EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION IN NEPAL: BRINGING BACK TO TRACK

PRESENTED BY

NEPAL'S TEAM

Dr. Lava Deo Awasthi, PhD
Director General, Department of Education

Mr. Yoga Raj Pokhrel,
Under Secretary, Ministry of Education

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BREAKING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

Lack of Basic Capabilities

Lack of Scope for Self-determination

Externally designed and monitored Development strategies

Perpetuate central control
TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFORMATION

Central legislation creating Local Self Governance

Changing rules and regulations

Specifications of roles and functions New sharing of powers

Changed framework for education management

Involvement of community in education management
BUILDING FROM BELOW: SOCIAL POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

Redefining the powers of the Centre

Integration of the group into the political framework along with powers

Activating and vesting power and authority in the informal groups

Formal accreditation of the community group with power and authority

Informal grouping of community members

Mobilizing the community for education
NEED FOR CONVERGENT LEGITIMIZATION

State

Facilitation through legal and executive measures

Decentralized management

Structures

Processes

Community

Proactive participation
Central to Local

Central Govt

Local Government

School Community / School Management Committee (SMC)

Community Ownership/ Principle of Subsidiarity
CENTRALIZED EDUCATION SERVICE
DELIVERY SYSTEM

School
SMC, PTA, CSOs, professional Groups
Local Government (VDC, Municipality, DDC)
Government Delivery System (Centre / MoE/ DEO – RC/ DEO)
Decentralized Education Service Delivery Model

Central Govt. (MOE, DOE,)

Local Govt. (VDC, Municipality, DDC)
SMC, PTA, COs, NGOs, INGOs, Professional groups

School
EVOLUTION OF EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION

- Nepal’s indigenous construct of community owned school system
- Introduction of centralized education system in 1971
- Bringing back community-culture in schools, following the restoration of multi-party democracy in the 1990s.
- The 7th Amendment of Education Act 2001 and Regulations 2002 – A Step Forward
- The Education Act (2001) and The Local Self Governance Act (1999) – Inter-relations
- Reshaping schools and adding value to local constructs
- Readiness and building trust – at community levels
- Stakeholder’s interest and interest of children
- Building Consensus – on going efforts
EXPERIMENTS IN NEPALESE EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Nepal experienced the centralized education system since 1971 when all schools were nationalized.

- Decentralization of education service at local level was promoted following the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990.

- Since then,
  - Several development projects and programs have been implemented.
  - Billions of rupees have been spent to increase access, quality and efficiency of community schools.
  - Several studies and researches have been conducted to bring about the improvements in the school education system.
EXPERIMENTS IN NEPALESE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Issues and Challenges:

- Equity and Access
- Retention and success
- Quality and Relevance
- Building trust in stakeholders
- Distribution of services
- Elite capturing
- Political interference
- Politicized teaching cadres
- Public –Private dichotomy
- Global and local realities
- Resourcing and sustainability
- School autonomy and Capacity Development
- Local accountability and ownership
Current moves of decentralization is regarded as:

- a response to a history of failure with centrally planned governance,
- a major component of current institutional innovation throughout the world,
- a tool of poverty reduction, good governance and ensuring public accountability
THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION IN NEPAL

- **Enabling Environment**
  - Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2006
  - Three Year Plan (2010-13)
  - Nepal Development Forum (NDF)
  - Community School Support Project (World Bank) 2002 - 04
  - EFA Program 2004 - 09
  - School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) 2009 - 15
  - SIP, VEC, DEP
  - ASIP / AWPB
  - Social Audits
  - Collaboration with DPS, (I)NGOs/ COs/Media / Communities...
THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION IN NEPAL

- The Local Self Governance Act and Regulations (LSGA) 1999
  - Milestones in the history of decentralization
  - Promoting local participation in planning and decision making,
  - Opened up the space for devolution

  - Enlarging people’s involvement in planning process.
  - Stressing on local ownership in preparing local plans.
  - Community empowerment
  - Decentralization as a means of good governance and poverty reduction tool
THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION IN NEPAL

- Approach Paper to Tenth Plan
  - Recognized the concept of community schools,
  - Visioning the transfer of authorities, responsibilities, and resources to local levels for operation of schools up to secondary levels.

