youth with disabilities.

Recognizing the importance of evidence-based advocacy, BYAN intends to systematically study and document the current state of civic engagement among young people with disabilities in Nepal. This study will provide critical insights and data to support effective lobbying and advocacy efforts by BYAN and other Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs). Through this research, BYAN aims to generate evidence that will facilitate the promotion of inclusive policies and

practices, ensuring that the voices of youth with disabilities are heard and integrated into the fabric of Nepalese civic and political life.

1.2 Introduction of the Study

Civic engagement is a process in which people take collective action to address issues of public concern and is instrumental to democracy. The involvement of youth in civic engagement and political participation is crucial for the development and sustenance of democratic societies. This participation ensures that the voices of younger generations are heard in decision-making processes, fostering inclusive governance and responsive policies¹. The engagement of youth in civic and political spheres holds significant importance, especially in the post-conflict era of democratic transition in Nepal². However, when it comes to youth with disabilities, their status in engagement and remains largely underexplored and underrepresented.

Youth with disabilities often face multifaceted barriers that hinder their active involvement in civic and political space. These barriers like societal stigma, lack of accessible infrastructure, and inadequate legislative support etc.³. The challenges are compounded by socio-economic factors and insufficient implementation of disability-inclusive policies. Despite the ratification of the UNCRPD in 2010 and the existence of national laws aimed at protecting the rights of people with disabilities, practical enforcement and societal attitudes lag.

Moreover, the political landscape in Nepal is characterized by unpredictability, which often overshadow the specific needs of marginalized community people, including persons with disabilities⁴. The 2015 Constitution of Nepal promises equality and non-discrimination, yet the gap between policy and practice persists, leaving many young individuals with disabilities marginalized from the civic and political mainstream.

This study report aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the status of youth with disabilities in Nepal concerning their civic engagement and political participation in Nepal. This study also tries to identify the existing barriers, highlight successful initiatives, and propose recommendations

¹ Checkoway, B., & Aldana, A. (2013). Four forms of youth civic engagement for diverse democracy. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(11), 1894–1899. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2013.09.005

² <https://digitalcommons.mcalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2434&context=himalaya> Access on 1 July 2024.

³ <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-with-disabilities.pdf> Access on 2 July 2024.

⁴ <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/charting-the-course-strategies-for-inclusive-representation-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-nepalese-politics/> Access on 2 July 2024.

for fostering an inclusive environment that empowers youth with disabilities to actively participate in the civic and political spheres.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the real status of youth with disabilities about their civic and political participation in Nepal. Civic and political engagement in the public sphere are fundamental components of a democratic society. The inclusion of all sections of the population is essential for the creation of equitable and inclusive governance system in the country. In this context the purpose of study aims to identify the barriers which directly hinder the engagement of youth with disabilities in civic and political life.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to investigate and evaluate the status of youth with disabilities in Nepal in terms of their civic engagement and political participation. . The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. Assess the levels of civic engagement and political participation among youth with disabilities in Nepal.
- ii. Identify the key barriers and challenges that prevent youth with disabilities from fully participating in civic and political activities.
- iii. Examine the effectiveness of current policies and initiatives aimed at promoting the inclusion of youth with disabilities in these spheres.
- iv. Provide recommendations for policymakers, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders on how to enhance the civic and political engagement of youth with disabilities.

1.5 Importance of the Study

The inclusion of youth with disabilities in civic engagement and political participation is crucial for the development of inclusive and democratic societies. This study holds significant importance for several reasons:

Firstly, it addresses a gap in policy discourse regarding the involvement of youth with disabilities in civil and political spheres. Secondly, the findings of this study have the potential to inform policy

and programmatic interventions that can better support the empowerment and inclusion of youth with disabilities. This study also provides evidence-based recommendations that can guide policymakers, representatives of CSOs, and OPDs and other relevant stakeholders for promoting the inclusion in the public spheres.

Further, the study underscores the importance of fulfilling international commitments such as the UNCRPD, which Nepal was ratified in 2010. The UNCRPD emphasizes the right of persons with disabilities to be involved in public life equally.

Additionally, promoting the civic and political engagement of youth with disabilities is essential for achieving broader development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Inclusive participation is integral to goals such as reduced inequalities (SDG 10) and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). This study aligns with these global objectives, advocating for a more inclusive and equitable society.

1.6 Target Audience

The target audiences for this study report are as follows:

- Members and employees of OPDs
- Researchers
- Representatives from CSOs
- Member of political parties
- Policy makers.
- Members of Youth Club
- Persons with Disabilities
- And the public.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Civic engagement and political participation are multifaceted issues for the youths with disabilities that intersect with broader themes of human rights, social inclusion, and democratic engagement. This chapter reviews the relevant literature on the current position of persons with disabilities in civic and political participation. It also explores national and international policy frameworks and empirical findings. It also provides a comprehensive understanding of the barriers and opportunities faced by persons with disabilities.

2.2 Civic Engagement and Political Participation: Definitions and Importance

Civic engagement encompasses a wide array of activities through which individuals contribute to the public life of their communities and influence governmental processes. These activities include participation in meetings, public discourse, discussions, forum volunteering, community organizing, and participating in civic groups.⁵

Political participation involves actions directly related to influencing government policies and decisions. This includes joining political parties, voting, be a candidate, campaigning for candidates or issues, attending political rallies, and engaging in policy advocacy⁶. Political participation is a critical mechanism through which individuals exercise their civil and democratic rights and responsibilities, ensuring that diverse voices are represented in the political process. For youth with disabilities, civic engagement and political participation are particularly significant. These activities enable them to advocate for their rights, challenge societal barriers, and promote inclusive policies that address their unique needs and concerns⁷. Engaging in civic and political life helps to dismantle the systemic exclusion that often marginalizes people with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive society where all members could contribute and thrive. Youth with disabilities face various types of unique challenges like physical and attitudinal barriers, lack of

⁵ https://www.unomaha.edu/international-studies-and-programs/_files/docs/adler-goggin-civic-engagement.pdf Access 29 June 2024.

⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/political-participation> Access on 4 July 2024.

⁷ <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2021-12/UNDP-II-UNPRPD-Political-Participation-of-Persons-with-Intellectual-or-Psychosocial-Disabilities-V2.pdf>. Access on 4 July 2024.

accessible information and limited opportunities in participation and engagement in social and political process.⁸

Empirical studies highlight the importance of inclusive civic engagement and political participation for youth with disabilities. Participation in these activities can enhance their social capital, increase their sense of agency, and improve their overall well-being. Moreover, inclusive participation contributes to the development of policies and programs that are more responsive to the needs of all citizens, fostering a more equitable and just society⁹.

2.3 Barriers to Civic Engagement and Political Participation

a) Physical and Environmental Barriers

Physical accessibility poses a significant obstacle to civic engagement and political participation for youth with disabilities in Nepal¹⁰. The lack of accessibility in polling stations, public buildings, and community spaces hampers the ability of individuals with mobility impairments to participate in civic activities. Moreover, the absence of accessible transportation exacerbates this issue, as it restricts the mobility of youth with disabilities, hindering their attendance at meetings, rallies, and other political events¹¹.

The physical environment plays a critical role in shaping the accessibility of civic spaces for persons disabilities in Nepal. Despite efforts to promote inclusivity, many polling stations, public buildings, and community spaces remain inaccessible¹². The lack of ramps, elevators, and other accommodations poses challenges for individuals with mobility impairments, restricting their ability to exercise their civic rights. Moreover, the dearth of accessible transportation options exacerbates this issue, as it limits the mobility of youth with disabilities and constrains their participation in political activities beyond their immediate vicinity.

b) Attitudinal Barriers

Societal attitudes towards disability also play a vital role in shaping the civic and political participation of persons with disabilities in Nepal. The social stigma and negative stereotypes often

⁸ <https://www.generationunlimited.org/media/3021/file/Action%20Guide%205:%20Young%20people's%20participation%20and%20civic%20engagement.pdf> . Access on 3 July 2024.

⁹ <http://giar.org/publishpaper/vol3issue6/d503r63.pdf> Access on 3 July 2024.

¹⁰ https://eaccess.s3.amazonaws.com/media/attachments/resources_mainresource/537/Disability%20Election%20Access%20Monitoring_English.pdf. Access on 2 July 2024.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

marginalize persons with disabilities, discouraging their engagement in public life. In Nepal, entrenched traditional beliefs and cultural practices contribute to perpetuating these negative attitudes, further isolating youth with disabilities from civic and political processes¹³.

Societal attitudes towards disability significantly influence the participation of youth with disabilities in civic and political processes. Negative stereotypes and stigma surrounding disability often led to the social exclusion of individuals with disabilities. In Nepal, deeply ingrained cultural beliefs and traditions can further exacerbate these attitudes, fostering an environment of marginalization and isolation for youth with disabilities¹⁴. These attitudes not only discourage individuals from actively participating in public life but also contribute to their internalized sense of inferiority, undermining their confidence and motivation to engage in civic activities.

c) Information and communication related Barriers

Limited access to information presents a significant barrier to civic engagement and political participation for many youths with disabilities in the world ¹⁵. Due to constrained resources, lack of disability-friendly information and communication systems, and poor education many individuals with disabilities are deprived of basic information regarding their rights and opportunities for engagement. This informational deficit impedes their full engagement in civic and political activities.

Access to information and communication is essential for empowering individuals to participate effectively in civic and political processes. However, many youths with disabilities in Nepal face significant challenges in accessing information about their rights and opportunities for engagement ¹⁶. Limited resources, inadequate dissemination of information, and a lack of disability-friendly communication mechanisms all contribute to this informational gap. Furthermore, disparities in educational opportunities impair the issue, as persons with disabilities often have limited access to formal education. Furthermore, inaccessible and unreadable documents, the absence of sign language interpretation, lack of captioning, and navigational challenges with inaccessible websites further enlarge this barrier.

d) Legal and Policy Barriers

¹³Sharma, A. (2024). Socio-cultural challenges faced by people with physical disabilities. *Shahid Kirti Multidisciplinary Journal*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.3126/skmj.v2i2.62504>.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ World Health Organization. (2011). *World report on disability*. Geneva: WHO.

¹⁶ Ibid

Despite the presence of progressive laws, the implementation of disability rights legislation in Nepal remains inadequate. For instance, the Election Act of Nepal contains provisions that indirectly discriminate against persons with disabilities. Specific articles within the act fail to provide reasonable accommodations for disabled individuals, effectively limiting their ability to participate in elections.¹⁷ A notable gap exists between policy and practice, with many persons with disabilities encountering discrimination and exclusion in political processes. This disparity underscores the necessity for more effective enforcement of existing laws and the establishment of additional supportive measures to enhance the political inclusion of individuals with disabilities in Nepal.

2.4 Opportunities and Good Practices

Civic involvement and active participation in politics are integral elements of democratic societies, allowing individuals to contribute to decision-making processes and shape the future of their communities. However, youths with disabilities often face significant barriers that limit their ability to participate fully in civic and political life. Despite these challenges, there are opportunities and best practices that can effectively promote the inclusion of youths with disabilities in these processes, thereby fostering a more equitable and representative society.

a) Inclusive Education and Empowerment Programs

Inclusive education and empowerment programs offer promising opportunities for enhancing the civic engagement and political participation of young people with disabilities. These programs provide tailored support and resources to empower them to develop essential knowledge, confidence and skills necessary for active citizenship. The transformative impact of inclusive education and empowerment programs on the lives of disability youth group, emphasizing the importance of providing opportunities for skill development, enhance knowledge, and self-advocacy. By investing in such programs, policymakers and stakeholders can create an enabling environment where this group is empowered to participate meaningfully in civic and political activities.

b) Technological Advancements

¹⁷ Election Commission, Nepal. (2017). Election Act. Retrieved from <http://www.election.gov.np> Access on 28 June 2024.

Technological advancements offer another avenue for enhancing the civic and political participation of disabled youths. Accessible assistive technologies, online platforms, and communication devices can significantly improve the accessibility of civic and political processes, allowing them to overcome barriers related to mobility, communication, and information access. Advancements in assistive technology have the potential to revolutionize the participation of individuals with disabilities in civic and political life. For example, screen readers, speech recognition software, and alternative input devices enable individuals with visual, speech, and motor impairments to engage in online discussions, access digital content, and communicate their opinions effectively¹⁸.

c) Collaborative Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships between civil society organizations, OPDs, government agencies, educational institutions, and community based organization and groups play a crucial role in promoting civic and political engagement of persons with disabilities. . By working together, stakeholders can pool resources, share expertise, and develop inclusive initiatives that address the diverse needs and challenges faced by them. The importance of collaborative partnerships is highlighted in the work of disability rights organizations such as the World Institute on Disability (WID), which advocates for the inclusion of youths with disabilities in decision-making processes and community development initiatives¹⁹.. Through partnerships with government agencies, WID has been able to influence policy reforms and promote their rights on a global scale.

d) Legislative and Policy Reforms

Legislative and policy reforms are essential for creating an enabling environment that supports the civic engagement and political participation of the youth groups having disabilities. Laws and regulations that prioritize accessibility, accommodation, and the rights of individuals with disabilities are critical for removing systemic barriers and ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens to participate in civic and political life. The importance of legislative and policy reforms in promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in political life. Countries like Sweden and Canada have implemented comprehensive strategies that prioritize accessibility, outreach, and the

¹⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/eca/media/30671/file/Teacher%27s%20guide%20for%20building%20capacity%20for%20assistive%20technology.pdf>. Access on 27 June 2024.

¹⁹ World Institute on Disability. (n.d.). About. Retrieved from <https://wid.org/about/>. Access on 27 June 2024

involvement of disabled persons' organizations in policymaking processes, resulting in increased political participation among individuals with disabilities²⁰.

e) Youth Leadership Development

Investing in youth leadership development programs that are inclusive of disability youth section can empower them to become effective advocates and agents of change in their communities. By providing opportunities for skill-building, mentorship, and networking, these programs enable them to develop the confidence, enhance knowledge, and develop leadership skills necessary for active civic and political engagement.

A study highlights the positive impact for the youth leadership development programs on the civic engagement and political participation of disabled youths. Through participation in leadership training workshops, community service projects, and advocacy campaigns, they develop a sense of agency and empowerment, leading to increased involvement in civic activities and decision-making processes²¹.

f) Accessible Voting Processes

Accessible voting process is essential for ensuring that persons with disabilities can exercise their right to vote independently and free and fair environment. By implementing measures like electronic voting machines with audio and braille ballots, and accessible polling locations, governments can remove barriers to political participation and promote their inclusion in the electoral process²².

