

DELVING INTO THE DIVERSE ISSUES RELATED TO THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN NEPAL

A study conducted as a part of the Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellowship 2023, together with
the Honorable Sumana Shrestha

Researcher:

Sushant Nepali
Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellow 2023

Government Partner:

Hon. Sumana Shrestha
Member of the House of Representatives
August 2023

Mentor:

Dr. Kalpana Khanal
Senior Research Fellow, Policy Research Institute



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

From the outset of my journey as a fellow to the culmination of this report, numerous individuals have played pivotal roles. Their guidance and support have been instrumental in enabling me to complete my fellowship with a wealth of insights and experiences. At the forefront, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Daayitwa for the invaluable opportunity provided through the Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellowship.

A special expression of gratitude is reserved for the dedicated fellowship team members: Ms. Rakshya Silwal, Sushit Dhakal, Satish Bajracharya, and Prajol Joshi, Aman Awale. Their unwavering guidance and facilitation accompanied me throughout this journey, guiding me from inception to conclusion. I am equally appreciative of my mentor, Kalpana Khanal, whose valuable feedback significantly enriched my research endeavors. My heartfelt thanks extend to the experts who graciously shared their insights during the diverse sessions.

Turning to my assigned workplace, Hon. Sumana Shrestha Secretariat, my gratitude knows no bounds. I am indebted to them for welcoming me into their fold and considering me an integral part of their team. The team's warm reception and continuous guidance were invaluable. I must commend Aakriti Ghimire, the Chief of Staff, for her exemplary leadership and guidance that served as a constant source of inspiration. Her adept leadership style is truly commendable. Honorable Sumana Shrestha, my government partner, stands as a beacon of inspiration with her commitment, actions, integrity, and authenticity.

I also extend my appreciation to the friends within this fellowship program, as well as my family and friends, whose unwavering motivation sustained me throughout this fellowship journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
CHAPTER - I.....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 About DNPP Fellowship.....	1
1.2 Objectives of this Fellowship.....	2
1.3 About my Public Partner.....	3
1.4 About my Mentor.....	3
CHAPTER II.....	5
2. Work Performed during the Fellowship	5
2.1 Research on Reform Options in the Education Sector:	5
2.2 Budget Analysis:.....	13
2.3 Research on the issues surrounding Non-Objection Certificate (NOC)	15
2.4 Drafting letters on behalf of Sumana Shrestha Secretariat	17
2.5 Suggesting Amendments in the Proposed Nepal University Bill	18
CHAPTER III	19
3. Modus Operandi.....	19
3.1 Problem Identification	19
3.2 Research on the Issue.....	19
3.3 Documentation of the findings.....	19
3.4 Consulting with the mentor.....	19
3.5 Sharing with the public partner	19
3.6 Following up with the issue	20
CHAPTER IV	21
4. Learnings and Experiences Gained through this fellowship:	21
4.1 Navigating the Parliamentary Landscape:	21
4.2 Effective Time Management:	21
4.3 Rapid Research Proficiency:.....	21
4.4 Meeting Stringent Deadlines:	21
CHAPTER V	22
5. Difficulties and Challenges During Internship	22
5.1 Aligning with the Public Partner's Vision:	22
5.2 Undertaking Unaddressed Research:	22
5.3 Navigating Parliamentary Roadblocks:	22
CHAPTER VI:	23

Findings, Conclusion, and Suggestions	23
6.1 Findings:	23
6.2 Conclusion:	24
6.3 Suggestions:	24

CHAPTER - I

1. Introduction

1.1 About DNPP Fellowship

The Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellowship (DNPPF) is a program aimed at addressing Nepal's social, political, and economic challenges. It seeks to bridge the trust gap between the youth and the government while tackling the issue of youth unemployment, enabling them to actively engage in democratic civic participation.

DNPPF mobilizes talented Nepali youth in research and advocates for evidence-based policymaking to promote a prosperous Nepal. Over the course of its 10-year journey, the fellowship has provided opportunities for Nepali youth to collaborate closely with government agencies and parliamentarians, conducting policy research and contributing to innovation in the governance system.

The DNPPF 2023 spans three months, commencing from June 5, 2023, to September 5, 2023. It offers unique opportunities for participating candidates to work closely with public partners, engage in leadership and research training provided by esteemed professionals from prestigious institutions, and receive mentorship from experts in respective fields. In addition to the professional development benefits, fellows are provided with a monthly stipend to support them during the program. This fellowship is a good opportunity for people with specific qualifications in fields related to public policy, international relations, economics, business, or relevant disciplines, preferably with research experience.

After learning about this fellowship program, I applied by filling out a comprehensive Google form, which involved answering various questions related to my background, academic achievements, research experience, and interests in public policy. Following the application process, I was thrilled to receive news that I had been shortlisted for the next stage. Subsequently, I was invited for an interview, where I had the opportunity to showcase my skills, knowledge, and passion for policy research and public service. During the interview, I was asked relevant and thought-provoking questions, which allowed me to demonstrate my understanding of the program's mission and how I could contribute effectively. The interview process was rigorous yet

enriching, and I felt privileged to be considered for this esteemed fellowship program. Finally, after careful evaluation, I was overjoyed to receive the news of my selection as a Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellow, and I am truly grateful for this opportunity, as it has provided me with invaluable insights into the workings of policy at a higher level, the functioning of parliamentarians, collaborative leadership and research, and other similar aspects.

1.2 Objectives of this Fellowship

The Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellowship Program was introduced with the following objectives.

