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| Topic | <p><u>Inclusive Democracy: Marginalised Voices Reclaiming Power.</u> Fostering inclusivity within civil society organisations, with a focus on people with disabilities (PwD) and youth.</p> |
| Speakers | <p>Sarah Timreck, Youth Engagement Program Officer at International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Jiwan Acharya, Program Officer for Civic Engagement at Blind Youth Association Nepal (BYAN)</p> |
| Key Takeaways | <p><u>Actionable steps for mainstreaming disability into CSO activities and empowering youth:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Considering the cost of exclusion of people with disabilities- Adopting a rights-based approach instead of tokenistic approach to inclusion- Allowing participation from the marginalized group during planning and budgeting- Accommodating diverse needs through universal infrastructure design and alternative formats of communication- Recognising diversity within a marginalized group- Building up on the lessons learned about the parallels between diverse needs- Creating accessible spaces that allow significant participation of young people with disabilities, where they can gain confidence and influence discussions <p><u>Factors impacting young people's engagement in their communities and as decision-makers</u></p> <p>Positively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Media literacy and access to information, awareness raising- Adaptation tools: sign interpretation, braille...- Inclusive employment and quotas in politics to ensure equality of opportunity- Highlighting the value of young people's contributions- Education for youth in informal settings, capacity building for leadership skills development, mentorship and peer-to-peer learning- Support to youth led initiatives, programming with a focus on youth needs- Intergenerational spaces, where youth ideas meet older leaders's experience- Social and cultural community activities promoting cohesion and civic participation <p>Negatively</p> |

- Poor access to education and limited economic opportunities
- Adultism, existing mindset or cultural norms of older population
- Inaccessible technologies limiting their capacity to be informed
- Physical inaccessibility, inadequate infrastructure (stairs, bathrooms...)
- Youth matters and concerns clearly not a priority of newly elected candidates
- Corruption and lack of funding for youth initiatives, leading to youth apathy towards politics
- Nepotism and stiff hierarchical structures, limiting youth growth and creating a feeling of hopelessness

Highlighted Initiatives

Examples of CSOs activities mainstreaming disability and empowering youth

- IFES' research on participation and engagement of young people with disabilities

[In Their Words: A Practical Guide for Engaging Young People in Civic Education](#)

A survey that covers more than 70 countries and shows existing access barriers, such as the misperception that young people with disabilities are not able to be part of civic and political life, for example.

- [IFES' global leadership curriculum for young persons with disabilities, Engaging a New Generation for Accessible Governance and Elections \(ENGAGE\)](#)

A programme adapted to the unique context of young people with disabilities that has augmented its alumni's public and civic engagement.

Other resources

- IFES & BYAN [presentations](#)
- IFES' article [[Positive Youth Development: A Bridge to Connect Civic Education and Sustainable Development](#)], about connecting the meaningful engagement of young people to effective civic education practices and sustainable development (for more information, please reach out to alaw@q2impact.com)
- IFES' [Intersectionality Assessment Framework](#) on the questions to ask when planning a project
- BYAN and IFES' [Report on Access and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Nepal's 2022 General Elections](#)