The importance of accessible voting processes is underscored in the work of disability rights advocates such as the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), which campaigns for the implementation of accessible voting technologies and polling practices²³. Through advocacy efforts and collaboration with election officials, AAPD works to ensure that all citizens, including disabled youths, have equal access to the voting booth.

g) Civic Education and Training

²⁰ https://inclusivefutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/InclusiveFutures_Partnerships_March2023_WEB.pdf Access on 28 June 2024.

²¹ https://youthtoday.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2017/11/Youth-CEL_FINAL.pdf Access on 26 June 2024.

²² https://eaccess.s3.amazonaws.com/media/attachments/resources_mainresource/537/Disability%20Election%20Access%20Monitoring_English.pdf Access on 25 June 2025

²³ American Association of People with Disabilities. (n.d.). Voting rights. Retrieved from <https://www.aapd.com/advocacy/voting/>. Access on 25 June 2025.

Comprehensive civic education and training programs that are inclusive of persons with disabilities are essential for building their knowledge and understanding of civic rights, responsibilities, political and democratic processes. By providing accessible and culturally relevant curricula, as well as opportunities for experiential learning and peer support, these programs equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary for active citizenship. The importance of civic education in promoting the political participation of persons with disabilities. By integrating disability-inclusive content into school curricula and extracurricular activities, educators can empower them to become informed and engaged citizens who contribute positively to their communities²⁴.

h) Youth-Led Initiatives

Youth-led initiatives focused on disability rights advocacy, community organizing, and civic engagement play a crucial role in amplifying the voices and concerns of youths with disabilities. By providing platforms for peer support, leadership development, and collective action, these initiatives empower them to advocate for their rights and effect positive change in their communities.

The significance of youth-led initiatives is demonstrated in the work of organizations such as the Youth Organizing Institute (YOI), which trains young activists, including those with disabilities, to advocate for social justice and systemic change²⁵. Through grassroots organizing, coalition building, and direct-action campaigns, YOI empowers youths with disabilities to challenge ableism, discrimination, and inequality in society.

i) Representation and Inclusion

Promoting representation and inclusion of youths with disabilities in decision-making bodies, advisory councils, and policymaking processes is essential for ensuring that their voices and perspectives are heard and considered in shaping public policies and programs. By actively involving this group in governance structures and political processes, governments and organizations can foster a more inclusive and responsive democracy.

The importance of representation and inclusion is recognized in the work of international instruments such as the CRPD, which calls for the full participation and inclusion of persons with

²⁴ Bueso, L. (2022). Civic Equity for Students With Disabilities. *Teachers College Record*, 124(1), 62-86. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681221086092>

²⁵ Youth Organizing Institute. (n.d.). About us. Retrieved from <http://www.youthorganizing.org/about/>.

disabilities in all aspects of society²⁶. Through advocacy and capacity-building initiatives, CRPD promotes the meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes and public affairs.

j) Awareness Campaigns and Outreach

Awareness campaigns are important for raising awareness about the individual rights, and capabilities of youths with disabilities, as well as fighting stigma, discrimination, and misconceptions. By disseminating accurate information, challenging stereotypes, and promoting positive representations of this community in the media and public discourse, these campaigns can create a more inclusive and supportive social environment which promotes equality in the society. For instance, the "Disability Rights Are Human Rights" campaign launched by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) aims to raise awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities, including youths, and mobilize support for disability-inclusive policies and programs²⁷. Through online advocacy tools, social media campaigns, and community events, IDA engages with diverse audiences to promote understanding, empathy, and solidarity with persons with disabilities worldwide.

Promoting the civic and political engagement of young people with disabilities requires a multifaceted approach that addresses systemic barriers, fosters empowerment, and promotes inclusion. By leveraging opportunities such as inclusive education and empowerment programs, technological advancements, policy reforms, youth leadership development, accessible voting processes, civic and voter education and training, and awareness campaigns and outreach, stakeholders can create an enabling environment where this community can fully participate in civic and political life²⁸.

2.5 International Frameworks and Policies

Several international frameworks advocate for the inclusion of youth with disabilities in civic and political life, recognizing their rights to full and effective participation in society. These frameworks provide a crucial foundation for guiding policy development and implementation at

²⁶ United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

²⁷ International Disability Alliance. (n.d.). Campaigns. Retrieved from <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/campaigns>.

²⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/17006/file/Country%20Profile%20-%20Nepal.pdf> Access on 24 June 2024.

the national level, shaping efforts to promote the inclusion of this group in civic and political processes.

The CRPD represents a landmark treaty that sets out the rights of persons with disabilities and outlines the obligations of states parties to ensure their full participation and inclusion in all aspects of life. Adopted in 2006, the CRPD emphasizes the principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and accessibility, reaffirming the inherent dignity and autonomy of persons with disabilities²⁹. Article 29 of the CRPD specifically focuses on the political participation of persons with disabilities, recognizing their right to vote and be elected, as well as their participation in public and political life on an equal basis with others. The article calls for measures to eliminate barriers to political participation, ensure accessibility of polling stations and materials, and promote awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities in the political process³⁰.

²⁹ United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

³⁰ Ibid

Article 29 – Participation in political and public life

States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake:

a) To ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected, inter alia, by:

i. Ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use.

ii. Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate.

iii. Guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice.

b) To promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and encourage their participation in public affairs, including:

i. Participation in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country, and in the activities and administration of political parties.

ii. Forming and joining organizations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at international, national, regional and local levels.

The sustainable development goal (SDG), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, provides a global blueprint for achieving a more sustainable and inclusive world by 2030. Goal 16 of the SDG specifically addresses the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all, and the building of effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels³¹. This goal recognizes the importance of inclusive governance and civic participation in fostering

³¹ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> Access on 1 July 2024.

peace, justice, and sustainable development. It emphasizes the need to ensure equal access to political processes and decision-making for all members of society, including youth with disabilities. By mainstreaming disability considerations into development policies and programs, Goal 16 aims to create more inclusive societies where the rights and voices of marginalized groups like persons with disabilities are also respected and upheld. These international frameworks provide a crucial backdrop for understanding the obligations of countries like Nepal in promoting the civic and political participation of youth with disabilities. By ratifying and implementing these treaties, Nepal commits to upholding the rights of persons with disabilities and taking proactive measures to remove barriers to their full inclusion in civic and political life. These frameworks also provide valuable guidance for policymakers, advocates, and other stakeholders in designing and implementing inclusive policies and programs that address the specific needs and challenges faced by youth with disabilities. Furthermore, the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health 2016 plays a crucial role in enhancing the overall health and well-being of youths, including those with disabilities, by integrating goals related to nutrition, education, sanitation, health, and livelihood transformation. By prioritizing the needs of marginalized groups, including youths with disabilities, this strategy aims to address the root causes of health disparities and promote equitable access to healthcare services and opportunities for youths worldwide³².

In addition to the SDGs and the Global Strategy, international agreements such as the UNCRPD Article 4(3)³³ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Article 25 emphasize the importance of inclusive civic engagement and political participation for persons with disabilities and youth. These agreements reaffirm the principles of democracy and inclusivity, advocating for the removal of barriers to participation and the empowerment of marginalized groups, including youths with disabilities, in decision-making processes at all levels of society³⁴. The international commitment reflected in the SDGs, the Global Strategy, and international agreements such as the UNCRPD and the ICCPR provides a robust framework for promoting the

³² World Health Organization. (2016). Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016-2030). Retrieved from <https://platform.who.int/data/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent-ageing/global-strategy-data> Access on 24 June 2024

³³ United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

³⁴ United Nations. (1966). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

civic engagement and political participation of youths with disabilities, both nationally and globally.

Similarly, there are several regional human rights treaties that contain provisions for civic engagement and political participation, which include arrangements for people with disabilities. For instance, the European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols³⁵, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights³⁶, and the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities all³⁷ emphasize the importance of inclusive participation in civic and political life. These instruments highlight best practices that Nepal could adopt to enhance the political and civic engagement of individuals with disabilities, thereby promoting a more inclusive democratic society.

2.6 Context of Youth with Disability and Civic Engagement in Nepal

According to the Nepal Census 2021, the total population of Nepal is 29,164,578, with 654,782 people having disabilities. This means that 2.25% of the population has a disability. Of these, 354,889 are men and 299,893 are women. These numbers emphasize the importance of creating inclusive and supportive environments to ensure that everyone, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate in society³⁸. Around 40 persons living with disabilities have been elected across the country from the local level polls held in 2022. The number of persons with disabilities elected in the local levels has increased compared to the previous election held in 2017³⁹. NGOs and civil society groups play crucial roles in empowering youth, including those with disabilities, in Nepal. Approximately 3,358 registered NGOs operate in the country, with roughly 20% focusing on youth-related issues. Similarly, around 190 international NGOs are active in Nepal, some of which address concerns specifically related to youth⁴⁰.

³⁵ Council of Europe. (1950). *European Convention on Human Rights*. Retrieved from https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf

³⁶ African Union. (1981). African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Retrieved from <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights>

³⁷ Organization of American States. (1999). Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities. Retrieved from <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/a-65.html>

³⁸ <https://nfdn.org.np/news/disability-data/> Access on 2 July 2024.

³⁹ <https://risingnepaldaily.com/news/12056> Access on 2 July 2024.

⁴⁰ Social Welfare Council. (n.d.). *Registered NGOs*. Government of Nepal.

Despite commendable efforts, challenges persist for youths with disabilities in Nepal. While the country has enacted legislation such as the Disability Rights Act and ratified international conventions like the UNCRPD, effective implementation remains an ongoing challenge. Issues surrounding accessibility, service provision, and enforcement continue to hinder the realization of rights for individuals with disabilities⁴¹.

"Civic engagement," a multifaceted concept, encompasses various activities such as local clean-ups, tutoring, voting, and participation in community associations⁴². It can be categorized into four primary types: political engagement, community engagement, civic skills engagement, and social justice engagement, each involving distinct activities aimed at encouraging active participation in civic life⁴³.

Youth-led social organizations operating for over two decades, face challenges in engaging youth due to a predominant focus on resource accumulation rather than fostering peer involvement in Nepal⁴⁴. Despite the establishment of the National Youth Council with the objective of promoting youth leadership and participation in decision-making, its effectiveness has been limited, often serving as a platform for political parties to manage youth cadres⁴⁵.

At the local level, bureaucratic hurdles hinder youth engagement, as governments fear criticism and exposure of incompetence. Requirements such as multiple registrations and pre-approval for activities restrict civic space, impeding youths' freedom of association⁴⁶. These obstacles discourage youths from establishing and operating organizations and hinder their participation in civic activities.

Concerning youths with disabilities, their active involvement in civic engagement is limited despite constituting a significant portion of the youth population. Studies indicate minimal participation in NGOs, community groups, and political parties, often without holding decision-

⁴¹ Government of Nepal. (n.d.). *Election Commission of Nepal*. <https://election.gov.np/> Access on 23 June 2024.

⁴² Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H. E. (1995). *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

⁴³ Civic Engagement Research Group. (2012). *Civic education and youth civic engagement: A review of the literature*. Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement.

⁴⁴ Shrestha, P. (2020). *Youth-led Civil Society Organizations in Nepal: Challenges and Opportunities*. Tribhuvan University.

⁴⁵ Government of Nepal. (2015). *National Youth Policy 2072 (2015)*. National Youth Council.

⁴⁶ National Youth Council. (2016). *National Youth Policy Implementation Plan 2073 (2016-2021)*. Government of Nepal.

making roles⁴⁷. Despite constitutional provisions aimed at safeguarding the rights of youths with disabilities, shortcomings in implementation persist, hindering their proactive participation⁴⁸.

2.7 National Policies in Nepal

Nepal has made significant strides in recognizing and safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities, including their right to participate in civic and political life. For youth with disabilities in Nepal, these legal frameworks represent essential tools for advocating for their rights, ensuring their voices are heard, and fostering their active engagement in shaping the future of their communities and country.

The Constitution of Nepal stands as a cornerstone of Nepal's commitment to inclusivity and democratic governance. Its provisions guarantee the right of every citizen, regardless of disability status, to participate in state affairs and public service⁴⁹. This constitutional guarantee is particularly significant for persons with disabilities, as it affirms their equal citizenship and underscores their entitlement to participate in civic and political life.

Building upon the constitutional framework, Nepal has enacted legislation specifically aimed at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and promoting their inclusion in society. The Disabled Persons Protection and Welfare Act, 1982, laid the groundwork for addressing issues related to disability rights and accessibility. Subsequently, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017, further strengthened legal protections and mandates for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all spheres of life, including civic and political domains⁵⁰.

For youth with disabilities in Nepal, these legal instruments provide a sense of empowerment and legitimacy in their efforts to engage with the broader community and participate in decision-making processes. However, despite the existence of these progressive policies, practical challenges persist, hindering the full realization of their rights and opportunities for civic engagement and political participation. The details national laws and policies include the following:

⁴⁷ Sharma, A. (2018). *Youth with Disability and Civil Engagement in Nepal: A Study on Participation and Challenges*. Kathmandu University.

⁴⁸ Government of Nepal. (2015). *Constitution of Nepal, 2015*.

⁴⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Government of Nepal. (1982). *The Protection and Welfare of the Disabled Persons Act 2039 B.S.*

a) Constitution of Nepal- 2015

In Nepal, while there exist international and national policies addressing youth issues, the focus remains primarily on youth in general, with limited specific provisions for youth with disabilities. The Constitution of Nepal, promulgated in 2015, serves as a foundational document outlining the rights and inclusion of various marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities.

Article 18 of the Constitution of Nepal 2015 emphasizes equality among youth, signaling the state's commitment to addressing their needs. Furthermore, Article 51, Directive Principle (h)7 underscores the importance of youth empowerment and development. The constitution ensures the political inclusion of youths and individuals with disabilities through various mechanisms. For instance, proportional representation in legislative bodies and reserved seats at different government levels guarantee their participation in political processes⁵¹.

Constitutional provisions regarding social justice (Article 42) highlight the rights of socially marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, to participate in state bodies based on inclusive principles. This ensures their representation and involvement in decision-making processes. Additionally, Article 84 mandates the representation of persons with disabilities when political parties nominate candidates for the House of Representatives, reinforcing their political inclusion⁵².

Article 86 of the Constitution of Nepal 2015 mandates the election of eighteen members to the National Assembly, ensuring inclusive representation by including at least one person with a disability or from a minority community. This provision guarantees that individuals with disabilities have a voice in the national legislative body⁵³. Furthermore, Article 176 addresses the formation of Provincial Assemblies, requiring provisions for the representation of persons with disabilities when political parties nominate candidates. This provision extends political inclusion to the provincial level, ensuring representation in regional governance structures⁵⁴.