- A) Promote Evidence-Based Policymaking:** The fellowship aims to advocate for evidence-based policymaking in Nepal. By engaging young professionals in research and providing them with opportunities to collaborate with government agencies and parliamentarians, the program seeks to foster the use of reliable data and research to inform policy decisions, leading to more effective and impactful governance.
- B) Empower Nepali Youth for Civic Engagement:** DNPPF intends to bridge the trust gap between the youth and the government by empowering young Nepali professionals with the necessary skills and resources to actively participate in democratic civic engagement. Through their involvement in government projects and policy research, the fellowship equips youth with the tools to become proactive contributors to Nepal's development and governance.
- C) Enhancing Leadership Capacity:** The program focuses on nurturing collaborative leadership among the fellows by means of dedicated leadership sessions. These sessions are thoughtfully structured to facilitate a comprehensive grasp of various dimensions of leadership. While working closely with public partners and experts, participants have the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership skills and innovative approaches to address and solve complex issues thereby making meaningful contributions to bring a positive change in the country.
- D) Developing the research skills:** DNPPF aims to cultivate a culture that values research and effective writing. To achieve this, the program has meticulously crafted a range of sessions that span from fundamental research skills to comprehensive training in quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Furthermore, these sessions are dedicated to

imparting multifaceted writing techniques. The program provides a platform for us to demonstrate our writing prowess through avenues like blogs and Op-eds. By assembling a diverse group of talented individuals and assigning them to investigate various prominent subjects under expert guidance, the program endeavors to foster a robust research culture.

E) Support Government Initiatives and Priority Projects: The program seeks to provide valuable research support to the government and political representatives in addressing critical needs of priority projects. By collaborating with government agencies and parliamentarians, the fellows contribute their expertise and ideas to initiatives that have a direct impact on Nepal's development and prosperity.

1.3 About my Public Partner

During my participation in the Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellowship, I had the privilege of being placed with Parliamentarian Sumana Shrestha, who was elected through proportional representation by Rastriya Swatantra Party to the House of Representatives. Sumana Shrestha stands out as an exceptional figure among politicians, displaying remarkable qualities of hard work, genuineness, and courage. Unlike the common perception of politicians in our society, she defies stereotypes and embodies a true commitment to public service. Working tirelessly, she leads a team of 20-25 students and graduates who dedicate themselves to researching and collecting data and facts to address critical issues in the parliament. She firmly believes that data and evidence are crucial in conveying her points to the public, and she consistently puts her research in the public domain for widespread dissemination of information.

Her leadership style is truly commendable; she guides and inspires her team with great effectiveness. Her efforts and dedication have not gone unnoticed by the public, who appreciate her constant interaction through platforms like Facebook Live, videos, and social media. Sumana Shrestha's commitment to transparency and open communication resonates with the public, further reinforcing her reputation as an outstanding leader in the political sphere.

1.4 About my Mentor

During my time as a Daayitwa Nepal Public Policy Fellow, I had the privilege of being a mentee to Dr. Kalpana Khanal which is itself a big opportunity. As a mentor, her insights were really valuable to my journey as a public policy fellow. She is an economist with a strong interest in

various fields, including public policy, macroeconomics, international finance, money and banking, development economics, institutional economics, social justice, feminist economics, statistics, and data analysis.

Currently, she is affiliated with the Policy Research Institute (PRI) located in Kathmandu, Nepal. PRI holds the distinction of being a state-established, specialized think-tank institution dedicated to enhancing the evidence-based, effective, and functional nature of the country's public policies. She has built an impressive record of publications and has presented her work at numerous national and international conferences, as well as high-level dialogues. Additionally, she has taken on leadership roles such as chairing international conference panels and moderating high-level policy dialogues.

CHAPTER II

2. Work Performed during the Fellowship

Over the course of the three-month fellowship, my assignment was at the Hon. Sumana Shrestha Secretariat. This experience resembled being part of a dynamic team composed of around 20 to 25 students and researchers, all of whom were dedicatedly engaged in supporting Hon. Sumana Shrestha with her various responsibilities. Throughout this period, I had the privilege to engage in extensive work and research, encompassing a wide array of topics. Some of the notable aspects I had the chance to delve into during these three months include:

2.1 Research on Reform Options in the Education Sector:

At the outset, I was presented with a document comprising concise feedback and suggestions offered by diverse experts regarding potential reform avenues within Nepal's education sector. I was instructed to conduct research using an Excel spreadsheet to look into these issues, locate relevant laws, policies, and guidelines, and then assess the existing provisions along with identifying any gaps or shortcomings. Furthermore, I was tasked with formulating requisite solutions and recommendations after meticulously analyzing the problems based on information acquired through researching diverse texts, news articles, and international practices.

In the process of investigating this subject, I tackled approximately 9 to 10 distinct issues. These ranged from enhancing the quality and competence of head teachers in community schools to overhauling teacher tenure systems, promoting data transparency and accessibility at both local levels and within schools, fostering accountability and elevating school quality, refining financial accountability and equity in school financing, accommodating non-state actors' involvement in school education, segregating the regulatory and operational functions of the ministry, expanding conversations to encompass integrated services and cross-sectoral interventions in early childhood development, and effecting reforms within Tribhuvan University.

My research spanned all these subjects, and I meticulously documented my findings within the Excel spreadsheet, which was subsequently submitted to the secretariat. Some of the findings has been elaborated below:

i. Enhancing the quality and competence of head teachers:

Effective and efficient leadership is crucial for ensuring the delivery of quality education in school levels. Head teachers play an important role in shaping the learning environment, overseeing administrative operations, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

National Education Policy 2076 asserts the need of leadership development for head teachers by equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and values to lead schools efficiently.

However, the existing legal provisions in the education system may have certain gaps and loopholes that might be an obstacle for the capacity development of Head teachers. The eligibility criteria¹ for head teachers, as outlined in the Education Rules 2059, may be too narrowly focused on pedagogy and education degrees, neglecting individuals with expertise in other areas such as management. This problem has been recognized by the government itself. In the curriculum² for the leadership training for Head Teachers, it has been stated that this leadership training is important because Head Teachers are only selected from education background not from planning and management. This limitation can hinder the appointment of individuals best suited for effective school administration.