- Decentralization Implementation Action Plan:
  - Visioning devolution of basic health, agriculture & livestock, postal services and primary education

- The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper - 10th Plan (Feb 2002)
  - Decentralized management in the delivery of social services,
  - Accepts basic education as a tool of poverty alleviation.
The Context of Education Decentralization in Nepal

- A National Framework Document for Decentralized Governance and Capacity Building
  - Alleviation of poverty by shifting decision-making power closer to poor communities through devolution of authorities and resources to local bodies,
  - Decentralized governance to be the principal strategy in decision making and development process by enhancing people’s participation.

- Immediate Action Plan
  - The concept of transferring management of community schools to communities,
  - Transfer of regular grants to SMCs in the form of block grants
The Context of Education Decentralization in Nepal

- Public Expenditure Review Commission
  - Devolution of functions at local levels.

- Budget Speech 2002/2003
  - Commitment for handing over of 100 primary schools to Schools Management Committee,
  - Promoting community ownership in the management of primary schools,
  - SMC to recruit teachers,
  - Block grants to schools.

- Sustainable Development Agenda for Nepal
  - Promoting decentralization of administration and political devolution through legal and financial autonomy to local elected bodies
The Context of Education Decentralization in Nepal

The 7th Amendment of Education Act 2001 & Education Regulations 2002

- Internalized the concept of community schools
- Provision of Village Education Committee (VEC) at the village level
- Provision of local body representatives in the District Education Committee (DEC).
- Provision of Parental participation in SMC
- Empowerment of SMC to recruit teachers, set the conditions of service for the teachers to be accountable to the communities.
FACTORS PROMOTING EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION IN NEPAL

- **1999/2000:** The preparation of District Education Plans (DEPs) marked the beginning of the decentralized education planning process.

- **2002:** Government commitment to handover 100 public schools to communities.

- **2003:** Launching Learning Innovation Loan (Community Support School Project) to handover 1500 schools to communities.

- Increase in the allocation of resources to the district from 80% in 2000/01 to about more than 90% in subsequent years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002/003</td>
<td>Transfer of the primary teachers’ and women teachers’ salary to District Development Committee (DDC).</td>
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<td>2001/02</td>
<td>Introduction of piloting of SIP and formula funding approach.</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Implementation of Education for All Program</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Implementation of School Sector Reform Program</td>
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FACTORS PROMOTING EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION IN NEPAL

- As of September 2010
  - About 11,000 schools are managed by local community.
  - Local communities have greater role to play in school decision making.
  - Inclusive participation in SMC and PTA
  - SMCs are fully autonomous in funds management of schools.
  - SMCs are not fully autonomous in Teacher management.
  - Partial rights to raise local revenues from parents and other community people.
OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Consensus on agenda Setting:**
  - Manifestations of political parties
  - National Plans and Policy Statements
  - Sectoral Plans and Programmes
  - Global and local level support – EFA/MDGs
  - Parental Commitments
  - Robust community support-base
  - Professional strengths – teachers, wealth of local expertise
  - Private –public collaborations
  - Education - top priority
  - Sectoral success and role modeling
Implementing Decentralization – Tracing the Trends

Policy Making

Centre

Programme Formulation

Implementation

Local
IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALIZATION – TRACING THE TRENDS

- **Financial arrangements – Three broad approaches**
  - Block grants
  - Earmarked (Allocated) funds
  - Incentive or matching funds

- **Governance and Administration**
  - SMCs are empowered
  - PTAs are made functional
  - Primary teachers' salary goes to school through DDC.
  - Partnership with INGOs, NGOs, GOs, COs, civil society, community.
  - VECs are visualized
  - Ministry of Education is the executor and Department of Education, Regional Education Directorates, District Education Offices and Resource Center are the implementers.
IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALIZATION – TRACING THE TRENDS

- **Legal arrangements**
  - Enactment of Seventh amendment of Education Act and Regulations articulating education decentralization through school management responsibility transfer to communities.
  - LSGA / R 1999

- **Educational setup**
  - Policy making function with the center
  - Implementing function with district and local level government agencies (such as DOE, DEO, RED, RC).
  - School management responsibility with the community (SMC)
  - School decision making through inclusive participation of community members and local stakeholders.
EFFECTS OF EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION

- About 11000 schools are managed by community as of end of September 2010.