These constitutional provisions underscore Nepal's commitment to inclusive governance and democratic engagement, reflecting efforts to address the specific needs and rights of youth with disabilities within the broader framework of social justice and political inclusion.

⁵¹ Government of Nepal. (2015). *Constitution of Nepal, 2015*.

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Ibid

b) The Act Relating to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2017⁵⁵

In Nepal's National Legal System, the protection of the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities is outlined through specific legislative measures. Two key pieces of legislation, "The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2074" and the "Accessibility Standards and Information Services Directive for Persons with Disabilities, 2069," play pivotal roles in ensuring accessibility and participation for individuals with disabilities, including youth.

"The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2074" delineates various rights and entitlements for persons with disabilities, including their political participation. Section 11 of this Act is particularly significant as it enshrines the right of persons with disabilities to stand as candidates in elections on an equal footing with others. Moreover, it emphasizes the autonomy of persons with disabilities to exercise their voting rights independently, with or without assistance. This provision is fundamental in fostering the political empowerment and representation of persons with disabilities within the democratic process.

On the other hand, the "Accessibility Standards and Information Services Directive for Persons with Disabilities, 2069" complements the Act by focusing on the physical accessibility of electoral processes. Section 34, clause (g) of this directive mandates the creation of accessible physical structures throughout the electoral process, from voter registration to polling stations. These measures are crucial in ensuring that persons with disabilities can access and participate in elections without encountering physical barriers. However, despite these provisions, challenges persist regarding the accessibility of voter registration centers, polling stations, and counting centers for persons with disabilities. Addressing these gaps is essential to guaranteeing the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process⁵⁶.

While these legislative instruments do not explicitly address the specific needs of youth with disabilities, certain provisions indirectly benefit them. For instance, Section 24 of the Act advocates for the inclusive participation of persons with disabilities in sports activities, which can positively impact the inclusion of youth with disabilities in recreational and competitive sports.

While Nepal's legal framework provides significant protections and provisions for persons with disabilities, including their participation in political processes and accessibility in elections,

⁵⁵ Government of Nepal. (2017). *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017*. Retrieved from <https://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/archives/category/documents/prevailing-law/statutes-acts/rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-act-2017>.

⁵⁶ <https://nfdn.org.np/national-policies/accessibility-guideline-eng/> Access on 2 July 2024.

continued efforts are necessary to address existing gaps and ensure the meaningful inclusion of youth with disabilities across various societal domains.

c) Election Laws

In Nepal's election laws exhibit a mix of enabling and restrictive measures for the provisions regarding civic engagement and political participation of youths with disabilities, reflecting a complex landscape that warrants careful examination.

Firstly, the Election Act, 2074, in Section 13, prohibits individuals from being disqualified as candidates solely on the grounds of 'mental instability' without further defining the term. This provision holds significance as it prevents discrimination against individuals with mental disabilities who may otherwise be excluded from candidacy based on misconceptions or stigma⁵⁷. However, the Voter List Act, 2073, in **Section 23, 2 (ka)**, imposes a restriction by prohibiting individuals with mental instability from voting. This restriction raises concerns regarding the disenfranchisement of persons with mental disabilities and their exclusion from the democratic process⁵⁸.

Furthermore, several sections of election acts, such as **Section 36, sub-section (D)** of the Local Election Act, Section 41, sub-section **(G)** of the Provincial Assembly Member Election Act, and Section 41, sub-section **(G)** of the House of Representatives Member Election Act, limit the assistance available to voters with disabilities to only one member of the household who is authorized to retain the voting right.

Moreover, Section 39 of the Local Level Election Act, 2074, and Section 42 of the Provincial Assembly and House of Representatives Member Election Act, 2074, grant authority to election officials to decide whether to provide assistance to a person in voting. While these provisions aim to accommodate the diverse needs of voters with disabilities, the discretionary nature of assistance provision may lead to inconsistencies and potential biases in the electoral process.

In contrast to these provisions, Section 42 of the Election Commission Act, 2073, underscores the importance of incorporating gender-friendly and inclusive principles in election management tasks. While not directly addressing disability rights, this provision highlights the broader

⁵⁷ Election Commission of Nepal. (2022). *Local Election Report 2022*. Government of Nepal.

⁵⁸ <https://election.gov.np/source/निर्वाचन%20कानून/१-ऐन/२-मतदाता%20नामावली%20ऐन%2C%20२०७३.pdf> Access on 2 July 2024.

commitment to inclusivity and accessibility in electoral processes, which may indirectly benefit youths with disabilities⁵⁹.

Overall, the provisions within Nepal's election laws present a nuanced landscape for the civic engagement and political participation of youths with disabilities. While some provisions aim to mitigate barriers and promote inclusivity, others may inadvertently perpetuate restrictions and challenges. Addressing these complexities requires a comprehensive approach that prioritizes the rights and needs of youths with disabilities within the electoral framework.

d) Local Government Operation Act, 2074

The Local Government Operation Act, 2074, in Section 24 (5), mandates the active involvement of various stakeholders, including youths with disabilities, in the planning and implementation processes of rural municipalities and municipalities. This provision underscores the importance of inclusive governance and civic engagement, recognizing the unique perspectives and contributions of diverse segments of society.

By stipulating the involvement of youths with disabilities alongside other marginalized and underrepresented groups, the Local Government Operation Act, 2017, emphasizes the principle of social inclusion and ensures that their voices are heard in local decision-making processes. Specifically, Article 68(2)(h) of the Act mandates the inclusion of representatives from various groups, including persons with disabilities, to participate in local assemblies and committees. This provision aligns with international frameworks advocating for the participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society, including governance and policy making⁶⁰.

Furthermore, by explicitly mentioning youths with disabilities as stakeholders in local governance, the Act acknowledges their agency and rights as active members of their communities. This recognition not only promotes their political participation but also contributes to their empowerment and the advancement of disability rights at the grassroots level.

Overall, the inclusion of provisions regarding the participation of youths with disabilities in the Local Government Operation Act, 2017, signifies a significant step towards building more inclusive and equitable local governance structures in Nepal.

⁵⁹ <https://lawcommission.gov.np/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Election-Commission-Act-2073-2017.pdf> Access on 2 July 2024

⁶⁰ Government of Nepal. (2017). *Local Government Operation Act, 2074 (2017)*. Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

e) National Youth Council Act, 2072⁶¹

The National Youth Council Act, 2072 (2015), contains a provision that specifically addresses the representation of youths with disabilities in the formation of the Youth Council. Section 5 of the Act highlights the importance of inclusivity by mandating the representation of youth with disabilities in the composition of the Youth Council.

This provision recognizes the unique perspectives and needs of youths with disabilities and aims to ensure their meaningful participation in decision-making processes concerning youth affairs at the national level. By including youths with disabilities in the formation of the Youth Council, the Act promotes their civic engagement and political participation, aligning with principles of social inclusion and equality.

Moreover, this provision reflects Nepal's commitment to upholding the rights of youths with disabilities and fostering their active involvement in shaping policies and programs that affect their lives. By acknowledging the importance of representation and inclusion, the National Youth Council Act, 2072, contributes to creating more inclusive and equitable opportunities for youths with disabilities in the country.

f) The National Youth Policy 2015⁶²

The National Youth Policy of 2015 recognizes the importance of inclusion and participation of youths with disabilities across various domains, including education, arts, literature, culture, sports, entertainment, and special group-focused priorities. This policy underscores the need to address the specific needs and rights of youths with disabilities and provides a framework for promoting their civic engagement and political participation.

In the realm of education, the policy aims to ensure equal access to quality education for youths with disabilities, acknowledging their right to education as enshrined in international conventions and national laws. By prioritizing inclusive education practices, the policy seeks to create an enabling environment where youths with disabilities can acquire knowledge and skills necessary for their personal and professional development.

Regarding arts, literature, and culture, the policy recognizes the creative talents and cultural contributions of youths with disabilities. It advocates for the promotion of inclusive cultural

⁶¹ <https://moys.gov.np/sites/default/files/nitiheru/National%20Youth%20Council%20Act%202072.pdf> Access on 2 July 2024.

⁶² https://www.moys.gov.np/sites/default/files/nitiheru/National%20Youth%20Policy%202072_2.pdf Access on 2 July 2024

activities and initiatives that celebrate diversity and foster social cohesion. By providing opportunities for youths with disabilities to showcase their artistic abilities and cultural heritage, the policy promotes their active participation in cultural life and community activities.

In the domain of sports and entertainment, the policy emphasizes the importance of inclusive sports programs and recreational activities that cater to the needs and interests of youths with disabilities. It calls for the removal of barriers to participation in sports and entertainment events, ensuring equal access and opportunities for youths with disabilities to engage in physical activities and leisure pursuits.

Additionally, the policy highlights special group-focused priorities, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by youths with disabilities and other marginalized groups. It calls for targeted interventions and support mechanisms to address the specific needs of these groups, ensuring their full inclusion and participation in youth-related initiatives and programs.

Overall, the National Youth Policy of 2015 serves as a guiding framework for promoting the civic engagement and political participation of youths with disabilities. By recognizing their rights and advocating for inclusive practices across various sectors, the policy seeks to create an inclusive and enabling environment where all youths, including those with disabilities, can actively contribute to society and realize their full potential.

g) Youth Vision 2025 and the Ten-Year Strategic Plan⁶³

The Youth Vision 2025 and the Ten-Year Strategic Plan include various programs and initiatives aimed at addressing the needs and aspirations of youths, including those with disabilities. Notably, Section 4.3.1 of the Youth Vision 2025 and Section 5.2.2 of the Ten-Year Strategic Plan highlight the Youth Save Program, which specifically targets youths with disabilities.

The inclusion of the Youth Save Program underscores the recognition of the unique challenges faced by youths with disabilities, particularly in terms of financial security and economic empowerment. By focusing on financial literacy, savings, and asset-building opportunities tailored to their needs, the program seeks to enhance their economic resilience and independence.

Furthermore, the Youth Save Program reflects a commitment to promoting civic engagement and political participation of youths with disabilities by addressing socio-economic barriers that may hinder their full participation in society. By providing access to financial resources and opportunities for economic inclusion, the program contributes to improving the socio-economic

⁶³ https://moys.gov.np/sites/default/files/nitiheru/Youth%20Vision-2025_2.pdf Access on 2 July 2024

status and overall well-being of youths with disabilities, empowering them to actively engage in civic and political processes.

The inclusion of the Youth Save Program within the Youth Vision 2025 and the Ten-Year Strategic Plan demonstrates a proactive approach towards promoting the rights and interests of youths with disabilities and fostering their meaningful participation in society. Specifically, the sections of these policies that highlight financial inclusion and empowerment initiatives provide a solid foundation for these commitments.

h) Provincial Government, Youth Management Policies

The Provincial Government, Youth Management Policy reflects varying approaches to prioritizing youth engagement and participation across different provinces in Nepal. While the central government has emphasized youth issues, only Gandaki Province has established a dedicated ministry for youth and sports. In other provinces, efforts have been made to establish youth councils to address the needs and aspirations of young people, including those with disabilities.

In Karnali Province, the establishment of the "Karnali Youth and Sports Council" signifies a commitment to promoting youth development and engagement, including opportunities for participation in sports and recreational activities. By creating a dedicated council, the provincial government aims to address the specific needs and concerns of youths, including those with disabilities, and provide platforms for their civic engagement and political participation.

Similarly, Bagmati Province has taken steps to prioritize youth empowerment by establishing both the "Province Youth Council" and the "Province Sports Council." These councils serve as mechanisms for engaging youths in decision-making processes and promoting their active involvement in sports and recreational pursuits.

In Lumbini Province, the formation of the "Youth Council" underscores the province's commitment to youth participation and empowerment. This council serves as a forum for addressing the diverse needs and interests of youths, including those with disabilities, and advocating for their rights and inclusion in provincial policies and programs. By providing a platform for youths to voice their concerns and aspirations, the provincial government aims to foster a culture of civic engagement and political participation among young people across the province.

i) Youth Friendly Local Governance⁶⁴

The concept of Youth Friendly Local Governance incorporates provisions aimed at promoting the civic engagement and political participation of youths with disabilities, along with other marginalized groups, within the governance framework. These provisions emphasize inclusivity and representation to ensure that the voices and needs of youths with disabilities are adequately addressed in local decision-making processes. Specifically, Section 3.1.2 of the Youth Friendly Local Governance framework highlights the importance of inclusivity in governance.

One key aspect of the concept is the inclusion of youths from marginalized communities, including persons with disabilities, in the mainstreaming process of governance. Section 4.2.1 emphasizes the recognition of diversity and representation, ensuring that the perspectives and experiences of youths with disabilities are considered in local governance initiatives and policies.

Furthermore, the establishment of youth-friendly local levels by 2030, as outlined in Section 5.3, demonstrates a commitment to creating environments that are accessible and accommodating to youths with disabilities. This commitment includes providing special arrangements for youths belonging to sexual and gender minorities, persons with disabilities, and other special categories in government processes. These arrangements may involve accessibility accommodations, targeted outreach efforts, and tailored support services to facilitate the active participation of youths with disabilities in local governance activities.

Additionally, the formation of a Sports Development Committee at the local level, as mandated by Section 6.4, presents an opportunity to promote inclusivity and representation. The committee is required to ensure at least 40% representation of women and inclusive representation of sexual and gender minorities, persons with disabilities, Dalits, indigenous communities, and other marginalized groups. This provision aims to create spaces where youths with disabilities can actively engage in sports and recreational activities, contributing to their overall well-being and social inclusion.

⁶⁴ <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-01/UNDP-NP-YFLG-Digdarshan.pdf> Access on 2 July 2024.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodological Approach

The study adopted a qualitative research approach, which facilitated the acquisition of in-depth information from individuals regarding their experiences and perspectives on civic engagement and political participation. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced challenges and opportunities faced by youth with disabilities in Nepal. The research methodology comprised several components, including a desk review of relevant documents, the development of an inclusivity checklist, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and an online survey targeting stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as political parties.

3.2 Desk Review

The desk review involved a thorough examination of documents related to the status of youth with disabilities in civic engagement and political participation. This included an assessment of current practices, identification of gaps, and review of international policies and practices. Additionally, the study analyzed manifestos of various political parties to understand their stance and commitments towards the inclusion of youth with disabilities.

3.3 Preparation and Sampling

In October 2023, the study team conducted a survey through a meticulous six-step process. The study design, developed through an extensive review of relevant documents, clarified the scope and requirements of the project. The study involved interviews with members of OPDs, individuals with disabilities, local government representatives, political leaders, and representatives from youth-related NGOs. The identification of sample respondents was a coordinated effort led by BYAN Nepal. This comprehensive approach, integrating literature review, fieldwork, and collaboration, ensured the survey's success.

