

# Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP)

April 4, 2016 – September 30, 2022

## CS:MAP AT A GLANCE



**Supported by:**  
USAID



**Implemented by:**  
FHI 360, Equal Access  
International and  
International Center for  
Not-for-Profit Law with  
over 40 local partners



**Total Budget:**  
US\$ 18.3 million



**Project Coverage:**  
Nationally, and across  
34 districts and  
57 municipalities  
(22 urban and 35 rural)

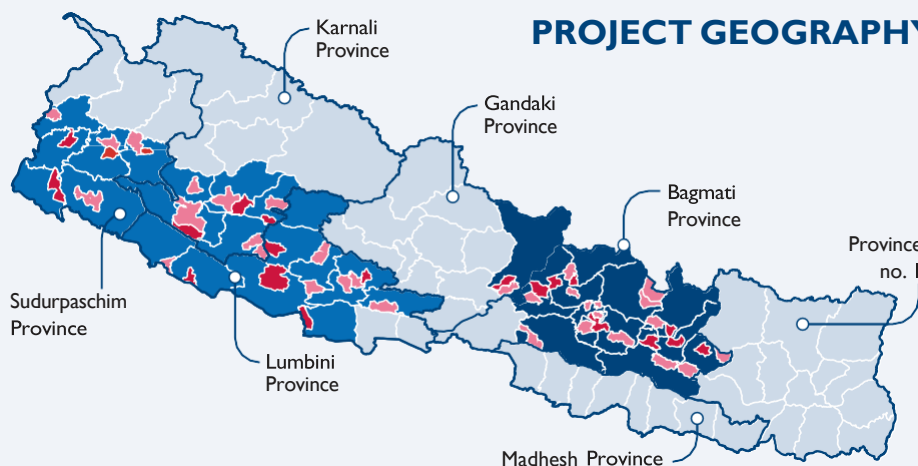
## INTRODUCTION

The Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP) was a United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-supported cooperative agreement aimed at fostering a more legitimate, accountable, and resilient Nepali civil society that could advance the public interest. CS:MAP contributed to USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy Development Objective 1: “more inclusive and effective governance”. CS:MAP was composed of four objectives, within which equality and inclusion are integral, cross-cutting dimensions:

- 1 Strengthened enabling environment for civil society and media
- 2 Improved civil society and media capacity for effective policy advocacy and government engagement
- 3 More coordinated and effective civil society and media oversight of public resource use and service delivery
- 4 Strengthened organizational capacity and sustainability of selected civil society organizations working in USAID priority sectors

A fifth human rights objective, “Improved enforcement of fundamental human rights as enshrined in the Constitution,” was added in 2019, not as a change to the underlying project agreement but as an additional 15-month budget allocation to support human rights law, policy, and practice through engagement with civil society, the media, and public bodies nationally and sub-nationally.

Over 6.5 years of implementation, CS:MAP achieved a wide range of successes that helped promote a more legitimate, accountable, and resilient Nepali civil society capable of advancing the public interest. CS:MAP worked closely with implementing partners, civil society organizations (CSOs), media, and local governments.



## PROJECT GEOGRAPHY AND PARTNERS

- National level program intervention
- CDCS districts intervention
- Earthquake-affected districts intervention
- CS:MAP Focus Municipalities: 20
- CS:MAP Municipalities: 37

## CS:MAP IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Equal Access International
- International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
- Blue Diamond Society
- Center for Dalit Women Nepal
- Community Development Centre - Nepal
- Daayitwa
- Dalit NGO Federation
- Development Exchange Centre - Nepal
- Federation of Nepali Journalists
- FMDC - Media for Development and Social Change
- Foundation for Development Management Pvt. Ltd.
- Freedom Forum
- Good Governance Foundation (GoGo Foundation)
- Human Rights Awareness and Development Centre Nepal
- Human Rights Protection and Legal Service Centre Nepal
- Indreni Rural Development Center Nepal
- Informal Sector Service Center
- Information and Human Rights Research Centre
- Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal
- Integrated Rural Development Society Gulmi
- Interface, Nepal
- Kathmandu Living Labs
- Martin Chautari
- Media Advocacy Group
- Mitra Samaj
- National Election Observation Committee
- Nepal National Social Welfare Association
- Nepal Participatory Action Network
- NGO Federation of Nepal
- Rural Woman Development Centre
- Samata Foundation
- Samjhauta Nepal
- Samudayik Sarathi
- Sanjeevani Nepal
- Shtrii Shakti
- Shubha Media Home Pvt. Ltd
- Social Science Baha
- Society for Humanism Nepal
- South Asia Partnership Nepal
- Sundar Nepal Sanstha
- Unity Service Cooperation Nepal
- Women Acting for Transformative Change
- Youth Innovation Lab