Furthermore, the low monthly allowance provided to head teachers, as specified in the same rule³, may fail to motivate and retain qualified candidates in these leadership positions. As per the provision, the Head teacher of Secondary level of School receives only Rs 500 as a monthly allowance and Rs 300 and Rs 200 respectively for the Head teachers of lower secondary level and primary level schools.

¹ Rule 93, Education Regulations 2059.

² Head Teacher, Leadership Capacity Development Training Curriculum, Falgun 2073. (<http://nced.gov.np/np/files/multipleupload/0-02-Mar-2017-12-03-01HT%20Leadership%20Training%20Curriculum.pdf>)

³ Rule 93(11) Education Regulations 2059.

These legal provisions need to be revisited to address these shortcomings. Also, we need to establish a specialized leadership training program similar to the Singapore’s “Leaders in Education Program” which aims to train potential head teacher rigorously.⁴ School Education Sector Plan⁵ also looks forward to developing the leadership capacity of head teachers and the improvement of the appointment systems. As envisioned by the National Education Policy 2076, we need to make an effort towards enhancing the facilities for head teachers, fostering capacity-building programs for principals, teachers, staff, and management committee officials, establishing legal provisions that hold principals accountable and grant them authority, and promoting greater representation of women in school leadership roles.

ii. Reforming teacher’s tenure:

The topic at hand focuses on the need for reforming teacher tenure policies in the education sector. It acknowledges a significant challenge highlighted in the School Education Sector Plan 2022/23-2031/32⁶ - the shortage of adequate, competent, and motivated teachers in schools, which greatly impacts the quality of learning. To address this challenge, it is crucial to examine the existing teacher tenure system and its effectiveness in ensuring teacher quality and student outcomes.

The current teacher tenure system in Nepal, governed by the Education Service Commission Rules 2057 involves a competitive exam for the selection of permanent teachers. Teachers are appointed after written and practical exams and an interview. The Education Rules 2059 outlines a probationary period of six months for female teachers and one year for male teachers, with provisions for removal if their performance is unsatisfactory during this period⁷. However, there is an ongoing debate about the effectiveness of tenure, with a need to extend the

⁴ Prashant Jayapragas, *Leaders in Education Program: The Singapore Model for Developing Effective Principal-ship Capability*, CURRENT ISSUES IN COMPARATIVE EDUCATION (CICE) Volume 19, Issue 1, Fall 2016. https://www.tc.columbia.edu/cice/pdf/08_Jayapragas.pdf

⁵ School Education Sector Plan for the Nepal School Education Sector 2022/23-2031/32, Education Ministry, GoN.

⁶ *Id*

⁷ Rule 96, Education Rules 2059.

probationary period and implement rigorous evaluation processes. Key evaluation criteria include teacher performance in the classroom, student outcomes/growth data, and feedback from students, parents, and colleagues. However, the existing instruments have no such prescribed mechanisms to evaluate the teacher's performance and it is not also seen in the practice.

The research suggests potential solutions to reform teacher tenure policies, drawing inspiration from successful models such as the District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS) IMPACT system in the United States.⁸ One proposed solution is to implement a comprehensive evaluation system that considers multiple measures, including classroom observations, student growth data, and feedback from various stakeholders. Extending the probationary period for teachers and incorporating these rigorous evaluation criteria can help identify and retain high-performing teachers while providing support or dismissing those who underperform. The IMPACT system's success in DCPS, as evidenced by studies⁹, demonstrates that tenure reforms can lead to significant gains in student achievement by encouraging teacher improvement and promoting the retention of effective educators.

iii. Improving Data Transparency and Accessibility at the Local Level and Enhancing Transparency and Information about Schools

The topic under consideration centers on the imperative need to enhance data transparency and accessibility in the education sector, particularly at the local level. It recognizes that having readily available educational information is vital for informed decision-making, not only for education professionals but also for parents, students, and policymakers. The discussion stems from Nepal's National Education Policy 2076, which emphasizes the use of cloud technology for managing educational data in real-time. This approach aims to bolster the

⁸ Thomas S. Dee, James Wyckoff *Incentives, Selection, and Teacher Performance: Evidence from IMPACT*, JOURNAL OF POLICY ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT, Volume 34, Issue 2 p 267-297 (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/pam.21818>).

⁹ *Id*; Study: DC Public School's Teacher Evaluation System Continues to Improve Teacher Workforce DEC 02, 2019. (<https://batten.virginia.edu/about/news/study-dc-public-schools-teacher-evaluation-system-continues-improve-teacher-workforce>)

transparency of data, allowing it to be accessible and beneficial to a broader range of stakeholders.

The National Education policy¹⁰ and ICT policy¹¹ highlight the importance of real-time data management and the utilization of information and communication technology for educational quality enhancement. However, the existing infrastructure and accessibility issues present significant challenges. A major concern is the limited availability of computers and internet access in most schools across the country. The Economic Survey reveals that only 12 percent of public schools possess internet connectivity for IT-based studies.¹² This situation questions the feasibility of providing real-time access to educational information. Furthermore, while the policies emphasize data transparency, there is a lack of comprehensive evaluations and assessments of educational performance within the reports published by the Education and Human Resource Development Center.

To address the need for improved data transparency and accessibility, several solutions have been proposed.

- First and foremost, it is essential to enhance infrastructure by ensuring schools have the necessary data management systems, including computers and internet access.
- Schools should adopt a practice of regularly publishing comprehensive information, including school-level details, on their websites to foster transparency.
- The implementation of Educational Information Management System (EMIS) could significantly streamline data collection and management while enabling access at various administrative levels.
- Additionally, the development of standardized data formats and the revision of existing policies, such as the "Unified Educational Information

¹⁰ Policy 10.36, National Education Policy 2076.