Selection of Research Sites

The study team selected Biratnagar and Kathmandu districts as the primary sites for the study. These cities were chosen to cover the diverse demography, who are residing from various other districts and a diverse understanding of perspectives on civic engagement and political

participation, focusing specifically on the participation of youth with disabilities. Additionally, an online survey was conducted with persons with disabilities across various provinces and districts, covering:

Karnali Province: Surkhet, Salyan, Dailekh

Madhesh Province: Sarlahi

Bagmati Province: Makwanpur, Kavre, Chitwan, Lalitpur, Dhading, Kathmandu

Koshi Province: Udayapur, Dhankuta, Morang

Lumbini Province: Dang, Rupandehi, Bardiya

Coordination was also established with local governments such as Kathmandu- metropolitan city, Kritipur municipality, Gokarneshower municipality, Kageshowri municipality, Mahalaxmi Municipality-Lalitpur metropolitan city, and Tarkeshower municipality. Additionally, views from fraternal organizations within political parties were sought. Detailed lists of respondents and stakeholders are provided in *Annex*.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection involved direct engagement in the two cities of Kathmandu and Biratnagar. The study team conducted site visits, starting with Biratnagar, and subsequently moving to Kathmandu, where approximately half of the interviews and group discussions took place. Targeted interviews were conducted with political leaders, including the Provincial Chair of the Nepali Congress, communist party of Nepal Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), Communist Party of Nepal Maoist Centre, Rastriya Swotanttra Party (RSP), the President of Nepal Student Union, and the Ward Chairperson of Kathmandu Metropolitan Ward-4. Additionally, representatives from local government offices in the Kathmandu valley were interviewed.

For group discussions, the study engaged with NGO representatives from organizations such as Karuna Foundation, Yowalaya, Kathmandu, Sagarmatha Community Development Center, and BYAN representatives in Morang. These discussions provided valuable insights into the experiences and challenges faced by youth with disabilities in their civic and political participation.

Table 1: Details of KII, FGD and Online Survey

SN	Level	With	Number of KII	FGD
1	Local Level representative	Ward chairperson	1	

2	Local Level official	Department head	6	
3	Provincial level	Election commission and provincial parliament member	1	
4	Representative of Political Party	CPN- UML, Nepali congress, CPN Maoist and Independent party, Parliament member (Koshi province)	7	
5	Fraternal organization of political parties	CPN- UML, Nepali congress, CPN Maoist and Independent party	5	
6	NGOs	NGO federation, Yowalaya, Sagarmatha, Karuna Foundation, and NLR		4
7	Persons with Disabilities	from 6 provinces	23	
8	OPDs	BAYAN- Morang		2
	Total		43	6

Data collection tools based on research questions and methods of research developed. The questionnaire was prepared in consultation with the BYAN team and study team and finalized in accordance with the requirements specified by need of study.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected through various methods were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the status of youth with disabilities in civic engagement and political participation in Nepal.

a) Quantitative Data Analysis

- **Survey Data:** The data obtained from the online survey were analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their levels of civic engagement and political participation.

b) Qualitative Data Analysis

- **Transcription and Coding:** Interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then coded using thematic analysis. This involved identifying significant themes, patterns, and categories that emerged from the data.
- **Thematic Analysis:** The themes were developed by systematically reviewing the transcripts and organizing the data into coherent categories. Key themes included barriers

to participation, facilitators of engagement, experiences with political processes, and recommendations for improvement.

- **Triangulation:** The study employed triangulation by cross-referencing data from the desk review, interviews, focus group discussions, and survey responses to validate findings and ensure robustness.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to strict ethical standards to ensure the integrity of the research process and the protection of participants' rights. The following ethical considerations were implemented:

Informed Consent

- **Voluntary Participation:** All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.
- **Consent Forms:** Written consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study. For online surveys, a digital consent form was provided.
- **Data Protection:** All personal data collected during the study was kept confidential and stored securely. Access to data was restricted to the research team only.
- **Anonymization:** To protect participants' identities, all data were anonymized. Identifiers were removed from transcripts, survey responses, and any published reports.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** The research team was trained in cultural sensitivity and disability awareness to ensure respectful and appropriate interactions with participants.
- **Support Services:** Participants were provided with information on support services and resources in case discussing their experiences caused any distress.

2.7 Limitation of the Study

The survey methodology adopted, along with the survey tools and techniques used to collect primary and secondary data, were guided by the scope and objectives of the survey. This study is based on a selected sample, and the underlying statistical limitations of the sampling method may be inherited in this study as well. The findings are mainly based on the answers of respondents obtained through KII, online surveys, and FGD. The study team attempted to remain unbiased and

neutral to the extent possible during data collection. Consequently, the responses may have limitations such as recall bias.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In delving into the status of youth with disabilities in civic engagement and political participation in Nepal, the research methodology encompassed a multifaceted approach, including FGDs, KIIs, and an online survey. These methods were instrumental in capturing a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and perspectives of this demographic. However, the cornerstone of our investigation lies in the meticulous examination of field observations, meticulously detailed based on the collated data. Throughout the analytical process, a critical lens was applied, emphasizing the correlation between existing policies and their tangible implementation on the ground. As such, the forthcoming findings encapsulate not only the voices and narratives of youth with disabilities but also shed light on the systemic challenges and opportunities embedded within Nepal's socio-political landscape.

4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Perspectives and Initiatives of Nepali Political Parties towards Youth with Disabilities

a) Nepali Congress

The Nepali Congress, as one of the major political parties in Nepal, has enshrined constitutional provisions aimed at ensuring the representation of marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, in governance structures. However, despite such provisions, meaningful inclusion remains a challenge. Barriers such as tokenism, inadequate support structures, and systemic biases may hinder the effective participation of youth with disabilities within the party.

As the student wing affiliated with the Nepali Congress, the Nepal Student Union serves as a critical platform for youth engagement and activism within the political landscape. Recognizing the importance of disability inclusion, the Union has directed its efforts towards involving youth with disabilities in advisory committees and decision-making processes.⁶⁵ By prioritizing disability and inclusion within its organizational structure, the Nepal Student Union demonstrates a proactive approach towards fostering diversity and representation. Advisory roles provide a platform for voicing concerns and perspectives, yet the true measure of inclusion lies in the ability of youth with disabilities to actively shape policies and agendas within the party.

⁶⁵ Interview with Dujang Sherpa, President, Nepal Student Union.

b) Communist Party of Nepal (UML)

The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) stands as a formidable force in Nepali politics, renowned for its emphasis on grassroots mobilization and youth empowerment. Within the party's organizational framework, provisions have been made to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in political activities. The CPN (UML) party in Nepal ensures the inclusion of persons with disabilities through its internal policies, which mandate representation in various party structures. Specifically, Section 5 of the party's statute requires that persons with disabilities be included in decision-making bodies to promote their participation and representation⁶⁶. This commitment aligns with broader efforts to ensure inclusive political processes in Nepal. However, despite the establishment of these quotas, the actual engagement and involvement of individuals with disabilities in political processes remain limited. This discrepancy between policy and practice raises questions about the effectiveness of existing mechanisms in enabling meaningful participation. Potential barriers such as lack of accessibility, social stigma, and limited resources may hinder the full integration of youth with disabilities into the political sphere within the UML. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to not only create opportunities for participation but also to address systemic barriers and promote a culture of inclusivity within the party.

c) Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre)

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) emphasizes proportional representation in committee formations, with a focus on including various marginalized groups. Sections 34, 35, and Section 38 of the CPN Maoist Center's Party Constitution 2078 outline provisions for the participation of persons with disabilities in the party's committees and nominations. These sections ensure that individuals with disabilities are included in decision-making processes and have opportunities for representation within the party structure⁶⁷. While the party's constitutional provisions aim to ensure the representation of persons with disabilities, challenges persist in translating these aspirations into tangible outcomes. Despite efforts to promote inclusivity, systemic barriers and social stigma may deter the active participation of youth with disabilities within the Maoist Centre. To address these challenges, the party must prioritize targeted

⁶⁶ [https://system.cpnml.org/parse-image/623?hash=\\$2y\\$10\\$qfm9j7XveTvU.2I2HqQ83eZk4/Pj0zjoslcngvipSO6mMlChDBYgu](https://system.cpnml.org/parse-image/623?hash=$2y$10$qfm9j7XveTvU.2I2HqQ83eZk4/Pj0zjoslcngvipSO6mMlChDBYgu) Access on 2 July 2024.

⁶⁷ https://cdn.cpnmc.one/media/Party-Bidhan_final-078-05-13.pdf Access on 2 July 2024

interventions, including awareness campaigns, accessibility enhancements, and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of youth with disabilities. Moreover, fostering an inclusive and supportive organizational culture that values diversity and actively promotes the participation of individuals with disabilities is essential for realizing the party's commitment to social justice and equality.

d) Rashtriya Swotantra Party (National Independent Party)⁶⁸

Conversely, the **Rashtriya Swotantra Party** appears to lack specific provisions addressing the participation or representation of marginalized communities, including persons with disabilities. This absence highlights a gap in the party's approach to inclusivity and raises questions about its commitment to diversity within its ranks. While the party may prioritize certain demographics, such as women and youth, the exclusion of persons with disabilities underscores the need for a more comprehensive and intersectional approach to political representation. Without explicit measures to address the needs and concerns of marginalized groups, including youth with disabilities, the party risks perpetuating inequalities and marginalization within the political sphere. To rectify this situation, the party must reevaluate its policies and practices to ensure that they are inclusive and reflective of the diverse needs and aspirations of all segments of society. This may involve the formulation of targeted initiatives, engagement with disability rights advocates, and the establishment of internal mechanisms to promote diversity and representation within the party's structures and decision-making processes.

4.2.2 Insights from Fraternal Organizations within Political Parties

The civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal is an area of growing concern and importance. Through consultations with representatives from five key fraternal organizations—namely the National Federation of Disability Organization Nepal, the National Democratic Disabled Organization, the Unified Socialist Party of Nepal, affiliated youth organizations, and the Socialist Disability Organization Nepal—several critical insights have been gleaned. These insights shed light on the current status, challenges, and progress related to the involvement of youth with disabilities in the civic and political spheres in Nepal.

a) Representation and Participation of Youth with Disabilities

⁶⁸ <https://rspnepal.org> Assess on 2 July 2024

The representation and participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal's political landscape is a multifaceted issue. From the consultations, it became evident that while there are efforts to include youth with disabilities, their actual representation in decision-making processes remains limited. Representatives from the consulted organizations highlighted that although there are policies in place to ensure inclusion, the real-world application of these policies falls short.

Youth with disabilities face numerous barriers that hinder their participation. These barriers include physical accessibility issues, societal attitudes, and a lack of support systems. Despite these challenges, there are individuals and groups within the disabled community who are actively advocating for better representation. These advocates are pushing for more inclusive practices and policies that truly reflect the needs and aspirations of youth with disabilities.

b) Mandated Seat Reservations

A critical aspect of the political inclusion of youth with disabilities in Nepal is the constitutional mandate for seat reservations. According to the representatives from all five organizations consulted, the constitution of Nepal requires that seats be reserved for persons with disabilities in central committees. This provision is designed to ensure that individuals with disabilities have a platform to voice their concerns and contribute to political decision-making. However, the implementation of this mandate is significantly lacking. The gap between the policy and its practice is wide, resulting in insufficient representation of youth with disabilities. This discrepancy stems from several factors, including bureaucratic inertia, lack of political will, and systemic challenges within political parties. The weak enforcement of the seat reservation policy means that many youths with disabilities remain on the periphery of political processes, unable to influence decisions that affect their lives.

The lack of robust implementation mechanisms also means that the reserved seats often go unfilled, or when filled, the appointees may not be adequately empowered to make a meaningful impact. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance with the constitutional provisions.

c) Advocacy and Progress

The role of advocacy in enhancing the participation of youth with disabilities cannot be overstated. The involvement of youth with disabilities in civic and political arenas has largely been driven by sustained advocacy efforts. These efforts are spearheaded by individuals with disabilities and organizations that represent them, striving to create a more inclusive political landscape.

Advocacy has led to some progress, notably in raising awareness about the rights and capabilities of individuals with disabilities. These efforts have also resulted in incremental policy changes and a gradual shift in societal attitudes. However, the progress is uneven and varies significantly across different political entities and levels of government.

One of the primary achievements of advocacy efforts has been the inclusion of disability issues in political discourse. This inclusion, however, is not always matched by tangible actions or policy implementations. Many political entities still view disability inclusion as a peripheral issue rather than a core component of their agendas. This disconnect highlights the need for continued and intensified advocacy to ensure that the rights of individuals with disabilities are not only recognized but also actively promoted and protected.

Despite these challenges, advocacy efforts have managed to secure some victories. For instance, there have been instances where disability rights activists have successfully lobbied for accessible voting processes and better representation in local government bodies. These successes, while noteworthy, are still far from achieving comprehensive and systemic change.

d) Challenges in Political Awareness and Training

One of the most significant barriers to the political participation of youth with disabilities is the lack of political awareness and training. The consultations revealed that many youths with disabilities are not adequately informed about political processes, their rights, or the avenues available for political engagement. This lack of awareness significantly hinders their ability to participate effectively in political activities.

Training and capacity-building programs for youth with disabilities are scarce. Most political parties do not prioritize these initiatives, leaving many young individuals with disabilities without the necessary skills and knowledge to engage in political discourse. This gap in training and education means that even when opportunities for participation arise, many youths with disabilities are not equipped to take full advantage of them.

Furthermore, political parties have not shown sufficient interest in addressing the specific issues faced by individuals with disabilities. This neglect is partly due to a lack of understanding of disability issues and partly due to the marginalization of these issues within broader political agendas. As a result, youth with disabilities often feel alienated and disengaged from political processes.

To address these challenges, there is a need for targeted educational and training programs that focus on political literacy, advocacy skills, and leadership development for youth with disabilities. These programs should be designed to empower individuals with disabilities, enabling them to participate more actively and effectively in political and civic life.

e) Limited Opportunities and Representation

Despite the constitutional provision for reservation quotas, the reality is that marginalized individuals, particularly those from conflicted backgrounds, are not provided with adequate opportunities to participate in political processes. The representation of individuals with disabilities within fraternal organizations is limited, which in turn restricts their ability to contribute to political activities.

The restricted representation is partly due to structural barriers within political parties and fraternal organizations. These barriers include entrenched political hierarchies, lack of inclusivity in party practices, and inadequate support for individuals with disabilities. As a result, many youths with disabilities who are willing to engage in political activities find themselves sidelined or discouraged.