## CS:MAP COLLABORATORS (CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES, GOVERNMENTS, ACADEMIA)

- 57 Local Governments
- Provincial Governments (Bagmati, Gandaki, Karnali, Lumbini, and Sudur Paschim)
- National Human Rights Commission
- Central Bureau of Statistics
- Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority
- Dalit Commission of Nepal
- Election Commission of Nepal
- Kathmandu University
- Mid-Western University
- Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
- Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Admiration
- Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen
- Municipal Association of Nepal
- National Association of Rural Municipalities in Nepal
- National Information Commission
- National Planning Commission
- Nepal Law Commission
- Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers
- Press Council of Nepal
- Social Welfare Council
- Sudur Paschim University
- The Nepal Administrative Staff College
- Tribhuvan University

## KEY ACTIVITIES

CS:MAP supported civic engagement in three mutually reinforcing ways: by strengthening organizational and leadership capacity; supporting advocacy through better CSO and media collaboration related to civic space and a wide range of local development issues that resonated with citizens; and by strengthening collaborative governance in 57 core municipalities across 34 districts in ways that enhanced transparency, accountability, and inclusion.

**Public law and policy:** Provide technical support to CSO and media leadership, particularly at the federal and provincial level, regarding legal and policy dimensions including policy review and policy advocacy on the right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association to support the CSO and media enabling environment. This also included health and education, as well as other public interests including agriculture and disaster risk reduction, where support was mainly at local government level.

**Inclusive public sphere:** Enhance the role of the media in advancing public interests through support to radio, social media, and other programming, with a focus on the leadership of youth, sexual and gender minorities, and members of other marginalized groups at local and national levels.

**Participation and Accountability:** Support CSO and media engagement in promoting inclusive and accountable public services and resource use through participatory mechanisms from ward to municipal headquarters and district level. Support for structural changes in CSO and government partners through the promotion of Open Government Partnership Principles and civic engagement common principles.

**Civil society leadership, capacity, and public trust:** Support CSO and media leadership, capacity, and collaboration that advances the public values of inclusion, transparency, and accountability in governance.

**Human rights:** Improve the ability of human rights organizations to advocate and engage with government at the federal and subnational levels and improve sub-national governments' knowledge and understanding about how to incorporate the protection of rights into their planning.

**Institutionalizing equality and inclusion:** Strengthen essential transformative capacities i.e., participation, agency, and political voice of women and marginalized groups for inclusive governance and accountable government.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### Public Law and Policy

- At the federal level, 5 public policies were introduced, adopted, repealed, changed, or implemented consistent with citizen input.
- Supported 77 policy procedures in various stages of development, from analysis to implementation.
- Provided policy support to 57 local governments on formulating social accountability tools' guidelines, good governance policies, and anti-corruption strategies.
- Designed over 100 policy drafts in health, education, agriculture, disaster risk reduction, governance, and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). Of these, 53 were adopted by local governments as laws, policies, or guidelines; 31 were fully implemented; 12 were approved, and 10 are being reviewed before finalization.



### Inclusive Public Sphere

- Formed 68 Common Assemblies, 102 Listening, Discussion and Action Groups at the ward level.
- 52 Partnership Forums at the municipal level, and 34 CSO Coalitions at the district level as inclusive civic spaces to advance public interest issues.
- Engaged and mobilized 151 civil society champions to advance public interest issues and the agenda of the marginalized at the district level.
- Developed leadership skills and capacity for 831 households of Dalit and marginalized people of 34 CS:MAP working districts to get access to local municipalities to address their issues.
- Launched #MaKhaandina campaign reaching 187,372 people with messages against corruption.
- The Public Outreach Campaign reached more than 85,000 people with messages about the role and importance of civil society.
- Sajha Boli radio series that built citizen awareness of social accountability tools, engaged 43,444 callers in response to 1,487 episodes of Sajha Boli, 308 episodes of Sajha Boli Radio Bahas, and 49 episodes of youth-focused Sathi Sanga Manka Kura.