¹¹ Policy 11.5.1, Information and Communication Technology Policy 2072

¹² Binod Ghimire, *Digital Divide too wide for online classes to succeed in Nepal*, THE KATHMANDU POST, May 28, 2020. <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2020/05/28/government-has-proposed-conducting-online-classes-but-a-majority-of-schools-and-students-don-t-have-computers-and-internet>

Management System Operation Directive, 2079," should be considered to facilitate real-time data dissemination and ensure public access to vital educational information.

- In conclusion, these solutions, coupled with addressing infrastructure challenges, are poised to substantially enhance the availability and utility of educational data across all levels of the education sector in Nepal.

iv. **Separating Regulatory and Operational Roles of the Ministry**

The discussion revolves around the need to distinguish the regulatory functions of the Ministry of Education from its operational roles. Currently, the Ministry of Education in Nepal is responsible for tasks such as formulating teacher appointment regulations, creating educational policies, conducting teacher examinations, issuing teaching license, and authorizing the selection of qualified teachers from local areas and schools.

This centralized approach defeats the purpose of the Constitution, which assigns the basic and secondary education management authority to local levels.¹³

While the Constitution empowers local levels to manage education up to the secondary level, the Education Act and Regulations, have limited local governments' authority over school operation-related matters. Even teacher appointments in many schools across Nepal are still subject to central commission decisions. The appointment of many teachers is carried out centrally through the Teacher Service Commission¹⁴, which conducts written exams, interviews, and grants teaching license.

This centralization poses a challenge to local empowerment and decision-making in the education sector. Some of the suggestions to decentralize the appointment of teachers are as follows:

¹³ Schedule 8, Constitution of Nepal 2072.

¹⁴ Section 11(b), Education Act, 2028.

- The responsibility for teacher recruitment, including conducting written exams, interviews, and issuing teaching license, should be devolved to local governments.
- To ensure that local levels and schools have the necessary autonomy, new Federal Education Act should clearly define the authority of local governments in appointing teachers.
- In addition to the operation of community schools in the Local Government Operation Act¹⁵, it should establish the provision for the appointment of teachers and staff for community schools. This would enable local bodies to recommend and appoint teachers for vacant positions and for the expansion of teaching and staff positions in community schools.

Overall, these solutions aim to grant local governments greater control over teacher appointments and education management, in alignment with constitutional provisions and the need for decentralization.

v. **The Necessity of Reform in the Governance Structure of Universities of Nepal:**

Currently, there exists a significant political intervention in the organizational framework of universities in Nepal, demanding its eradication and emphasizing the relevance of the Board of Trustees in shaping this structure. Such reforms align with the Nepali context.

As per the existing legal provisions of most universities, the Prime Minister serves as the Chancellor of the University. For example, In Tribhuvan University, Prime Minister is the Chancellor¹⁶ and the Education Minister is the Pro-chancellor¹⁷. The Chancellor I.e. Prime Minister also presides over the University Senate.¹⁸ Also, there is a provision to nominate the Student's leader to be a part of the University Senate.¹⁹

¹⁵ Section 11(2)(j), Local Government Operation Act, 2074.

¹⁶ Section 16(1), Tribhuvan University Act, 2049.

¹⁷ Section 17(1), Tribhuvan University Act, 2049.

¹⁸ Section 8, Tribhuvan University Act, 2049.

¹⁹ *Id*

The former vice-chancellor of Tribhuvan University, Prof. Kedarbhakta Mathema says, “because of the political interference in the appointment of Vice-Chancellor, Rector, Registrar, Dean, Director, the situation has become chaotic. If there is no interference from the Prime Minister, Minister of Education, or anyone from the political background, it might solve the problem.”²⁰

In that case, a comprehensive revision of the University Act is imperative to eliminate political intervention completely. The current organizational structure of universities and the roles of officials need to be reconsidered.

The Policy Research Institute suggests that, in Nepal, universities must establish an integrated and uniform legal framework²¹, distinct from individual institutional laws. The federal government should establish regulations and standards for provincial universities, enabling each province to establish, operate, manage, and regulate its respective university according to a unified law. The implementation of this system should be supervised by following provisions outlined in a federal-level law.

Also, globally renowned universities such as Harvard University, the University of Cambridge, and the University of London, there is an organized structure and system for trustee governance and administrative appointments. At Harvard, the Harvard Corporation and the Board of Overseers work collaboratively to establish an administrative structure.²²

In Nepal also, experts involved in education have deemed the trustee structure appropriate for leadership. Moreover, universities such as Madan Bhandari University and Gandaki University have already adopted the Board of trustee structure. However, it is essential to remain cautious when establishing

²⁰ Bhawanishwar Gautam, *भद्रगोल विश्वविद्यालय*, NAYA PATRIKA, (<https://www.nayapatrikadaily.com/news-details/104243/2023-01-05>)

²¹ नेपालमा विश्वविद्यालयहरूको अवस्था र प्रादेशिक विश्वविद्यालय स्थापनाका आयामहरू, नि.अ.प्र प्रकाशन संख्या ०६२, नीति अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठान, पृष्ठ संख्या १५५.

²² नेपालमा विश्वविद्यालयहरूको अवस्था र प्रादेशिक विश्वविद्यालय स्थापनाका आयामहरू, नि.अ.प्र प्रकाशन संख्या ०६२, नीति अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठान, पृष्ठ संख्या १४७.

organizational structures and making administrative appointments to avoid political influence that could negatively impact the overall university system.