Additionally, political affiliations can sometimes deter individuals from participating in organizations that do not fully support their inclusion or address their needs. The perceived decrease in contributions from individuals with disabilities is often attributed to the lack of genuine commitment from political parties to foster an inclusive environment.

To improve representation and participation, it is crucial to address these structural barriers and create a more inclusive political culture. This includes implementing policies that actively promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities, providing adequate support and resources, and fostering an environment that values and respects the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their abilities.

f) Findings of consultations

The findings from the consultations with the five fraternal organizations highlight the significant challenges and opportunities related to the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal. While there are constitutional provisions for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities, the implementation of these provisions remains weak and inconsistent.

Advocacy efforts have led to some progress, but there is still a long way to go in terms of achieving full inclusion and representation. The lack of political awareness, training, and genuine interest

from political parties continues to hinder the participation of youth with disabilities. Moreover, the limited opportunities for representation within fraternal organizations further exacerbate the marginalization of individuals with disabilities.

The journey towards full inclusion and representation of youth with disabilities in Nepal's political and civic spheres is ongoing. While there have been some positive developments, significant challenges remain. It is imperative that all stakeholders work together to create an environment where individuals with disabilities can fully participate and contribute to the political and civic life of the nation. Only then can the true potential of these individuals be realized, and their rights and aspirations be fully respected and fulfilled.

4.2.3 Field Work Observations on the Status of Youth with Disabilities in Civic Engagement and Political Participation in Koshi Province, Nepal

During our fieldwork in Koshi Province, researchers closely observed the significant efforts made towards organizing and structuring committees focused on addressing the needs and rights of persons with disabilities. Key among these efforts is the establishment of the Provincial-level Disability Management Committee and various Local-level Disability Committees. These committees have been instrumental in advocating for and implementing policies to support persons with disabilities.

Our assessment revealed that there are 83 OPDs formed within the province, with 70 currently active. These OPDs play a vital role in serving as platforms for advocacy, ensuring that the voices of persons with disabilities are heard and their rights are promoted. The active OPDs are involved in a range of activities, from raising awareness about disability rights to participating in policy-making processes. They provide crucial support networks for persons with disabilities and work towards their social and economic inclusion.

Through researchers' interactions with local stakeholders and analysis of financial records, we found that advocacy efforts led by the NFDN in Koshi Province have led to significant financial commitments from local governments. Rural Municipalities have allocated NPR 150,000.00, while Municipalities have allocated NPR 200,000.00 annually to empower persons with disabilities. These financial allocations are a direct result of sustained advocacy efforts and are used to fund various initiatives aimed at improving the lives of persons with disabilities.

These funds are primarily directed towards projects that enhance accessibility, such as building ramps and accessible toilets, providing assistive devices, and conducting skills development

programs. Additionally, the funds support educational initiatives, including the provision of free education and the distribution of scholarships to students with disabilities. These scholarships are designed to alleviate the financial burden on families and encourage higher enrollment and retention rates of students with disabilities in schools. By fostering an inclusive educational environment, these measures help to ensure that students with disabilities have equal opportunities to succeed academically.

4.2.4 Election Commission Nepal

According to the Election Commission of Nepal, political parties currently lack established mechanisms to actively engage youth with disabilities in their processes. This absence of dedicated strategies or programs signifies a critical gap in the political inclusion of this demographic. The Election Commission, however, has taken noteworthy steps to address this issue. Specifically, the Commission has implemented several mechanisms to make the electoral process more accessible to persons with disabilities, including youth. This initiative is part of a broader effort led by the Chief of the Election Commission, who has prioritized facilitating access for youth with disabilities to ensure their inclusivity in the election process⁶⁹.

During consultations, it was revealed that the measures put in place by the Election Commission include:

- **Accessible Voting Booths:** Ensuring that polling stations are physically accessible to individuals with mobility impairments.
- **Voter Education Programs:** Tailored educational materials and sessions to inform youth with disabilities about their voting rights and the electoral process.
- **Assistance at Polling Stations:** Provision of assistance for those with visual or hearing impairments to help them cast their votes independently and confidentially.

Despite these efforts, the lack of proactive engagement from political parties remains a significant barrier to the full political participation of youth with disabilities. Without structured programs or policies from these parties, the representation and voice of disabled youth in political discourse and decision-making processes remain minimal.

⁶⁹ Interview with Tirtha Adhikari, Election Commission Nepal.

4.2.5 Local government's Perspective

During the fieldwork, consultations with local government officials revealed significant gaps and challenges concerning the status of youth with disabilities in civic engagement and political participation. The findings from these consultations are detailed below:

a) Lack of Data on Persons with Disabilities

In Ward-4 of Kathmandu Metropolitan, there is a notable absence of comprehensive data on persons with disabilities. Neither the ward office nor the metropolitan office maintains records on individuals with disabilities. This lack of data presents a substantial barrier to understanding the specific needs and challenges faced by this demographic, thereby impeding the development of targeted interventions and inclusive policies.

b) Awareness and Planned Initiatives

Despite the lack of data, there is a high level of awareness about disability rights among local government officials in Ward-4. The ward office is planning to distribute wheelchairs to persons with physical disabilities, demonstrating a commitment to supporting individuals with mobility impairments. Additionally, the acting head of the Social Development Department at the Kathmandu Metropolitan office mentioned plans to collect precise data on people with disabilities. This data collection initiative aims to facilitate the engagement of youth with disabilities in various groups, networks, and support systems, potentially enhancing their civic and political participation.

c) Regional Disparities in Focus and Mechanisms

Contrasting with the initiatives in Ward-4 and the Kathmandu Metropolitan office, other municipalities such as Kirtipur, Kageshwari, and Mahalaxmi have not prioritized the needs of persons with disabilities. These municipalities also lack adequate data on individuals with disabilities and do not have proper mechanisms in place for engaging youth with disabilities. This discrepancy highlights a regional disparity in the focus on and support for disability inclusion across different local governments within the Kathmandu Valley.

4.7 Youth with Disabilities in Civic Engagement and Political Participation: Perspectives from NGOs

The consultation meetings with NGOs shed light on the diverse experiences and initiatives aimed at enhancing the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal. The findings from these interactions are summarized below:

a) Karuna Foundation: Promoting Engagement in Community-Level Groups

The Karuna Foundation emerged as a leading organization actively promoting the involvement of youth with disabilities in various institutions, particularly at the community level. Through the establishment of 58 OPD centers and the provision of help desk support, the foundation has facilitated the mainstreaming of disability issues. As a result, youth with disabilities are assuming crucial roles within their communities, contributing significantly to changing societal perspectives on disability. Their active participation in local planning processes and engagement in social work within committees underscores their potential as agents of change.

b) NLR Nepal - Kosi Province: Empowering Youth through Skill Development

NLR Nepal - Kosi Province office stands out for its commitment to empowering youth with disabilities through skill development and job placement support. The organization's efforts have resulted in tangible outcomes, with youth who have acquired skills through their programs demonstrating the ability to earn a sustainable income. This success story not only highlights the potential for economic empowerment among persons with disabilities but also challenges stereotypes about their capabilities.

c) Sagarmatha Community Development Center: Limited Awareness and Inclusive Policies

In contrast to the proactive approach of some NGOs, the Sagarmatha Community Development Center in Morang exhibits limited awareness about disability issues. While the organization includes persons with disabilities in various groups from an inclusion perspective, it lacks specific policies to actively engage youth with disabilities in its program operation guidelines. This gap underscores the importance of fostering a more inclusive organizational culture and developing targeted strategies to address the needs of youth with disabilities.

d) Yuwalay: Opportunities for Enhanced Inclusivity

Similarly, Yuwalay, a youth-led organization based in Kathmandu, lacks comprehensive policies and procedures to actively engage both youth and individuals with disabilities in the youth movement. While the organization may not be well-versed in disability sector issues presently, there is an opportunity to enhance inclusivity by incorporating disability-inclusive practices into its operations and advocacy efforts.

4.2.6 Engagement of Youth with Disabilities in Non-Governmental and Governmental Organizations: Insight of person with disability

The findings from fieldwork conducted among individuals with disabilities across six provinces in Nepal provide valuable insights into the engagement of youth with disabilities in both non-governmental and governmental organizations.

a) Representation and Provisions in Organizations

A significant aspect highlighted by the fieldwork is the presence of provisions within the constitutions of proactive organizations for the representation of disabled youths on their boards. The majority of respondents (82%) confirmed the existence of such provisions, indicating a positive step towards inclusivity within organizational structures. However, a notable portion (8%) expressed uncertainty, suggesting a need for clearer guidelines or communication regarding these provisions.

b) Integration of Youth Focus in Policies and Programs

Concerning the integration of youth focus into the annual policies and programs of disability-focused organizations, opinions were varied. While over half of the respondents (52%) affirmed the presence of such a focus, indicating a recognition of the importance of youth engagement, a significant proportion (35%) disagreed. This disparity suggests potential gaps in awareness or implementation of youth-centric initiatives within organizational frameworks that warrant further investigation.

c) Prioritization of Youth with Disabilities in Organizational Programs

The fieldwork also revealed discrepancies in the prioritization of youth with disabilities in organizational programs. Only a quarter of respondents (26%) reported that these individuals are targeted in organizational initiatives. This finding underscores the need for greater attention to the specific needs and aspirations of youth with disabilities within programmatic interventions to ensure their meaningful inclusion and participation.

d) Inclusion in Organizational Boards

Regarding the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the boards of non-governmental organizations, the overwhelming majority of respondents (87%) indicated that such inclusion does not occur. However, a notable minority (13%) reported instances of affirmative inclusion, suggesting potential models of best practice that could inform efforts to foster greater diversity and representation within organizational leadership structures.

e) Alignment of Government Policies with the Needs of Youth with Disabilities

The fieldwork findings regarding the alignment of government policies with the needs of youth with disabilities are concerning. A significant majority of respondents reported that local (74%), provincial (78%), and federal (82%) government initiatives do not prioritize the needs of youth with disabilities. This underscores systemic shortcomings in recognizing and addressing the specific challenges faced by this demographic within governmental frameworks, highlighting the urgent need for policy reforms and targeted interventions.

f) Participation in Political Parties

Furthermore, the fieldwork explored the participation of persons with disabilities in positions of authority within political parties. The overwhelming majority of respondents (91%) reported the absence of such participation, except for those affiliated with disability-related fraternal organizations. This highlights the marginalization of persons with disabilities within mainstream political structures and underscores the imperative for inclusive policies and practices within political spheres.

4.2.7 Youth-Friendly Local Governance

a) Financial Incentives for Youth-Friendly Governance

During consultation meetings, it was highlighted that the National Youth Council has initiated a program aimed at promoting youth-friendly local governance by providing a financial incentive of NPR 500,000 to each of the 11 local governments in every province. However, insights from KIIs suggest that the continuity of this program has been irregular, raising concerns about its long-term effectiveness in empowering youth, including those with disabilities, in civic participation and decision-making processes.

b) Local Youth Council Regulation

Discussions during consultation meetings revealed the establishment of a local youth council regulation, which envisions a Youth Development Committee. However, KIIs indicated a significant oversight in this regulation—the absence of provisions ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the committee. This finding underscores the need to address accessibility and inclusivity barriers to ensure the meaningful participation of youth with disabilities in local governance structures.

c) Initiatives for Disability Networks

Consultation meetings highlighted proactive initiatives by several municipalities, such as Bhimeshwar Municipality, Dolakha and Nepalgunj Sub-Metropolitan City, Banke and others, to develop procedures for establishing disability networks extending to the ward level. Insights from KIIs underscored the importance of these initiatives in recognizing and addressing the specific needs and concerns of persons with disabilities within local communities. By fostering networks and support structures at the grassroots level, these municipalities aim to enhance the participation of youth with disabilities in civic affairs and decision-making processes.

The findings from consultation meetings and KIIs underscore both promising practices and critical gaps in promoting civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities. While initiatives such as financial incentives for youth-friendly governance and the establishment of disability networks show progress, challenges such as irregular program continuity and the lack of inclusivity in local governance structures remain. Addressing these gaps requires concerted efforts to prioritize accessibility, representation, and empowerment for all youth, including those with disabilities, in civic and political processes.

4.3 Identified Gaps

4.3.1 Gaps in political participation of Youth with Disabilities

The discussions surrounding the involvement of youth with disabilities in Nepali political parties reveal a significant gap between policy formulation and effective implementation. While parties have indeed formulated policies and procedures to actively involve youth with disabilities in their interventions, the translation of these policies into meaningful action remains a challenge. Despite the existence of inclusive measures, such as reserved quotas and advisory committees, political parties have struggled to mainstream youth with disabilities into their political interventions.

One notable observation is the limited representation of youth with disabilities in active roles within political parties. Although a small number of youths with disabilities may be present at the local level committees, their participation is often passive, and they may not hold influential positions within the party structure. This lack of active engagement suggests a disconnect between the intention to involve youth with disabilities and the actual opportunities provided for their meaningful participation.

Furthermore, the president of the Nepal Student Union highlights the broader issue of priority accorded to persons with disabilities within mainstream political parties. Despite the presence of

members with disabilities in committees, leaders often fail to give them the necessary attention and support to actively contribute to decision-making processes. This lack of recognition and support further marginalizes youth with disabilities within political parties, hindering their ability to voice concerns and shape agendas effectively.

Additionally, many persons with disabilities and youth with disabilities are not actively involved in political activities, indicating a broader trend of exclusion and disengagement. This lack of participation may stem from various factors, including social stigma, inaccessible political environments, and limited opportunities for meaningful engagement. Without proactive efforts to address these barriers, both political parties and youth with disabilities will continue to face challenges in achieving meaningful participation in the political process.

In conclusion, the gap between policy formulation and effective implementation, coupled with the lack of priority accorded to persons with disabilities within mainstream political parties, underscores the urgent need for proactive measures. To bridge this gap and promote inclusive political participation, political parties must go beyond tokenistic gestures and take concrete steps to create accessible and supportive environments for youth with disabilities. Similarly, youth with disabilities must be empowered to assert their rights and demand equal opportunities for participation. Only through collaborative efforts and a commitment to inclusivity can Nepali political parties truly reflect the diversity and aspirations of all segments of society.

4.3.2 Gap in Implementation of Policies and Provisions for Youth with Disabilities

The consultations with representatives from the five organizations revealed a significant gap between the established policies and their actual implementation. This gap highlights a critical area of concern that hampers the effective civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal.

a) Weak Implementation of Policies

Despite the existence of constitutional mandates and policies designed to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities, the actual implementation of these provisions remains weak. The gap between policy and practice is stark, with many political entities failing to fully enforce the reserved seat mandates for individuals with disabilities. This weak implementation results in the underrepresentation of youth with disabilities in central committees and other political bodies.