- SMCs are empowered and have the right to raise local resources and take control of school management.

- Quality of teaching and learning has been improved following the transfer of school management to community.

- Many researches show that community managed school has positive impacts on dropout reduction, increasing access, promotion rate, retention.

- Local ownership has enhanced and community participation in school decision making has been increasing.
EFFECTS OF EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION

- Primary teacher's salary goes to school through District Development Committee.
- In almost all of the community schools, SMCs are formed and functional.
- Village Education Committees (VECs) are formed in many Village Development Committees.
- To some extent, resource gaps of some community schools are met by SMC's efforts to generate local revenues and local contributions.
EFFECTS OF EDUCATION DECENTRALIZATION

- Teachers' trust on community managed schools has been gradually increasing to reckon that community managed schools do not endanger their jobs prematurely.

- There are many examples of private school's students going to community schools in several parts of the country.

- Community awareness has been increasing to participate in the schools' decision making.

- The dalits (untouchables), ethnic minority, disadvantaged groups are more going to schools with the initiation of SMC, PTA
The prolonged internal political conflict obstructed the smooth transformation of devolution of powers/authorities from central to local level.

Many provisions of Local Self Governance Act 1999 could not be implemented due to political conflict.

Decentralization initiatives gradually proceeded forward with slow pace in the form of a 'maintenance approach' rather than as a 'development or institutionalized approach'.

The term decentralization has become a political slogan rather than to become a realized commitment.
UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- As envisaged, SMCs have not been given power to hire and fire non-performing teacher.

- Still the local communities do not understand their roles and responsibility in school decision making.

- Elite group has the control on school decision making.

- Capacity development of SMC has remained to be a challenge for effective management of schools.

- Teachers are less academic but more puppets of political parties. They are still the central government staffs.

- SMCs are more effective in communities with abundant resources and educational attainment.
UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- Schools are not autonomous enough yet due to their excessive economic dependence on central government.

- Private schools are preferred more over the community schools.

- Community schools are regarded as the schools of people who live in rural area without access of private schools, who are economically poor not able to afford the cost of private schools.

- Village Education Committees are not functional.

- The local government's support to schools has not been institutionalized.
UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- Quality, results and output that the community schools are designed to achieve has not been spelled out yet.

- The governance structure that best supports and sustains quality community schools has not been spelled out yet.

- The monitoring mechanism that need to be established to frequently monitor the success and failures of community schooling system has not been effective enough.

- It is not properly defined to ensure how will funding for community schools be most effective in achieving priority outcomes.

- There is no any mechanism in place to identify how will community schools develop mutually beneficial relationships with families, youth and other members of the community?
UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- Who decides and controls decision-making?
  - The local vs. the central
  - Political leadership vs. bureaucracy
  - Where are the people? and Professionals?

- Personnel Management Issue
  - Who will appoint and control the teachers?
  - Whom are personnel accountable to?
  - Problem of dual control
  - Problem of maintaining quality of the personnel

- Does decentralization really ensure community empowerment and civil society participation?
  - How do we make participation inclusive?
  - Which type of institutional mechanism facilitates participation?
UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- **Capacity building**
  - Should decentralization wait for local capacity to be developed or it should be backed by capacity development plan?
  - Need for a long-term-strategy – capacity building is a slow process

- **Other Issues**
  - Questions of resources – Most contentious (debatable)
  - Mobilize resources for decentralization or decentralize to mobilize resources
  - Effective utilization of resources is also a serious concern
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- A great potent for partnership at all levels.
- The main focus should be at VDC or school.
- Need for capacity building at all levels.
- Sheer political commitments.
- Accomplishments of SSRP goals and targets.
- More external supports.
- Peaceful political settlement and state restructuring.
- Constitutional commitments.
- Well designed decentralization action plan and functional structure.
- Autonomous SMCs and accountable schools with sufficient rights of funds management, teacher management, local resource generation.
THANK YOU