2.2 Budget Analysis:

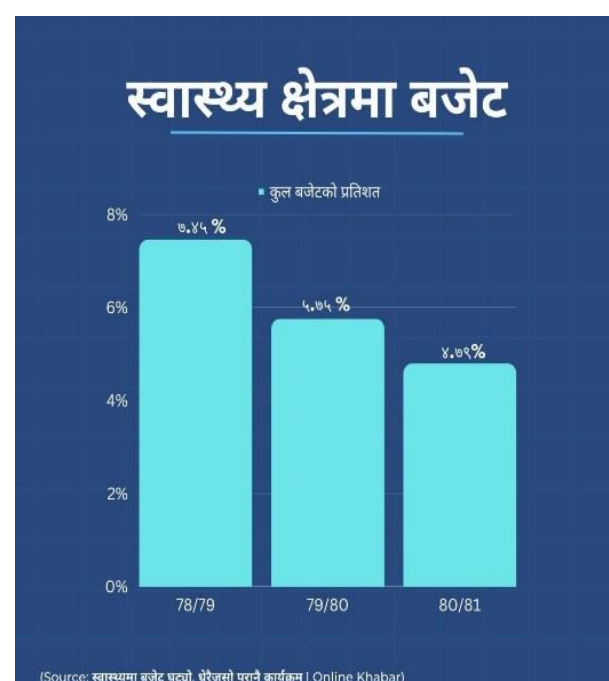
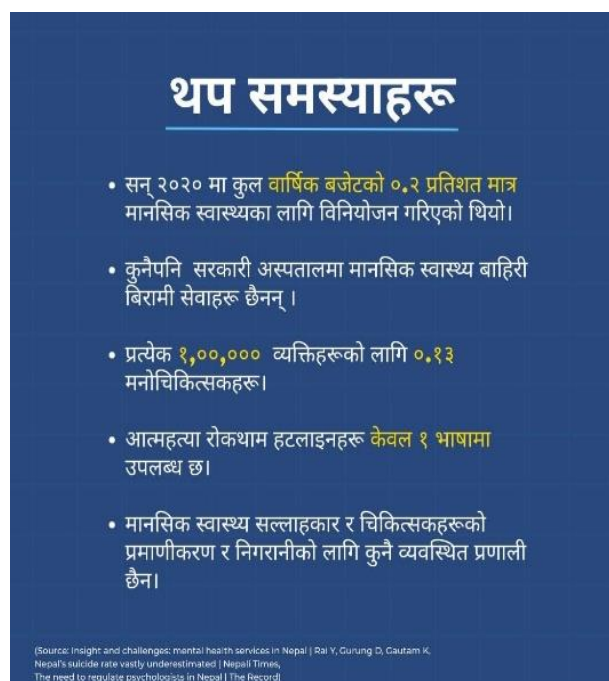
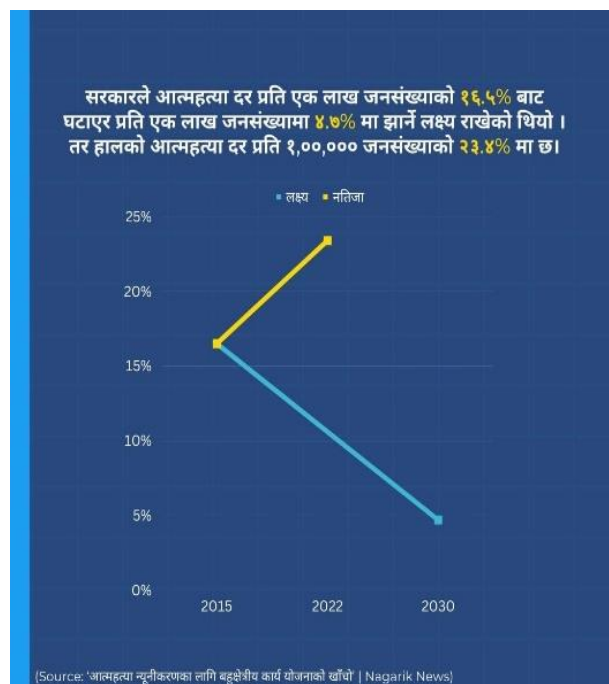
My engagement in budget analysis materialized during the parliamentary budget session, when I was entrusted with the task of scrutinizing the budget allocations of two vital ministries: The Ministry of Health and Population, and the Ministry of Education. Under the directive of Hon. Sumana Shrestha, I embarked on the exploration of budgetary allocations proposed by these ministries. My investigation focused on pinpointing inconsistencies and irregularities within the budget distribution. This endeavor unveiled instances where expenditures were duplicated under distinct headings, despite having identical motivations.

Furthermore, I was tasked with assessing areas overlooked by the budget allocation. Through this process, I identified key disparities. In the case of the Health Ministry, there was a notable lack of emphasis on mental health initiatives and the recruitment of essential human resources. Similarly, within the Education Ministry, the budget allocation was disproportionately tilted toward infrastructure development, sidelining investments in the enhancement of educational quality.

Subsequent to my analysis, I compiled my findings and submitted them to the secretariat. Portions of these findings were subsequently integrated into Hon. Sumana Shrestha's parliamentary speech. Additionally, my insights were transformed into informative infographics by the secretariat for dissemination through their social media platforms, ensuring public awareness on the matter.

Findings:

Ministry of Health and Population



Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

विश्वमा सिर्जना हुने नयाँ कामहरूको लागि के हामी तयार छौं?

वर्ल्ड इकोनोमिक फोरमको भविष्यमा हुने रोजगारीको माग सम्बन्धी २०२१ को रिपोर्ट अनुसार सबैभन्दा बढी माग हुने कामहरू यी हुन् -

- Work from Home Facilitator
- Fitness Commitment Counsellor
- Smart Home Design Manager
- XR Immersion Counsellor
- Workplace Environment Architect
- Algorithm Bias Auditor
- Data Detective
- Cyber Calamity Forecaster
- Tidewater Architect
- Human-Machine Teaming Manager

यदि छौं भने हाघो तयारी कहाँ, कस्तो छ ?