Several factors contribute to this weak implementation. Firstly, there is a lack of robust enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with the constitutional provisions. Without clear

guidelines and accountability measures, political parties and governmental bodies often overlook or ignore the mandates. Secondly, there is insufficient monitoring to track the progress and effectiveness of these policies. This lack of oversight allows non-compliance to go unchecked. Additionally, there is a lack of resources allocated towards the implementation of these policies. Adequate funding, infrastructure, and support services are necessary to facilitate the participation of youth with disabilities, but these are often lacking. This resource deficit further exacerbates the gap between policy and practice, leaving many individuals with disabilities without the necessary support to engage in political processes.

b) Lack of Political Consciousness and Will

Another significant factor contributing to the gap is the lack of political consciousness and will among political leaders. Many political leaders are not fully aware of the issues faced by individuals with disabilities or the importance of their inclusion in political processes. This lack of awareness translates into a lack of prioritization for disability issues within political agendas.

Even when political leaders are aware of the policies, there is often a lack of genuine commitment to implementing them. Disability issues are frequently seen as peripheral rather than central to political discourse, resulting in a lack of proactive measures to ensure the inclusion of youth with disabilities. This lack of political will is evident in the limited efforts made to create accessible political environments or to provide the necessary training and support for individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, the political culture in Nepal often does not support or encourage the participation of marginalized groups, including individuals with disabilities. This cultural barrier, combined with the lack of political consciousness, creates an environment where the rights and needs of youth with disabilities are consistently overlooked.

c) Discrepancy in Advocacy and Action

While advocacy efforts have led to some awareness and policy development, there is a noticeable discrepancy between advocacy and tangible action. Advocacy organizations have been successful in bringing disability issues to the forefront of political discourse, but translating this advocacy into concrete actions and outcomes remains a challenge. This discrepancy highlights the need for stronger collaboration between advocacy groups and political entities to ensure that policies are not only developed but also effectively implemented.

d) Limited Training and Awareness Programs

The lack of political awareness and training among youth with disabilities further widens the gap between policy and participation. Many individuals with disabilities are not equipped with the knowledge or skills needed to engage in political processes effectively. This lack of training and awareness stems from insufficient educational programs focused on political literacy and advocacy for individuals with disabilities.

Political parties and governmental bodies have not invested adequately in training programs that can empower youth with disabilities. Without these programs, individuals with disabilities are unable to fully understand their rights, the political landscape, and how they can actively participate in civic and political life. This lack of empowerment contributes to the low levels of participation and representation among youth with disabilities.

e) Structural Barriers within Political Parties

The structural barriers within political parties also contribute to the gap between policy and practice. Political parties often have entrenched hierarchies and practices that are not inclusive of individuals with disabilities. These structural barriers include inaccessible meeting venues, lack of accommodation for different types of disabilities, and party practices that do not consider the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Moreover, the political parties' internal policies and attitudes towards disability inclusion are often outdated or insufficient. There is a need for political parties to adopt more inclusive policies and practices that actively promote the participation of individuals with disabilities. This includes revising party constitutions, providing disability awareness training for party members, and ensuring that party activities are accessible to all.

4.3.3 Identified Gaps in General

The field observations indicate a significant gap in the active participation of persons with disabilities, particularly youth with disabilities, in these committees. The data highlights a pervasive underrepresentation of youth with disabilities in decision-making processes and committee activities.

This lack of active participation can be attributed to several factors. First, there is a general lack of awareness and understanding among committee members about the unique needs and potential contributions of youth with disabilities. Second, youth with disabilities often face additional barriers such as stigma, lack of accessible transportation, and limited opportunities for capacity building. These barriers hinder their ability to participate fully in committee activities and

decision-making processes. Consequently, the unique perspectives and requirements of young individuals with disabilities are often overlooked in policy and program development. This oversight can lead to the implementation of policies and programs that do not fully address the needs of youth with disabilities or harness their potential for civic engagement and leadership.

Similarly, there is a clear gap in the commitment of political parties to actively involve youth with disabilities, resulting in their underrepresentation and a lack of advocacy for their needs and rights within political platforms. Although the Election Commission has made progress in making voting accessible, broader civic engagement activities remain largely inaccessible to youth with disabilities. This includes their participation in public debates, political campaigns, and policy-making processes. Additionally, there is a significant lack of comprehensive data and research on the political participation of youth with disabilities, making it challenging to develop informed policies and measure progress effectively. Moreover, many political entities and institutions lack adequate training and awareness regarding disability rights and inclusivity, leading to unintentional exclusion and ineffective policy implementation.

In the meantime, a critical gap identified during the consultations is the insufficient data on persons with disabilities at both the ward and municipal levels. This lack of data is indicative of a broader issue: a general lack of administrative awareness and prioritization of disability rights. Without accurate data, it is challenging to design and implement effective programs that address the specific needs of youth with disabilities, thereby limiting their opportunities for civic engagement and political participation.

4.4 Suggestions for Enhancing the Civic Engagement and Political Participation of Youth with Disabilities in Nepal

The findings from fieldwork underscore the critical need for targeted interventions to enhance the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal. Despite some progress, significant barriers remain, including inadequate political party initiatives, limited accessibility beyond voting, and a lack of comprehensive data and research. Moving forward, it is essential to adopt a multifaceted approach that addresses these gaps through inclusive policymaking, enhanced accessibility measures, and robust awareness and training programs. By implementing these strategic actions, we can foster a more inclusive political landscape that empowers youth with disabilities to actively participate and advocate for their rights, thereby strengthening the democratic fabric of Nepal.

To address the identified gaps and promote the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal, a multifaceted approach is required. The way forward involves strategic actions by political parties, advocacy organizations, and governmental bodies. These actions should focus on creating inclusive environments, enhancing awareness, training, and ensuring robust policy implementation. Below are detailed suggestions for moving forward.

i) Establish Mechanisms for Engagement

Political parties should establish dedicated mechanisms to engage persons with disabilities, particularly youths, in their political interventions and networks. These mechanisms should operate at local, federal, and provincial levels to ensure comprehensive inclusion across all tiers of government.

a. Dedicated Disability Inclusion Units: Political parties should create disability inclusion units within their organizational structures. These units would be responsible for developing and implementing strategies to engage youth with disabilities in political activities. They would also act as liaison bodies between the party and disability advocacy groups to ensure continuous dialogue and collaboration.

b. Inclusive Policy Development: Parties should develop and implement inclusive policies that explicitly address the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities. This includes revising party constitutions to include provisions for disability inclusion, ensuring that all party activities are accessible, and promoting the representation of persons with disabilities in decision-making bodies.

c. Local Engagement Committees: Establish local engagement committees to work at the grassroots level. These committees would focus on identifying and addressing barriers to participation, promoting political literacy among youth with disabilities, and facilitating their involvement in local governance and political activities.

ii) Enhance Political Awareness and Training

To empower youth with disabilities to participate effectively in political processes, it is essential to enhance their political awareness and provide comprehensive training.

a. Political Literacy Programs: Develop and implement political literacy programs tailored for youth with disabilities. These programs should cover topics such as political rights, electoral processes, advocacy skills, and leadership development. They should be designed in accessible

formats and delivered through various channels, including online platforms, community workshops, and educational institutions.

b. Capacity Building Workshops: Organize capacity building workshops for youth with disabilities to equip them with the skills needed to engage in political activities. These workshops should focus on public speaking, campaign management, policy analysis, and other relevant areas. Partnering with disability advocacy organizations and educational institutions can enhance the reach and effectiveness of these workshops.

c. Mentorship Programs: Implement mentorship programs that connect experienced political leaders and activists with youth with disabilities. These mentorship relationships can provide guidance, support, and practical insights into navigating the political landscape. Mentorship programs should be designed to foster long-term engagement and development.

iii) Strengthen Policy Implementation and Monitoring

Effective implementation and monitoring of policies related to the inclusion of persons with disabilities are crucial for bridging the gap between policy and practice.

a. Enforcement Mechanisms: Strengthen enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with constitutional mandates and policies related to disability inclusion. This includes establishing clear guidelines for the implementation of reserved seat mandates and setting up accountability frameworks to monitor compliance.

b. Monitoring and Evaluation: Develop robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track the progress and impact of disability inclusion policies. Regular assessments should be conducted to identify gaps, measure outcomes, and inform policy adjustments. Involving persons with disabilities in these monitoring processes can provide valuable insights and enhance transparency.

c. Inclusive Budgeting: Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for the implementation of disability inclusion policies. Inclusive budgeting practices should prioritize funding for accessibility improvements, training programs, and support services for individuals with disabilities. Transparent budgeting processes and accountability measures can help ensure that allocated resources are used effectively.

iv) Promote a Culture of Inclusivity

Fostering a culture of inclusivity within political parties and society at large is essential for the sustainable engagement of youth with disabilities in political and civic life.

a. Awareness Campaigns: Conduct awareness campaigns to educate party members, political leaders, and the general public about the importance of disability inclusion. These campaigns should highlight the contributions of individuals with disabilities to society and the benefits of their participation in political processes.

b. Disability Sensitization Training: Provide disability sensitization training for political party members, government officials, and other stakeholders. This training should cover topics such as disability rights, inclusive practices, and effective communication strategies. Sensitization training can help create a more welcoming and supportive environment for individuals with disabilities.

c. Inclusive Leadership: Promote inclusive leadership within political parties by encouraging the participation of individuals with disabilities in leadership roles. This includes providing opportunities for youth with disabilities to assume leadership positions and actively participate in decision-making processes. Inclusive leadership can serve as a powerful example and inspire greater participation among individuals with disabilities.

v) Foster Collaboration and Partnerships

Collaboration and partnerships between political parties, advocacy organizations, governmental bodies, and other stakeholders are vital for achieving meaningful progress in disability inclusion.

a. Multi-Stakeholder Coalitions: Establish multi-stakeholder coalitions that bring together political parties, disability advocacy groups, governmental bodies, and other relevant organizations. These coalitions can work collaboratively to develop and implement strategies for enhancing the political participation of youth with disabilities. Joint initiatives and shared resources can amplify the impact of these efforts.

b. International Cooperation: Engage with international organizations and networks that focus on disability rights and political inclusion. Learning from global best practices and leveraging international support can enhance local efforts to promote the political participation of youth with disabilities. International cooperation can also provide opportunities for cross-border collaborations and exchanges.

c. Community Engagement: Promote community engagement initiatives that involve local communities in the efforts to enhance the political participation of youth with disabilities. Community-driven approaches can help identify context-specific barriers and develop tailored solutions. Engaging community leaders and members can also foster a more supportive environment for individuals with disabilities.

vi) Intensifying Advocacy Efforts

To address the current gaps in inclusion, both the OPDs and concerned stakeholders need to intensify their advocacy initiatives. These efforts should focus on ensuring that youth with disabilities are actively involved in decision-making processes. One effective approach is to implement targeted awareness campaigns that emphasize the importance of including youth with disabilities in civic and political activities. These campaigns should aim to educate committee members and the broader community about the valuable perspectives and contributions that youth with disabilities can bring to the table. Additionally, capacity-building programs specifically designed for youth with disabilities should be developed. These programs could include leadership training, public speaking workshops, and mentorship opportunities, all aimed at empowering youth with disabilities to take on more active roles within their communities and committees.

vii) Empowering Self-Advocacy

Empowering youth with disabilities to adopt a more proactive stance in advocating for their rights and engaging with committees is imperative. This can significantly enhance their participation and influence within these committees. Providing tools and training to help youth with disabilities become effective self-advocates is essential. By promoting self-advocacy, we can support youth with disabilities to engage more confidently and assertively within decision-making bodies. This empowerment will not only benefit the individuals involved but also enrich the committees with diverse perspectives and ideas.

viii) Accountability of Institutional Stakeholders

Institutional stakeholders, including local and provincial government bodies, school leaders, NGOs, and cooperative leaders, must be held accountable for the inclusion of youth with disabilities. These leaders should implement more targeted programs and policies that facilitate the engagement of young individuals with disabilities in civic and political spheres. This could involve setting specific quotas for youth representation in committees, providing funding for youth-led initiatives, and creating inclusive platforms for youth to voice their concerns and ideas. By holding these stakeholders accountable, we can ensure a more inclusive approach that fosters the active participation of youth with disabilities.

ix) Mainstreaming Disability in Development Processes

Mainstreaming disability in development processes is crucial for ensuring that youth with disabilities are not left behind in civic and political spheres. The Nepal Government needs to integrate disability considerations into broader development policies and programs. This mainstreaming approach will ensure that youth with disabilities are included in all aspects of development. Political parties must also be encouraged and supported to develop specific policies aimed at the active engagement of youth with disabilities. These policies should focus on creating opportunities for participation at all levels of political activity, from grassroots movements to national leadership.

x) Awareness and Collaboration Initiatives

The OPDs and related organizations should lead awareness campaigns to educate the public and stakeholders about disability rights. These initiatives can help reduce stigma and discrimination, thus fostering a more inclusive society. Despite the challenges, there is a clear commitment from the ward office and the Kathmandu Metropolitan office to support youth with disabilities. They have expressed a willingness to extend support and welcome the BYAN into various committees, provided that they receive the necessary assistance. This openness presents a valuable opportunity for collaboration between local government and disability advocacy groups to enhance the civic and political participation of youth with disabilities.

xii) Strategic Steps Forward

To bridge these gaps and foster a more inclusive political environment, several strategic steps are essential. Firstly, prioritize the collection of comprehensive and accurate data on persons with disabilities to inform policymaking and program development. Secondly, enhance the capacity of local government officials to understand and address the needs of youth with disabilities. Thirdly, develop and implement inclusive policies that ensure the active participation of youth with disabilities in civic and political processes. Finally, strengthen partnerships with disability advocacy groups like BYAN to leverage their expertise and resources in promoting disability inclusion.

xiii) Additional Recommendations

Based on the findings, further recommendations are proposed to enhance inclusivity and support the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities. Provide training and resources to NGOs to enhance their understanding of disability issues and develop inclusive strategies. Encourage NGOs to develop specific policies and guidelines for actively engaging

youth with disabilities in their programs and initiatives. Foster partnerships between NGOs, disability advocacy groups, and government agencies to leverage resources and expertise in promoting disability inclusion. Conduct awareness campaigns to sensitize the public and key stakeholders about the rights and capabilities of youth with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive society. By implementing these actions and recommendations, we can significantly enhance the inclusivity and representativeness of disability committees in Koshi Province and beyond, contributing to a more equitable society for all persons with disabilities.

