



# Case Study Series 3:

## Addressing Citizens' Concerns: Inspiration from Proactive Civil Servants

### Case 7 - Engagement of Marginalized People in the Policy Making

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The case studies for this series are collected from real-life cases of civil servants working in different South Asian countries. This collection initiative is an attempt to document different proactive approaches taken by civil servants and, in the process, encourage other civil servants to become more proactive in their workplaces. If you know of other such proactive acts, please email us ([parvez.yousuf@northsouth.edu](mailto:parvez.yousuf@northsouth.edu)), and we will get back to you to collect more information.

# Case 7-Engagement of Marginalized People in the Policy Making

Md. Parvez Hasan Yousuf, Sakir Mohammad and Hasan Muhammad Baniamin

## Missing voice of marginalized people in policymaking

Public policymaking is a complex and intricate affair that usually dictates the fates of certain groups or specific issues. Therefore, the government worldwide tries to be inclusive in policy-making initiatives. However,<sup>1</sup> it is difficult for developing and underdeveloped nations due to different reasons such as limited government resources, the urgency of the matter, lack of initiative, and limited government machinery.

Nepal is also a developing country that struggles to include all relevant stakeholders in the policy-making process, says Ms. X, who works as Under Secretary at the Nepal Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MOWCSC). It is challenging to involve marginalized groups in society as they are rarely organized or have any collective presence interest group. She added that in public policy, particularly within her ministry, stakeholder engagement needs to be well coordinated. Traditionally, public policies concerning marginalized groups have been developed and implemented without any or little input from them.

This usually leads to ineffective policy formulation and implementation. Besides, the group often feels neglected and lacks representation in government legitimacy.

## Development of a database for inclusive policy making

Ms. X has developed a method to incorporate marginalized people directly into the policy-making process by maintaining and categorizing a detailed guest list from various events at the MOWCSC. Within the guest lists, she has kept basic demographic details such as the name, background, location, education, gender orientation, professional background, and prior contributions to discussions on women, children, and senior citizen issues. As of March 2024, the list contains the details of approximately 30,000 marginalized people from various parts of Nepal with different backgrounds and orientations. The list became a foundational tool for ongoing stakeholder engagement and allowed for targeted communication when consulting on policies relevant to each group's expertise or interest.

### Problem

Marginalized people are often left out of the policy-making process

### Solution

Development of a database for the different marginalized people to engage in policy formulation needs.

### Outcome

Marginalized people are engaged in the policy-making process, and their concerns and needs are addressed.

### **Direct involvement of marginalized people in policy making**

Whenever a new policy was drafted or an existing one was up for revision concerning women, children, and senior citizens, Ms. X utilized the database to identify and contact relevant stakeholders. Usually, her team makes phone calls or sends group messages or emails to invite the participants for in-depth interviews or group discussions. The team also sends surveyors to the stakeholders for their input on the policy. This, in turn, helps to formulate the draft policies and ensures that the policies are well-rounded and inclusive. The drafts are then sent back to the same group of people for feedback to ensure comprehensive mechanisms for refinement and accountability. Ms. X says that by engaging marginalized people in policy-making, the MOWCSC has bridged the gap between realities and targeted policy intervention. The targeted group shared their satisfaction and ownership over the policies.

### **Declarations**

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