स्रोत: World Economic Forum at Davos, 2021 Report on Top 10 Jobs of the Future - For 2030 And Beyond

भौतिक पूर्वाधार विकास र शिक्षक कर्मचारीहरूको तलब, सुविधा र निवृत्तिभरणमा धेरै रकम विनियोजित

विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग को बजेट
रु. १९ अर्ब ७८ करोड ७९ लाख

शिक्षा, विज्ञान तथा प्रविधिको कुल बजेटको

पूर्वाधार निर्माणका लागि
रु. ३ अर्ब ५७ करोड १६ लाख

चालु खर्च
रु. १६ अर्ब २१ करोड ५५ लाख

राष्ट्रपति शैक्षिक सुधार कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत नयाँ विद्यालय भौतिक पूर्वाधार विकासको लागि
रु. ४४ करोड १० लाख

शिक्षकहरूको सेवा निवृत्तिभरण
रु. १८ अर्ब ६० करोड

स्रोत: आ.व. २०८०/८१ मा संघबाट कार्यन्वयन हुने निकायगत प्रमुख विकास कार्यक्रम तथा बजेट विवरण

आन्दोलनरत सामुदायिक विद्यालयका विद्यालय सहयोगी र लेखा सहायकका माग

	अहिलेको तलब	माग
विद्यालय सहयोगी	८,०००/-	३६,७३०/-
लेखा सहायक	१३,५००/-	२६,२१०/-

सरकारको नीति तथा कार्यक्रममा समावेश भएर पनि बजेटमा ती मागको सम्बोधन नहुनु पछाडीको कारण के त ?

स्रोत: विद्यालय कर्मचारीको आन्दोलनमा प्रहरी भएपछि नीति तथा कार्यक्रमको बजेट मागसँगै विद्यालय कार्यकारी

सूचना प्रविधि क्षेत्र अन्तर्गतका कार्यक्रममा शिक्षा मन्त्रालयको बजेट विनियोजन कस्तो छ ?

विश्वविद्यालयहरूमा इन्क्युबेशन केन्द्रहरूको स्थापना (विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग)	रु. २ करोड
शिक्षा तालिम केन्द्रहरूमा डिजिटल लर्निङ सेन्टरहरूको विकास र सुदृढीकरण	रु. १ करोड ७५ लाख
विद्यालयहरूमा IT प्रयोगशालाहरू, पुस्तकालयहरू र विज्ञान प्रयोगशालाहरूको स्थापना (राष्ट्रपति शैक्षिक सुधार कार्यक्रमको अंश)	रु. ३८ करोड ६१ लाख

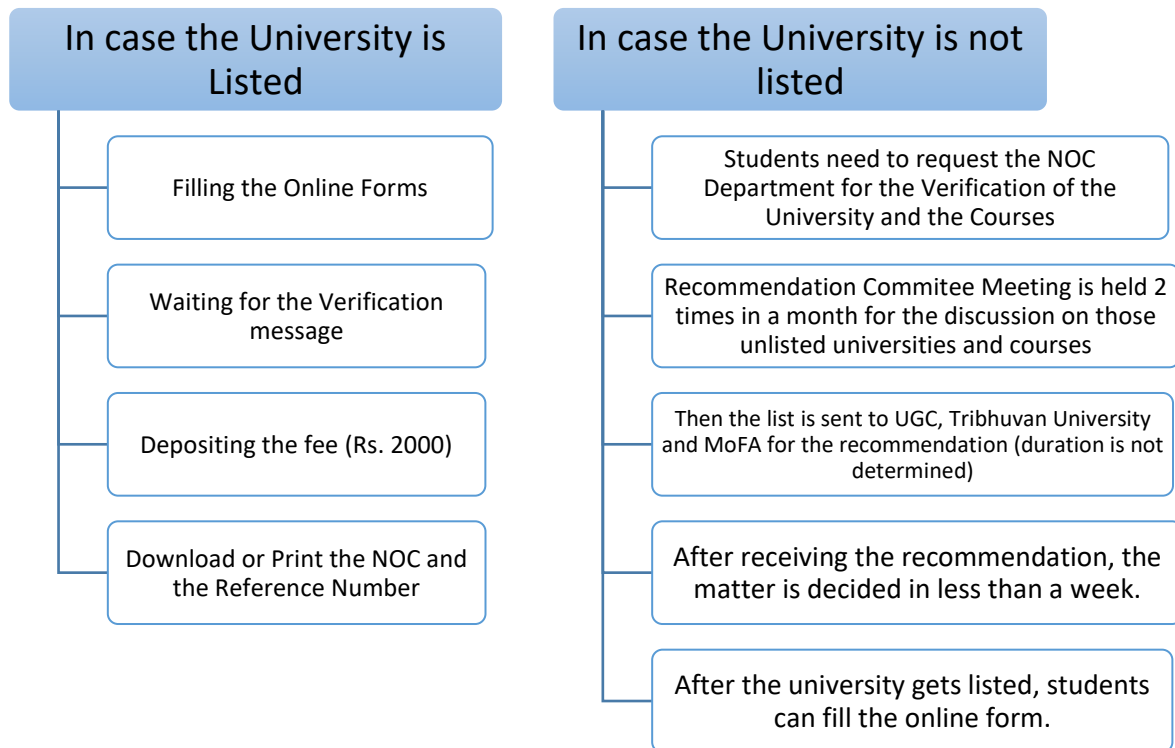
स्रोत: आ.व. २०८०/८१ मा संघबाट कार्यन्वयन हुने निकायगत प्रमुख विकास कार्यक्रम तथा बजेट विवरण

2.3 Research on the issues surrounding Non-Objection Certificate (NOC)

NOC is a No Objection Certificate granted by Government of Nepal for the Nepalese student to study abroad. The secretariat received numerous complaints from students who encountered substantial difficulties and prolonged delays in obtaining the mandatory NOC (No Objection Certificate) for their overseas studies. The guidelines for approval of foreign studies 2079, prohibits on giving the approval for the universities and courses that has not

been listed by the ministry.²³ In the same section, the guidelines state that the list can be updated however, the process is not quite clear. A pivotal challenge that emerged was the department's reluctance to issue the certificate for foreign universities and courses that were not pre-listed by the department. In such instances, the list had to be updated upon the student's submission of the necessary information and required documents. However, this process was characterized by its protracted nature, with no certainty regarding the issuance timeline. Some students even reported waiting for 3 to 4 months before receiving the NOC.