CHAPTER FIVE: KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.2 Key Findings

The key findings of this study are categorized into two main parts: policy level and practice level. At the policy level, the study focused on reviewing both national and international policies. At the practice level, discussions were held with various stakeholders, including political parties, provincial and local governments, NGOs, OPD members, and activists, to assess current practices, identify gaps, and propose a way forward. The study was conducted in Bagmati and Koshi provinces, utilizing triangulation methods to ensure comprehensive information gathering.

5.2.1 Policy Level:

At the policy level, several key findings emerged regarding the rights and inclusion of youth with disabilities in Nepal. The UNCRPD, a pivotal international treaty, serves to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities but lacks explicit provisions addressing the specific needs of youth with disabilities in civic and political spheres. This gap suggests that while general disability rights are recognized, targeted measures for engaging and supporting youth with disabilities in political activities are insufficiently addressed.

Similarly, the SDGs offer a comprehensive framework for global development, yet they do not explicitly acknowledge the distinct challenges faced by youth with disabilities. This oversight may limit the development of tailored initiatives within the SDG agenda aimed at improving the lives of youth with disabilities across various developmental sectors.

In Nepal's Constitution of 2072, while there are provisions guaranteeing equality for all citizens, including youth, specific measures to support youth with disabilities are notably absent. This highlights a significant gap in constitutional provisions that directly address the needs and rights of this demographic, potentially hindering their full inclusion in society.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2074, provides some protections, such as inclusive sports participation, but falls short in addressing broader issues like education, employment, and political engagement for youth with disabilities. This limited scope suggests a need for expanded legislative frameworks that comprehensively address the diverse needs of youth with disabilities. Moreover, the Local Government Operation Act, 2074, mandates the inclusion of marginalized groups in local governance, including persons with disabilities. However, it lacks specific

mechanisms to ensure effective participation of youth with disabilities at the local level, potentially leading to their marginalization in local governance processes.

The National Youth Act, 2072, introduces provisions for the representation of youth with disabilities in the formation of Youth Councils, signaling progress towards inclusion. However, the actual impact of these provisions on policy influence and decision-making remains to be evaluated, highlighting the need for further scrutiny and enhancement of these mechanisms.

The National Youth Policy, 2072, emphasizes the importance of including youth with disabilities across various sectors. Despite these intentions, the policy lacks detailed implementation strategies and monitoring mechanisms, potentially hindering the achievement of its inclusion goals.

Furthermore, while Gandaki Province has established a dedicated ministry for youth and sports, other provinces lack concrete provisions for the inclusion of youth with disabilities. This disparity underscores the need for strengthened institutional frameworks at the provincial level to ensure equitable opportunities and support for youth with disabilities across Nepal.

5.2.2 Practices Level

At the practice level, the study identified varying levels of awareness and willingness among political parties regarding disability issues and the involvement of youth with disabilities in political activities. While parties generally acknowledge the importance of inclusion, actual efforts to implement inclusive practices remain inadequate. This gap underscores the need for formal policy endorsements and robust advocacy efforts at the national level to translate awareness into concrete actions that promote meaningful participation of youth with disabilities in political processes.

Constitutional provisions within party frameworks often include discriminatory clauses that hinder the inclusive participation of individuals with socio-political disabilities. These barriers necessitate reforms within party constitutions to eliminate discriminatory practices and foster environments that promote equal opportunities for all, including youth with disabilities, in political engagement and decision-making.

Regarding social security and participation, while political parties emphasize support for individuals with disabilities, efforts towards facilitating their active political participation are often limited. This approach often views individuals with disabilities as rights-holders rather than active contributors to political processes, highlighting the need for initiatives that promote their meaningful inclusion and participation.

NGOs such as the Karuna Foundation and NLR play a crucial role in actively engaging youth with disabilities in various networks and employment initiatives. These efforts demonstrate a belief in the capabilities of youth with disabilities but also reveal gaps in comprehensive policy frameworks within NGOs. Many organizations lack specific policies and implementation guidelines tailored to effectively engage youth with disabilities, indicating a need for enhanced knowledge and more inclusive practices within the NGO sector.

Provincial initiatives aim to involve youth with disabilities in political processes, yet practical implementation of these policies often falls short. Despite the existence of supportive policies at the provincial level, there is a significant gap in realizing effective disability rights at the grassroots level. This gap calls for sustained advocacy efforts to ensure that provincial policies translate into meaningful opportunities and support for youth with disabilities across Nepal's diverse regions.

5.3 Conclusion

This study aimed to comprehensively assess the landscape of policies and practices related to the civic engagement of youth with disabilities in Nepal. By reviewing both national and international policies and conducting KII, FGD, and online surveys, the study gathered insights from various stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, political parties, provincial and local governments, NGOs, OPD members, and activists. These activities were carried out in the Bagmati, Karnali, Gandaki, Lumbini, Madesh, and Koshi provinces.

The findings reveal that while existing policies, including the SDGs, National Youth Act 2072, National Youth Policy 2072, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2074, and the Constitution of Nepal 2072, incorporate provisions for persons with disabilities, the actual implementation and engagement of youth with disabilities remain limited. Initiatives like the National Youth Council's program and the establishment of local youth council regulations indicate some progress, but their sustained and inclusive implementation remains a challenge.

The research findings underscore significant gaps and opportunities regarding the engagement of youth with disabilities across various sectors in Nepal. Despite the existence of policies and provisions, data indicates a notable lack of implementation and prioritization of youth with disabilities within these frameworks. Political parties, while having formulated policies to involve persons with disabilities, have limited actual participation from this group. For instance, only a small number of youths with disabilities are actively engaged at the local level committees.

According to the online survey, 91% of respondents reported the absence of participation by persons with disabilities in positions of authority within political parties, except for those affiliated with disability-related fraternal organizations.

Although fraternal organizations within political parties emphasize the need for reservation quotas for persons with disabilities in central committees, implementation remains weak. 87% of respondents indicated that the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the boards of non-governmental organizations does not occur. This highlights a significant gap between policy intent and actual practice, reflecting a broader issue of insufficient implementation.

Provincial government initiatives, such as the establishment of disability committees and the allocation of funds for empowerment, are commendable. However, data suggests a lack of active participation by youth with disabilities in these initiatives. While some NGOs actively promote inclusion and provide support for skill development and job placement, others lack awareness and specific policies for involving youth with disabilities in their programs. 74% of respondents stated that local governments do not prioritize aligning policies and programs with the needs of youth with disabilities.

Current practices, such as the National Youth Council's financial incentive program and the establishment of local youth councils, show promise. However, there is a lack of provision to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in these initiatives. This underscores the need for comprehensive and inclusive policies that explicitly address the engagement of youth with disabilities.

In conclusion, the study highlights the need for greater awareness, advocacy, and policy reforms to create an inclusive environment where youth with disabilities can actively participate and contribute to the development of Nepal. It underscores the importance of addressing gaps in implementation and prioritizing the inclusion of youth with disabilities across all sectors. Enhanced efforts are required to translate policy provisions into practical actions, ensuring that youth with disabilities are not only seen as rights holders but also as active contributors and participants in civic and political life.

5.4 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, this section presents a comprehensive set of recommendations for various stakeholders, including federal, provincial, and local governments, OPDs, CSOs,

development partners, and political parties. These recommendations aim to enhance and ensure the civic engagement and political participation of youth with disabilities in Nepal.

1. Election Commission Nepal

- i. If persons with disabilities are unable to participate in the election process due to gaps or obstacles in election policies, laws, or regulations, these should be amended to ensure inclusive arrangements are in place.
- ii. To conduct a comprehensive study of the challenges encountered by people with disabilities in participating in the election process, consult with disability organizations, and explore sustainable solutions.
- iii. To develop election-related information materials, voter education materials, and publicity materials in formats that are inclusive and accessible to all.
- iv. To provide adequate training to the employees who are assigned to conduct the election and the necessary guidelines to be prepared and provided. Also to make necessary preparations for its effective implementation.
- v. To prepare the indicators and standards for the accessible voting process, including testing the accessibility of polling places, building structures, furniture, and other facilities according to these standards. These reforms should be completed during the pre-election preparations.
- vi. To provide special transportation arrangements for disabled persons, senior citizens, pregnant women, individuals with health issues, or those with mobility challenges to access polling stations during elections.
- vii. To ensure voting accessibility for disabled individuals at polling stations by providing a support room and, where possible, arranging for sign language interpreters for those who are hearing impaired.
- viii. To train staff engaged in voter education and publicity staff on ensuring accessibility for all, including people with disabilities. Instructing stakeholders to conduct voter education programs that are inclusive and accessible to disabled individuals.
- ix. Facilitating the inclusion of disabled persons' names in the voter registration list and issuing voter ID cards.
- x. When deploying employees or volunteers for voting operations, implementing a policy to actively involve disabled individuals.

2. Federal Government

- i. Develop a comprehensive and standardized definition of "civic engagement" that includes youth with disabilities. This will guide and align activities across various sectors.
- ii. Introduce specific provisions in the constitution and enact laws that explicitly consider the rights and inclusion of youth with disabilities in civic activities.
- iii. Ensure that the National Youth Policy aligns with its initial vision by reevaluating the role of the National Youth Council to become a true platform for inclusive youth engagement.
- iv. Enforce the implementation of existing policies, such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and the Local Government Operation Act, ensuring inclusive representation and participation of youth with disabilities in decision-making processes.

3. Provincial Government

- i. Establish youth councils in each province with specific mandates to include youth with disabilities in their activities and decision-making processes.
- ii. Advocate for the removal of unnecessary barriers imposed by local governments on youth organizations. Simplify registration processes and approval requirements to enhance civic space for youth.
- iii. Promote collaboration between provincial offices and external entities, such as the OPDs, to address data gaps and enhance awareness within administrations about disability rights.

4. Local Government

- i. Ensure the implementation of inclusive policies at the local level, focusing on the active participation of youth with disabilities in local governance and community activities.
- ii. Conduct local awareness programs on disability rights and the importance of youth engagement for political parties, NGOs, and community organizations.
- iii. Create local advisory committees that include youth with disabilities to provide input on community projects and policies.

5. Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

- i. Lobby to hold the Election Commission, political parties, election monitoring bodies, National Human Rights Commission, National Women Commission and other bodies accountable for issues related to accessible elections.

- ii. Advocate for revisions in international commitments, such as the Disability Rights Convention and Sustainable Development Goals, to explicitly address youth with disabilities.
- iii. Enhance advocacy efforts to ensure that policies and programs at all levels prioritize the needs and rights of youth with disabilities.
- iv. Provide training and skill development programs tailored for youth with disabilities to enhance their employability and civic participation.
- v. Encourage people with disabilities to participate in the election process. Lobby political parties to allow the candidacy of people with disabilities.

6. Civil Society Organizations

- i. Encourage CSOs, especially youth-led organizations, to develop specific policies and procedures for actively engaging youth with disabilities in their initiatives.
- ii. Raise awareness on issues related to the political rights of persons with disabilities and their participation in the electoral process. Also, make people with disabilities participate in election education, voter education, civil and political rights related programs that they conduct.
- iii. Integrate youth with disabilities into existing programs and projects, ensuring that their voices are heard, and their needs are met.
- iv. Undertake research to identify barriers to the engagement of youth with disabilities and use findings to advocate for inclusive practices.
- v. The organizations should make the working committee and management team inclusive and ensure the meaningful presence of people with disabilities in it, as well as make elections, discussions and other programs within the organization accessible and inclusive.

7. Development Partners

- i. Fund and support programs that specifically target the inclusion of youth with disabilities in civic and political activities.
- ii. Offer technical assistance to local and provincial governments in the implementation of inclusive policies and programs.
- iii. Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of funded programs on the engagement of youth with disabilities.

8. Political Parties

- i. Ensure that election-related documents such as manifestos, constitutions, reports, rules, guidelines, and other materials are available in accessible formats. Coordinate with organizations run by persons with disabilities for this purpose.
- ii. Ensure that both the physical structure and informational content of political party offices are accessible.
- iii. Include persons with disabilities in the drafting of key documents, such as constitutions and manifestos, as well as in internal party committees and structures.
- iv. Establish mechanisms to allocate a certain number of positions for persons with disabilities and youth with disabilities in internal party competitions and various election cycles.
- v. Formulate policies and procedures to ensure the participation of youth with disabilities at all levels of political interventions. Coordinating with the Election Commission and providing necessary support to make polling stations accessible and safe for all.
- vi. The candidates of the political parties should debate, lobby and help raise awareness among the people on this issue to make the election process accessible to all.

9. Media

- i. To raise the challenges and obstacles faced by people with disabilities in terms of civic involvement and political participation in the media. Also, to lobby the government and the Election Commission to ensure an accessible election process and system.
- ii. To publicize the good practices of the government in accessible elections and raising questions about discrimination.

