

TI IPP STRONGG IN NEPAL

Together for Social Accountability and Integrity (TSAI) in Nepal

Established in 1996, Transparency International Nepal (TI Nepal) is part of the Transparency International global coalition against corruption that brings together chapters operating in more than 100 countries worldwide with an international Secretariat based in Berlin, working towards a shared vision: a world free of corruption.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, Nepal has improved its score in the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), rising from 27 points in 2015 to 35 in 2023. Although Nepal has made slight progress against some indicators related to fundamental aspects of good governance, its overall score remains poor, and corruption continues to be a significant issue. The country faces rampant corruption in public service delivery, hindering citizens, especially vulnerable individuals, and communities from benefiting uninterruptedly from

basic services in a fair and transparent manner. According to Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer – Asia 2020 (GCB), 58% of Nepalese citizens thought that corruption levels had increased in the 12 months prior to the survey.

PROJECT APPROACH

With support from the *TI Indo-Pacific Partnership for Strong, Transparent, Responsive & Open Networks for Good Governance (TI IPP STRONGG) 2020 – 2023*, TI Nepal worked towards engaging a wide range of anti-corruption actors, including citizens, civil society organisations, public institutions, and private sector entities, to enhance accountable governance at all levels and in all sectors of society. The chapter reached 3,988 people directly and more than 70,000 people indirectly through FM radios and print media under the *Together for Social Accountability and Integrity (T-SAI)* project. The project was implemented over a period of 3 years and 7 months, from June 2020 to December 2023.



Orienting Mothers' Group in Dhading / Picture: © Transparency International Nepal



Street demonstration organised on anti-corruption day in Kathmandu / Picture: © TI Nepal

TI NEPAL'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Evidence Based Advocacy in Community Development Process

Government offices have responded positively to key recommendations put forward by TI Nepal, which were compiled through extensive engagement with community members, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, regarding service delivery issues. Several of these recommendations have already been implemented, resulting in notable improvements in service delivery. The compiled data on the utilisation of Social Accountability Tools (SATs) and subsequent discussions resulted in an increased use of SATs in the government offices surveyed at the district level. In response to TI Nepal's recommendation letter addressing the absence of citizen charters in ward offices, as identified during Mobile ALACs, the Dakshinkali Municipality office instructed all 8 ward offices to implement a citizen charter based on TI-Nepal's design.

Furthermore, government authorities acted upon TI Nepal's recommendations following inspections of public schools under construction. This has led to enhanced construction quality, better utilization of public resources, and increased transparency through the disclosure of project details to the public and relevant stakeholders. Additionally, a potentially problematic Anti-Money Laundering (AML) amendment bill presented by the government was halted for more discussions and

amendments by both Houses following a joint media campaign and press release led by TI-Nepal and affiliated organizations (AOs). This campaign targeted prevention of loopholes that could facilitate the conversion of illicit funds into legitimate assets under certain conditions.

Strengthened Civic Engagement

Organised groups including women, senior citizens, low-income individuals, and disadvantaged communities actively participated in TI Nepal's interactive programmes. Through these engagements, these groups gained a deeper understanding of government systems and processes aimed at addressing their needs in service delivery. Service seekers also had the opportunity to directly express their concerns to government service providers during interactions facilitated by TI Nepal.



Citizens from the Shangharapur Municipality seeking advice from a mobile ALAC service. / © TI Nepal

Furthermore, integrity lecture sessions held in collaboration with educational institutions, featuring prominent personalities, significantly enhanced students' comprehension and interest in critical issues. These sessions not only raised awareness among students but also prompted schools to commit to organising similar sessions in the future. TI Nepal's monitoring of the ongoing construction of a school building, with the active involvement of concerned stakeholders and local residents, increased their vigilance in overseeing the progress of construction in their vicinity.

Collective Partnerships Against Corruption

TI Nepal collaborated with various organisations, including the Women's Security Pressure Group (WSPG) Nepal, a "rainbow coalition" advocating for the common interests of Nepalese women, National Federation of Disabled Nepal (NFDN), the national umbrella organisation for persons with disabilities, the mother's group, and the society of senior citizens from different local levels to listen to their voices and raise awareness on the issue of service delivery as well as anti-corruption effort.

TI Nepal also sustained collaborative efforts with 14 Affiliated Organisations (AOs) across various provinces. Together, they advocated for anti-corruption measures and pressured the government to address corruption cases highlighted in the media. Furthermore, they shared insights acquired during international visits to enhance capacity building.



Interactions between members of marginalised communities and ward representatives facilitated by TI Nepal, following the mobile ALAC at Shankharapur Municipality / Picture: © TI Nepal

TI Nepal's Advocacy Resolves School Construction Issue

A concerned citizen reached out to TI Nepal via its hotline, raising concerns about the delayed completion of a 4-room building at Banskharka Secondary School in Dhading. Despite attempts to gather information, project details remained undisclosed, leaving locals feeling that the construction was incomplete despite the contractor having received final payment prematurely.

Upon investigation, TI Nepal engaged with the school's newly appointed principal, management committee, and local ward chair. It was confirmed that the construction was indeed unfinished. Promptly, TI Nepal contacted the Education Department of the Benighat Rorang Rural Municipality (RM) office and the Education Development and Co-ordination Unit (EDCU), advocating for swift action.

In response to TI Nepal's advocacy, EDCU committed to addressing the issue in collaboration with the school and relevant stakeholders. Consequently, the Municipality office formally requested information from the school regarding the project's details and completion status. Acknowledging the urgency, the school convened a meeting with stakeholders and agreed to complete the remaining work under the supervision of the new principal and management committee. Construction resumed and was successfully finalized within six months.

TI Nepal, along with technical experts from the Municipality office and EDCU, conducted a thorough evaluation of the building. Based on their assessment, TI Nepal provided minor suggestions for improvement, which were accepted by all involved parties.

The initial complainant expressed gratitude for TI Nepal's intervention, recognizing the positive outcome. The school's new principal also extended appreciation to TI Nepal for rectifying the situation caused by premature payment release, ensuring no additional financial burden on the school.