Flow Chart of NOC Issuance Process



After conducting an in-depth inquiry into this issue and thoroughly examined the guidelines in place, it became apparent that the guidelines lacked clarity regarding the protocols to be followed when issuing the NOC for foreign universities and courses not included in the list. Our efforts to seek clarity involved engaging in correspondence with

²³ Section 18(3), Guidelines for Approval of Foreign Studies 2079

the NOC department of the ministry, the University Grants Commission (UGC), Tribhuvan University, and the ministry itself. The outcome of these communications highlighted the urgent need to overhaul the NOC procedures and address the existing ambiguities.

Resolving this matter necessitates amendments to the existing laws and policies to establish a clear and comprehensive procedure. While the issues have been identified, questions have been raised, and potential solutions are being disseminated, the path to a resolution remains a substantial undertaking.

2.4 Drafting letters on behalf of Sumana Shrestha Secretariat

Upon receiving student complaints and conducting our own thorough investigation, we embarked on a process of problem identification and categorization. This was aimed at pinpointing the specific stakeholders to whom we could direct our inquiries. The range of issues covered a wide spectrum, encompassing matters related to the NOC, existing challenges within Tribhuvan University, and inquiries concerning the parliamentary committee on Education, Health, and Technology.

- In our interactions with the Ministry of Education, we sought clarification on the current status of the Federal Education Act and Uniform University Act.
- Our engagement with Tribhuvan University and the University Grants Commission (UGC) revolved around scrutinizing their organizational structures and evaluating whether officials were adhering to their terms of reference, and if so, how they were assessing it.
- Equally significant was our communication with the ministry regarding the significance of equivalence in academic matters.
- To understand the issues encircling the NOC, we circulated numerous letters to the ministry, UGC, Tribhuvan University, and the NOC Department.

Throughout the span of these three months, I drafted multiple letters directed at the aforementioned stakeholders. These letters were meticulously reviewed and subsequently dispatched from Hon. Sumana Shrestha's official email. Responses varied, ranging from instant replies to delayed ones, and in some instances, no response at all. Nonetheless, playing an integral part in a process that scrutinizes our systems and policies for issues and vulnerabilities felt like a pivotal responsibility. I am of the belief that I contributed

significantly to this process, thereby advancing us towards the attainment of broader objectives.

2.5 Suggesting Amendments in the Proposed Nepal University Bill

An essential role of parliamentary members belonging to the opposition party involves the presentation of amendments to bills, a role that demands identifying issues and vulnerabilities within proposed legislation. Hon. Sumana Shrestha, known for her unwavering commitment to rectifying wrongs, has consistently utilized her position to raise inquiries in the parliament.

Over the course of three months, a handful of bills were brought forth in the parliament. Notable among them were the E-commerce Bill, the Nepal University Bill, and bills aimed at amending existing legal provisions. Among these, I had the privilege to delve into the intricacies of the Nepal University Bill. My approach encompassed the systematic categorization of issues and vulnerabilities, followed by the formulation of amendments that were then documented within an Excel spreadsheet, preparing them for further consideration.

Our analysis revealed persistent room for political interference within the Nepal University Bill, calling for immediate amendments to transform the university into a politically neutral entity. While the Bill awaits presentation in the House of Representatives, we remain hopeful that our suggestions will find incorporation. This process underscores our commitment to ensuring that the legislative framework evolves to address pressing issues and foster a more equitable environment.

CHAPTER III

3. Modus Operandi

3.1 Problem Identification

Issues were discerned through a multifaceted approach involving emails from students, expert insights, and individual research efforts. These sources collectively aid in the identification and acknowledgment of pertinent problems.

3.2 Research on the Issue

Research unfolded through various channels, including meticulous analysis of relevant documents. Additionally, it encompassed direct engagement with stakeholders, achieved through both telephone conversations and correspondence. This robust research methodology ensured a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

3.3 Documentation of the findings

A commitment to meticulous documentation was maintained, as guided by the Chief of Staff, Aakriti Ghimire. All research outcomes were systematically cataloged within the designated Google Drive repository. This repository accommodates a diverse range of formats, such as Excel spreadsheets and Google Docs, ensuring accessibility and traceability.

3.4 Consulting with the mentor

The guidance of Dr. Kalpana Khanal, my esteemed mentor, played a pivotal role. Consultations with her involved the presentation of my research findings, which were met with insightful feedback. Her expertise enriched the refinement process.

3.5 Sharing with the public partner

The final draft was shared with Hon. Sumana Shrestha, my public partner. Her team's meticulous review and valuable feedback contributed to enhancing the document's quality. The iterative process of editing and refining culminated in a polished product.

3.6 Following up with the issue

The engagement didn't conclude with document circulation. Following responses from stakeholders, persistent follow-up ensued. This phase involved further research and analysis, contributing to a continuous cycle of evaluation and advancement.

CHAPTER IV

4. Learnings and Experiences Gained through this fellowship:

Throughout the course of this fellowship, a diverse array of valuable learnings and experiences have been acquired, contributing to personal and professional growth.

4.1 Navigating the Parliamentary Landscape:

One of the pivotal takeaways has been an in-depth understanding of parliamentary functioning. Immersed in the process, insights into the inner workings of parliamentary operations have been gleaned, shedding light on decision-making processes and the complexities of policy formulation.

4.2 Effective Time Management:

The fellowship has underscored the importance of time management. Balancing the demands of research, consultations, and engagements with parliamentary duties necessitated a refined approach to time allocation, honing the skill of maximizing productivity within limited timeframes.