Annex

Annex-1 (Interviewed List)

SN	Name	Position	Organization
1	Durga Nath Yogi	Chairperson	BYAN- Morang
2	Bibas Rai	Member	BYAN- Morang
3	Santosh Pandit	Advocacy Officer	NFDN – Koshi Province
4	Saroj Nepali	Program coordinator	NFDN – Koshi Province
5	Nabin Chandra Dhungel	Chairperson	NFDN – Koshi province
6	Ghanashyam Khatiwada	Chairperson	CPNUMN -Koshi Province
7	Tirtha Adhikari	Office Head	Election commission Nepal
8	Shankar Giri	Computer operator	Election commission Nepal
9	Jayaprakash Chaudhary	Parliament Member	Koshi Province
10	Netra Adhikari	Secretary	NGO Federation
11	Shyam Kishor Shah	District Coordinator	Karuna Foundation
12	Dipak Raut	Program Coordinator	SCDC
13	Arun Karki	Finance officer	SCDC
14	Amod Kumar Chaudhary	Program Officer	Karuna Foundation
15	Numa Dhakal	Finance	NLR
16	Rita Niraula	Program Intern	NLR
17	Sanjib Adhikari	ED	Yuwalaya – Lalitpur
18	Dujang Sherpa	President	Nepal student Union

Online survey with person with disability:

Sn	Name	Address	Type of disability
1	Jit lal Dhakal	Surkhet	Physical disability
2	Sita Malla	Makwanpur	Physical disability
3	Rabin Kumar Mainali	Sarlahi	Voice and speech impairment
4	Anjana	Lalitpur	Physical disability
5	Shiva Shrestha	Dhading	Intellectual disability
6	Sabitra Ghimery	Rupendehi	Physical disability
7	Hom Raj KC	Salyan	Physical disability
8	Sapana Sharma	Lalitpur	Voice and speech impairment
9	Lila Kumari Oli	Salyan	Physical disability
10	Indira Acharya	Kathmandu	Intellectual disability
11	Mina Karki	Udaypur	Physical disability
12	Balkrishna Gaire	Kathmandu	Physical disability
13	Jhakka Pd. Pokhrel	Dailekh	Voice and speech impairment
14	Binaya Sarki	Maygdi	Intellectual disability
15	Rishi Ram Dhakal	Kathmandu	Physical disability
16	Ram bahadur karki	Mornag	Physical disability
17	Ganesh Kumar Khatrai	Dang	Physical disability
18	Parmila Neupane	Chitwan	Autism

19	Netra Prd. Sapkota	Bardiaya	Intellectual disability
20	Tulasa Dahal	Kathmandu	Physical disability
21	Surendra Timalisina	Makwanpur	Physical disability
22	Yubraj karte;	Dhankuta	Hemophilia
23	Phamfa Furkoti	Kavre	Psychical

KII – with local government:

SN	District	Name of Palika	Position	Department
1	Bimala Koirala	Kathmandu metropolitan city	Act. Department head	Social Dev. Department
2	Andira Shrestha	Kritipur department	Department head	Women & Children
3	Goma Parsin	Gokarneshower		
4	Sbina Kumari Shrestha	Kageshowari manhara	Officer	Women & Children
5	Tara Kumari KC	Mahalaxmi Municipality	Officer	Women & Children
6	Parmila Mishra	Tarkeshower	Officer	Women & Children
7	Dinesh Maharjan	Kathmandu metropolitan city ward-4	Ward Chair	

Annex II

नेत्रहिन युवासंघ नेपालले नेपालमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरुको नागरिक संलग्नता सम्बन्धी अवस्थिति पत्र तयार गर्न लागि रहेको छ । उक्त अवस्थिति पत्र तयारीका लागि तल उल्लेखि आधारभूत सूचना उपलब्ध गराइ सहयोग गरिदिनु हुन अनुरोध छ । तपाइले दिनु भएका सूचनाहरुको गोपिनियताको सुनिश्चितता गरिनेछ ।

अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरुलाई प्रश्नहरु

१. तल तपाइको नाम लेखिदिनुहोस ।

२. तपाइको फोन नं लेखिदिनुहोस ।

३. तलका मध्ये कुनै एक छान्नुहोस ।

पुरुष

महिला

यौनिक तथा लैंगिक अल्पसंख्यक

४ तलका मध्ये तपाइ रहेको प्रदेश छान्नुहोस ।

कोशी

मधेश

बागमती

गण्डकी

लुम्बिनी

कर्णाली

सुदुरपश्चिम

५. तल दिइएका मध्ये तपाइ रहेको जिल्ला छान्नुहोस ।

ईलाम - (कोशी)

उदयपुर

ओखलढुङ्गा

खोटाङ्ग

झापा

ताप्लेजुङ्ग

तेह्रथुम

धनकुटा

पाँचथर

भोजपुर

मोरङ

सखुवासभा

सोलुखुम्बु

सुनसरी

सप्तरी - (मधेश)

सिरहा

धनुषा

महोत्तरी
सर्लाही
रौतहट
बारा
पर्सा
काठमाडौं - (बागमती प्रदेश)
काभ्रेपल्लेचोक
चितवन
दोलखा
धादिङ्ग
नुवाकोट
भक्तपुर
मकवानपुर
रसुवा
रामेछाप
ललितपुर
सिन्धुपाल्चोक
सिन्धुली
कास्की - (गण्डकी प्रदेश)
गोरखा
तनहुँ
नवलपरासीपूर्व-
पर्वत
बागलुङ्ग
मनाङ्ग
मुस्ताङ्ग
म्याग्दी
लम्जुङ्ग
स्याङ्गजा
अर्घाखाँची - (लुम्बिनी प्रदेश)
कपिलवस्तु
गुल्मी
दाङ्ग
नवलपरासीपश्चिम-
पाल्पा
प्युठान
बर्दिया
बाँके
रुकुमपूर्व-
रूपन्देही
रोल्पा
कालिकोट - (कर्णाली प्रदेश)
जाजरकोट
जुम्ला
डोल्पा

दैलेख

मुगु

रुकुमपश्चिम-

सल्यान

सुर्खेत

हुम्ला

अछाम - (सुदुरपश्चिम प्रदेश)

कंचनपुर

कैलाली

डडेलधुरा

डोटी

दार्चुला

बझाङ

बाजुरा

बैतडी

६. अपाङ्गताको क्षेत्रमा कार्यरत संघ संस्थाहरूले आफ्ना विधान अनुसार कार्यसमितिहरूमा अपाङ्गता युवाहरू रहने व्यवस्था गरिएको छ ?

गरिएको छ

गरिएको छैन

थाहा छैन

७. अपाङ्गताको क्षेत्रमा कार्यरत संघ संस्थाहरूका वार्षिक नीति कार्यक्रमहरू युवा लक्षित हुने गरेका छन् ?

गरेका छन्

गरेका छैनन्

थाहा छैन

८. गैर सरकारी संघ संस्थाका कार्यक्रमहरू अपाङ्गता भएका युवा लक्षित हुने गरेका छन् ?

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छैन

थाहा छैन

९. गैर सरकारी संघ संस्थाहरूका कार्य समितिमा अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूलाई राख्ने गर्दछन् छ ? अथवा कार्य समितिमा सहज पहुँच छ ?

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छैन

थाहा छैन

१०. स्थानीय सरकारका नीति कार्यक्रमहरू अपाङ्गता भएका युवा लक्षित हुने गरेका छन् ?

छन्

छैनन्

थाहा छैन

११. प्रदेश सरकारका नीति कार्यक्रमहरू अपाङ्गता भएका युवा लक्षित हुने गरेका छन् ?

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छैनन

थाहा छैन

१२. संघीय सरकारका नीति कार्यक्रमहरू अपाङ्गता भएका युवा लक्षित हुने गरेका छन् ?

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छैनन

थाहा छैन

१३. राजनैतिक पार्टीका अपाङ्गता सम्बन्धी भातृ संगठन बाहेक अन्य पार्टी समिति वा भातृ संगठनहरूमा पदाधिकारीहरू अपाङ्गता भएका युवा छन् ?

छन

छैनन

थाहा छैन

१४ स्थानीय तहको योजना निर्माणका चरणहरूमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूलाई संलग्न गराउने गरिएको छ ?

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छैन

थाहा छैन

१५ तपाइ आवद्ध भएको संस्थामा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूको संलग्नता सम्बन्धी कुनै छलफल हुने गरेको छ ?

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थाहा छैन

१६ अन्त्यमा तपाइको केही सुझाव भए लेखिदिनुहोस ।

अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूको नागरिक संलग्नता सम्बन्धी अवस्था पत्र सूचना संकलन प्रश्नावली

(क) राजनीतिक दलसँग सोधिने प्रश्नहरू :

- तपाईंहरूलाई अपाङ्गता अधिकार सम्बन्धी कतिको जानकारी रहेको छ ।
- तपाईंहरूलाई अपाङ्गता भएको युवाहरूको अधिकार सम्बन्धी कतिको जानकारी रहेको छ ।
- तपाईंहरूको राजनीतिक दलमा कतिजना अपाङ्गता भएका युवा व्यक्तिहरूको सहभागिता रहेको छ ?
- तपाईंहरूको दलमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवा व्यक्तिहरूको प्रतिनिधि र भूमिका कस्ता रहेको छ ?
- के अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको समाजिक क्रियाकलापहरूमा सहभागी हुदाँ अन्य व्यक्ति सरह काम गर्न सक्छन् जस्तो लाग्छ ? यदि लाग्दैन भने किन र गर्नसक्छन् भने किन ?
- राजनीतिक दलमा समावेश भएका अपाङ्गता भएको युवाहरूको कार्य क्षमता कस्तो रहेको छ ?
- राजनीतिक दलमा अपाङ्गता भएको युवाहरूलाई समावेश गराउने के कस्तो योजनाहरू रहेको छन् ?

(ख) स्थानीय तथा प्रदेश सरकारका प्रतिनिधिहरू

- तपाईंको पालिकामा अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको संख्या कस्तो रहेको छ ?
- अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको समाजिक क्रियाकलापहरूमा कस्ता प्रकारको सहभागिता रहेको छ ?
- स्थानीय सरकारबाट बनेका विभिन्न समितिहरूमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूलाई सहभागिता गराउने स्थानीय सरकारको के कस्ता नियमहरू रहेका छन् ?
- अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको समाजिक क्रियाकलापहरूमा सहभागी गराउँदा उनीहरूको क्षमता कस्तो देखुहुन्छ ?
- के अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको समाजिक क्रियाकलापहरूमा सहभागी हुदाँ अन्य व्यक्ति सरह काम गर्न सक्छन् जस्तो लाग्छ ? यदि लाग्दैन भने किन र गर्नसक्छन् भने किन ?
- स्थानीय तहको योजना निर्माण प्रक्रियामा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूको भूमिका कस्तो रहेको छ ?
- अपाङ्गता भएको युवाहरूलाई विभिन्न सामाजिक क्षेत्रमा सहभागी गराउनको स्थानीय सरकारले के कस्ता योजनाहरू बनाई रहेको छ ?

(ग) गैसस तथा सहकारीसँग सोधिने प्रश्नहरू

- तपाईंको पालिकामा अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको संख्या कस्तो रहेको छ ?
काठमाण्डौ महानगरपालिका
- के अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको सामाजिक क्रियाकलापहरूमा सहभागी हुदाँ अन्य व्यक्ति सरह काम गर्न सक्छन् जस्तो लाग्छ ? यदि लाग्दैन भने किन र गर्नसक्छन् भने किन ?
हामी गैससमा आवद्ध छौ ?
- गैसस तथा सहकारीहरूले आफ्नो संस्थामा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूको भूमिकालाई कसरी सुनिश्चित गरेको छ ?
- अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरूको समाजिक क्रियाकलापहरूमा सहभागी गराउँदा उनीहरूको क्षमता कस्तो देखुहुन्छ ?

- विभिन्न स्थानीय समूह (संजाल, फोरम, मंच, जस्तै विध्यालय व्यवस्थापन समिति स्वयं सेवा समूह) हरूमा अपाङ्गता भएको युवाहरुको प्रतिनिधित्वलाई कसरी सुनिश्चित गरिएको छ ?
- पालिका, प्रदेश, तथा स्थानीय सरकारबाट गठन भएका समितिहरुमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरुको प्रतिनिधित्वलाई कसरी सुनिश्चित गरिएको छ ?
- तपाईंको संस्थाहरुमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरुलाई सहभागी गराउन आगामी दिनमा के कस्ता योजना रहेको छ ?

Annex IV

नेत्रहिन युवासंघ नेपालले नेपालमा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरूको नागरिक संलग्नता सम्बन्धी अवस्थिति पत्र तयार गर्न लागि रहेको छ । तपाइ संलग्न राजनैतिक पार्टीका भातृ संगठनका तर्फबाट उक्त अवस्थिति पत्र तयारीका लागि तल उल्लेखि आधारभूत सूचना उपलब्ध गराइ सहयोग गरिदिनु हुन अनुरोध छ । तपाइले दिनु भएका सूचनाहरूको गोपिनियताको सुनिश्चितता गरिनेछ ।

भातृ संगठनका प्रतिनिधिहरूलाई सोधिने प्रश्नहरू

१. तल तपाइको नाम लेखिदिनुहोस ।
२. तपाइ संलग्न भातृ संगठनको नाम लेखिदिनुहोला ।
३. तपाइको फोन नं लेखिदिनुहोस ।
४. तलका मध्ये कुनै एक छान्नुहोस ।

पुरुष

महिला

यौनिक तथा लैंगिक अल्पसंख्यक

५. तपाइको संगठनलाई मातृपार्टीले बिधानले चिन्छ वा बिधानमा संगठनको नाम लेखिएको छ ?

लेखिएको छ

लेखिएको छैन

थाहा छैन

६. तपाइको मातृपार्टीको वेबसाइटमा भातृसंगठनको नाम र गतिविधिहरू राखे गरिएको छ ?

राखे गरिएको छ

राखे गरिएको छैन

थाहा छैन

७. मातृपार्टीको बिधान अनुसार केन्द्रीय कमिटीमा अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरू अनिवार्य रहनेगरी आरक्षण गरिएको छ ? छन भनि कति जना छन ?

राखे गरिएको छ

राखे गरिएको छैन

थाहा छैन

संख्या.....

८. हाल मातृपार्टीको प्रदेश कमिटीमा अपाङ्गता कोटाबाट अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरू कमिटी/समितिमा रहेका छन ?

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थाहा छैन

९. हाल मातृपार्टीको जिल्ला कमिटीमा अपाङ्गता आरक्षण कोटाबाट अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरु रहेका छन् ?

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थाहा छैन

१०. यदि मातृपार्टीको विधान अनुसार विभिन्न कमिटीहरुमा अपाङ्गता आरक्षणको व्यवस्था कसरी सम्भव भएको हो ।

- क पार्टीले आफै व्यवस्था गरेको हो ।
- ख अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरुको वकालतले
- ग पार्टीका नेतृत्व तहसँग अझै वकालत गर्नु छ ।

११. राजनीतिक दलमा अपाङ्गता भएको युवाहरुलाई समावेश गराउने के कस्तो योजनाहरु रहेका छन् ?

१२. मातृ पार्टीको विधानमा विभिन्न समितिहरुमा अपाङ्गता भएका व्यक्तिहरु रहने व्यवस्था उल्लेख गरिएको छ ?

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छैन

थाहा छैन

१३. विधान मस्यौदा वा संशोधन गर्दा तपाइको संगठनलाई मातृपार्टीले संलग्न गराउने गर्दछन ?

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छैन

थाहा छैन

१४. कमिटी/समितिहरुमा युवाहरुको लागि कोटा निर्धारण गर्दा अपाङ्गता भएका युवाहरुलाई कोटा निर्धारण गर्दछन ?

गर्छन

गर्दैनन्

थाहा छैन

१५. तलका मध्ये कुनै एक छान्नुहोस ।

शारीरिक अपाङ्गता

दृष्टि सम्बन्धी अपाङ्गता
सुनाइ सम्बन्धी अपाङ्गता
श्रवणदृष्टिविहिन
स्वरबोलाइ सम्बन्धी अपाङ्गता
मनोसामाजिक अपाङ्गता
बौद्धिक अपाङ्गता
हेमोफेलिया
अटिजम
बहुअपाङ्गता
अभिभावक
१६ अन्त्यमा केही सुझाव भए लेखिदिनुहोस ।