

# TAKING THE LEAD! YOUTH IN GOVERNANCE

YOUTH CASE STUDY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEPAL



## SUMMARY

In 2016, 60% of Amnesty International Nepal's members were young people who actively work on activism and campaigning. In response to an increasing demand by young members to participate at all levels of the Amnesty International Nepal's work, specifically in governance, the section held elections and two young members were incorporated into the National Board.



## STORY OF CHANGE

Amnesty International Nepal has been growing its youth membership since 2007 through youth groups. In 2018, Amnesty Nepal had more than 40 youth groups with 50+ members each and a total of 3527 young members. In 2007 a Youth National Working Group was formed by 5 young members to communicate youth perspectives to the National Board and bring youth groups together. However, they wanted to become more involved in decision-making processes and governance. In response to these needs the Board added two positions in 2016 to their team for young members. Each youth group nominated one member to be interviewed by an election committee appointed by the National Board. The nominated leaders have to be 17-23 years old, members of Amnesty for at least 6 months, and must have worked with other youth-led Nepali organizations. At the election, each youth group chooses two people to vote on their behalf based on their commitment and contributions. In the first election which took place in 2016, there were 9 voting polls across the country managed by election officers who were appointed by the election committee. After the election, consultations were conducted to review and simplify the election modality.

"We are always told that youths are the leaders of tomorrow, but tomorrow never comes. Our time is now and we should not wait for it. We need to take responsibility and make things happen." – Pasang (National Board Youth Member)

## OBJECTIVES

- Include young people in decision-making processes and governance with the necessary competencies required.
- Promote a more intersectional and intergenerational approach to the selection of members in the National Board.
- Incentivize leadership among young members because it inspires them to become more involved and committed to the movement.
- Create a more sustainable movement by letting young, creative and innovative people take lead at all levels of the organisation.

## IMPACT

- Young people now have a space and the authority to lobby and push for initiatives that are in line with Amnesty International's Strategic Goals.
- Widening of spaces where young people can share their views and needs with the Board.
- The Board is considering engaging 2 more young people as observers on the Board in their Annual General Meeting in 2018.
- Young members of Amnesty International Nepal became more committed to the movement because they can aspire to become leaders. For instance, youth groups' leaders have been increasingly taking lead in advocating for Amnesty's campaigns through a variety of activities.
- In 2018 a young Board member attended the Global Assembly Member as youth delegate.

## TIPS AND TRICKS

- *Consider youth perspectives!* Many young people are very active and passionate about human rights work, give them a chance to decide on the movement's planning and strategy.
- *Open spaces for youth role models!* When young members see that other young people have become leaders they feel more inspired to contribute as well.
- *Give youth a space in governance!* Do not just mobilize them, let them drive the movement.
- *As a young person, believe in yourself!* If you are clear on what you want to achieve within the parameters of Amnesty International's Strategic Goals, don't be afraid to take the lead.



“Young people are creative in their approaches to create impact and are always looking to improve themselves and the organisation” - Bipin Budhathoki (National Board Youth Member)

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Pasang is one of the young members elected to be part of the National Board. She has been working with Amnesty International Nepal since 2010 leading the youth group of her region and later advising the Board as part of the National Youth Advisory Panel. Pasang is currently pushing for a digital platform and more digital campaigning and has advocated for the drafting of a National Youth Strategy which is now in process. Pasang feels like she has equal representation within the Board because she can push for the agenda of young Amnesty members, suggesting youth-friendly and youth-focused content and strategies. Pasang shared: “We have to be clear on our points and be straightforward with what we want, and we have to strategically look for ways to make things happen.”

“Having young people in the Board makes the rest of the members feel more committed to work for Amnesty Nepal's youth movement and to ensure that young people feel represented” - Lekh Nath Niraula (National Board, General Secretary)

## STAKEHOLDERS

- Amnesty International Nepal
- Regional Activism and Youth Coordinator at the International Secretariat
- Youth members
- Youth groups
- Global Youth Team at International Secretariat

## KEY INFORMATION

- Contact Amnesty International Nepal for more information: [info@amnestynepal.org](mailto:info@amnestynepal.org)

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