4.3 Rapid Research Proficiency:

The fast-paced nature of the fellowship highlighted the significance of swift and effective research. Learning to swiftly navigate through a plethora of resources to gather relevant and reliable information has been instrumental in crafting well-informed perspectives.

4.4 Meeting Stringent Deadlines:

The fellowship provided an environment where meeting strict deadlines was paramount. This experience nurtured the ability to consistently deliver high-quality work within the stipulated timeframe, showcasing adaptability and resilience.

In summation, this chapter encapsulates the multifaceted growth achieved through the fellowship. These insights, ranging from the mechanics of parliamentary proceedings to mastering time management, form a comprehensive foundation for future endeavors.

CHAPTER V

5. Difficulties and Challenges During Internship

The journey of this internship has been enriched not only by accomplishments but also by the hurdles encountered along the way. In this chapter, we delve into the difficulties faced and the strategies employed to surmount them.

5.1 Aligning with the Public Partner's Vision:

Early on, grasping the precise requirements and expectations of the public partner posed a challenge. Adapting to their specific demands took time, requiring effective communication and a proactive approach to ensure alignment with their vision and objectives.

5.2 Undertaking Unaddressed Research:

An inherent challenge emerged when research efforts did not always find immediate resonance or resolution. Some inquiries and findings encountered limited uptake or were temporarily shelved, emphasizing the dynamic nature of the parliamentary landscape.

5.3 Navigating Parliamentary Roadblocks:

The intricacies of parliamentary proceedings added another layer of complexity. Instances of session disruptions due to fellow parliamentarians' interventions presented unforeseen challenges. Navigating these roadblocks necessitated agile decision-making and swift problem-solving.

In conclusion, this chapter provides an insight into the various hurdles encountered during the internship. The ability to adapt, persevere, and creatively address these challenges reflects the dynamic and dynamic nature of the internship experience.

CHAPTER VI:

Findings, Conclusion, and Suggestions

6.1 Findings:

The culmination of the three-month fellowship journey has yielded significant findings that underscore the depth and breadth of experiences and accomplishments. Key findings include:

- The existing gaps in the legal provisions of our education system such as unscientific eligibility criteria and low monthly allowances for head teachers might be an obstacle in achieving and developing their leadership capacity.
- The existing teacher tenure system in Nepal lacks effective mechanisms for evaluating teacher performance and may contribute to challenges in retaining high-performing teachers.
- Enhancing data transparency and accessibility in the education sector is vital for informed decision-making and requires improving infrastructure, regular publication of school information, and the implementation of an Educational Information Management System (EMIS).
- The current centralized approach in Nepal's education system, where the Ministry of Education handles both regulatory and operational functions, contradicts the constitutional empowerment of local governments in managing basic and secondary education.
- In most of the universities of Nepal, Prime Minister acts as the Chancellor and Education minister as Pro-chancellor. There is extreme political interference in the appointment of university officials, including Vice-chancellors, Rectors, Registrar, and Deans.
- The process of obtaining the No Objection Certificate (NOC) for overseas studies in Nepal is marred by substantial difficulties, prolonged delays, and a lack of clarity in the guidelines, particularly for universities and courses not pre-listed by the department.
- The budget analysis revealed inconsistencies, duplications, and disparities in the allocation of funds in the Ministry of Health and Population and the Ministry of Education.

- The Nepal University Bill which is currently in discussion in the National Assembly, has issues that could potentially allow political interference, which calls for immediate amendments to ensure the university's political neutrality.

6.2 Conclusion:

The fellowship experience has been a transformative journey, revealing the intricate workings of policy formulation, the significance of time management, and the art of effective research. The experiences and endeavors detailed here underscore the persistent commitment of Hon. Sumana Shrestha and her team in addressing critical issues within Nepal's education and legislative systems. From advocating for disparities and gaps in the budget allocation, enhancing data transparency, tackling political interference in university governance, the team effort reflects a relentless pursuit of improvement. While challenges persist, these initiatives represent significant steps toward a better future for the country's education system.

In conclusion, the fellowship transcended mere theoretical knowledge, offering practical insights into policy advocacy especially in education sector and fostering resilience in the face of obstacles.

6.3 Suggestions:

Based on the insights gleaned from the fellowship journey, several valuable suggestions are proposed. These suggestions have been framed on the basis of the findings of the research.

- We need to revisit and amend the legal provisions related to head teachers, including eligibility criteria and monthly allowances, to better support their capacity development and retention in leadership positions.
- The proper implementation of a comprehensive evaluation system for teachers is necessary that includes classroom observations, student growth data, and feedback from various stakeholders, while also considering an extension of the probationary period. These reforms can help identify and retain high-performing teachers, ultimately improving student achievement and teacher quality.
- We need to prioritize enhancing the infrastructure in schools by providing necessary data management systems, including computers and internet access, to enable real-time data transparency and accessibility for the regular publication of school information, and the implementation of an Educational Information Management System (EMIS).

- We need to decentralize the appointment of teachers by devolving the responsibility, including conducting exams, interviews, and issuing teaching licenses, to local governments.
- The comprehensive revisions to the University Act is necessary to eliminate political intervention entirely in the appointment of university officials, and also we need to consider adopting a trustee governance structure while taking precautions to prevent undue political influence on the university system.
- We need to advocate for comprehensive amendments to existing laws and policies to establish a clear and efficient procedure for issuing the NOC, addressing the identified issues and ambiguities, and ensuring timely and smooth processing for Nepalese students pursuing studies abroad.
- We need to advocate for more transparent and efficient budget allocation processes, addressing the identified issues and ensuring a balanced distribution of funds in key areas such as mental health initiatives and educational quality improvement.
- We need to advocate for and prioritize the incorporation of suggested amendments in the Nepal University Bill to transform the university into a politically neutral entity, fostering a more equitable environment and addressing pressing issues.