### Civil Society Leadership, Capacity, and Public Trust

- 14 local partners' capacity enhanced in internal governance and institutionalizing the system by developing and refining human resource policy, financial policy, staff recruitment, procurement, GESI policy, and organization strategic planning.
- 492 CSOs and media organizations are participating in a self-regulatory and institutional governance initiative.
- Internal governance minimum standards developed and applied by 27 CSOs and media organizations.
- Minimum standards of internal governance for CSOs and civic charters shared with 3,500 CSOs and adopted by 97 CSOs.
- Developed and customized the Organizational Capacity Assessment tool with more than 35 non-partner local CSOs using it to improve internal governance.
- Around 200+ district-level CSOs benefited from peer learning and sharing practices established between district-level CSOs in collaboration with NGO Federation.
- Developed Accountable Journalism Guidelines (AJ) and 298 mainstream journalists oriented on AJ.
- 1,447 trained civil society activists who served as election observers to promote fair and free elections.



## Participation and Accountability



- 34 civil society coalitions engaged in more than 280 oversight actions of public service and resource use with a focus on health, education, agriculture, and disaster risk reduction.
- Strengthened capacity of local governments and CSOs on the use of social accountability tools to improve the quality of public services.
- 167 civil society organizations reported being routinely consulted by policymakers on policies relevant to their constituencies.
- 708 public forums held in which national legislators and members of the public interact.
- Average Advocacy Readiness Index Score of “Policy Advocacy, Government Engagement, and Oversight” increased by 77% by the end of the project period among partner CSOs.
- 567 joint actions undertaken by CSO – media coalitions across sectoral policy priorities.
- Good Governance Barometer (GGB) was successfully implemented across 11 municipalities. By the end of the project, the GGB score increased from 41% in 2017 to 63% in 2022.
- 14 local governments adopted social accountability guidelines for the public hearing, public audit, and social audit.
- A network for CSOs working on Open Government Principles and civic engagement formed and advocated for an open and transparent government.

## Human Rights



- 39 Consultations nationwide with more than 600 CSOs to prepare three alternative/ shadow reports and one state Universal Periodic Review report, and 2 shadow reports on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.
- Provided training and support to around 3,000 human rights defenders and 130 human rights organizations.
- Built capacity of 50 judicial committees' members to resolve disputes by applying human rights-based approaches.
- Five local government units adopted standards, procedures, and institutional arrangements for human rights.
- Provided legal aid or victim assistance to members of low-income or marginalized communities in more than 50 cases.

## Institutionalizing equality and inclusion



- Engaged extensively with the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers to finalize the National Human Rights Action Plan to include provisions on a gender-responsive budget at all levels of government; protection of rights of the sexual and gender minorities, and provision to provide land to landless Dalits for one time to build a home.
- Equipped 257 civil society actors with essential knowledge and skills to become effective systems leaders and enable them to adopt an inclusive systems approach to drive systems-level change and apply its lens to bring GESI transformative change.
- Launched #MaBolchhu campaign reaching 396,340 people with messages against gender-based violence and discrimination.
- Adoption of GESI policy in 9 municipalities and dialogues and drafting process initiated in others indicating increased willingness and readiness to adopt the rights-based approach in municipal business processes and promote gender equality and social inclusion.
- Contributed to changing the understanding of prevailing binary norms, notions, and narratives around the issues of gender and sexuality through a series of training, sensitization, and dialogues.
- Supported Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI)-inclusive Census 2021 by
  - advocating for the addition of the non-binary category in the Census questionnaire and for the LGBTI-sensitive preparatory process of the census.
  - sensitizing 37 districts, 15 municipalities, 119 ward offices, and 1,732 census supervisors and 52 census officers on LGBTI concepts and issues for effective data collection of LGBTI individuals.
  - meeting queer communities in 37 districts on the importance of being counted in the Census.

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