

# **An Exploratory Study on Local Education Policies in Nepal**



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National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal)

# An Exploratory Study on Local Education Policies in Nepal

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**Published Date:** December 2020

## Support:



**Design & Production:** Dream Graphic Press

## PREFACE

National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal) is a national level network working towards ensuring the right to education and lifelong learning of children and adults in Nepal through advocacy, lobby and campaign activities. Established in 2003 as a Nepal Chapter of Global Campaign for Education (GCE), NCE Nepal also holds the status of UN ECOSOC organization. Along with capacity enhancement of civil society organizations, advocacy through research and evidence is one of the priority works of NCE Nepal. Right from the time of its establishment, NCE Nepal has been advocating for the strengthening of public education system in Nepal with strong educational policies in place, its implementation and monitoring.

With the restructuring of government of Nepal into federal, province and local level, Nepal's Constitution has provisioned that the basic and secondary education is under the jurisdiction of local government. In this regard, the local governments are responsible for developing and implementing plans and policies related to education. These plans and policies of the local government must reflect the provisions of national education policies along with carrying the spirit of quality education agenda of Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the commitments made by Nepal at international level for public education strengthening. However, the local governments must be capacitated, supported and monitored by the central government for the smooth implementation of these plans.

In this context, the research has been carried out by NCE Nepal with the purpose to review and analyze the current policies developed by the local governments. This study may serve as an evidence for other local governments, MoEST and civil society organizations while developing similar educational plans and policies at the local level.

For completing this research, the contribution of Mr. Raj Kumar Gandharba is praise worthy as the lead researcher. I also extend my sincere gratitude towards Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) for its financial support along with Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Education Out Loud (EOL) for their continuous support and collaboration with NCE Nepal. In addition to this, NCE Nepal is always thankful to the advisors, NCE Nepal board members and all the member organizations for their guidance and support in the research and analysis works initiated by NCE Nepal. My special thanks to the entire secretariat team of NCE Nepal for their coordination in this research work.

Regards,

**Dilli Ram Subedi**

President

## Executive Summary

Based on the constitutional and global commitments of the government to provide free and compulsory basic education and free secondary education, some local governments have already developed policies and started implementing those policies. The research builds its foundation from localizing policies, building the capacity of local governments, and nexus of local education policies adopting the principles of right to education. Despite the progress in policy development at local level, there are still issues of clarity, capacity, mechanisms, systems, evidence-based planning, etc., which need to be addressed to transform education system. Addressing these needs, local policies which are in place need to be critically reviewed and analyzed so that it serves as evidence for further improvement of those policies to achieve education goal. The research explores the nexus of quality education, equality and inclusion, teacher management, students' assessment, local curriculum, safe learning environment, privatization, lifelong learning and adult education, governance and accountability, and education financing in the local educational policies as these are core elements to ensure right to education. The study identifies major policy strengths and gaps of the local education policies, and explores areas for improvements for strengthening public education in Nepal.

The study has been carried out using the application of qualitative research design, by textual analysis of 35 education policies of local governments. The local education policies include Education Acts, Education Guidelines, and Education Implementation Plans. The information coming out from the review of local education policies were classified, summarized, and presented in the table especially under the major inquiry areas. The analysis is done on the major issues or problems addressed by the policies, alignment of local policies with national and global policy commitments, and capacity, mechanisms, systems, and resources articulated in the local policies which are very crucial to consider for the achievement of SDG4. The purposive sampling technique has been used to select seven districts and 35 local governments which represent all the seven provinces of Nepal. All together 35 local government units (21 rural municipality, 13 municipality, and one metropolitan city) from seven provinces of Nepal.

The local policies were found including some elements of quality education, equality and inclusion, teacher management, students' assessment, local curriculum, safe learning environment, privatization, governance and accountability, and education financing. The policies made generic provisions without really capturing their local context. The lack of being explicitly clear on different aspects of education goals and targets is the major finding of this study. All the policies of the 35 local governments have mentioned free and compulsory basic education and free secondary education and schools would not charge fee in any headings like construction of school infrastructure. However, the policies have made dual provisions that they have allowed schools to take money from parents in the forms of donation, gift, or any other support, and charge fee to the facilities for the courses that are beyond the provision of free and compulsory public education which may lead to misinterpretation of this clause and schools are likely to charge money to parents with different excuses. The local education policies are silent on building local capacity, developing effective mechanisms including for resource generation, and establishing systems to promote equality and inclusion in education.

Based on the findings, recommendations have been made to local governments for clearly articulating the principles of different areas of right to education with provisions of systems, mechanisms, resources, and capacities, to federal government for developing guidelines with support systems and mechanisms and to NCE Nepal developing policy recommendations and position to advocate strengthening local education policies for the transformation of public education in Nepal.

# CHAPTER 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Historical Context of Education Policy Development in Nepal

The history of formal policy making process in Nepal can be traced back to autocratic Rana Regime in 1948 (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2016) where rulers of the nation made the policies themselves that were in the protection of their interest. Then, all post 1951 educational policies in Nepal promoted modern schooling which were guided by Western ideas and practices of mass education (Boli et al., 1985). Then the modern school systems were gradually made more formalized, institutionalized, and specialized; otherwise there were more informal and indigenous ways of education rooted to the community values.

Post 1951 Nepali state focused on developing educational policies which promoted schooling as a powerful tool to control the populace and legitimize the power and position of the state elites. The first ever education development plan in the country which was adopted as part of the national development plan very clearly prescribed that the children should not be allowed to speak other than Nepali language at schools (Pandey & Wood, 1956). Nepal National Education Planning Commission (1956) was the first education commission that restricted the minority languages in schools. Further, the commission was milestone to shape the whole education system in Nepal making uniform, rigid, and homogeneous in terms of governance, curricula, teacher management, and so on. Nationalization of whole educational processes in the country in 1971 was an illustration of state wish to control not only the educational processes but also the whole socio-cultural processes in the country (Ministry of Education [MoE], 1971; National Education Commission [NEC], 1992). Under this plan everything was centralized – curriculum, textbook, teacher management, governance, etc. making the whole system rigid and which emphasized on transmitting certain values, drawn from the worldviews of the privileged ones.

The history of decentralized policy development in Nepal is not very long. The decentralization of policy started in 1990 after the restoration of democracy, and then the policy making processes started recognizing the participation and voices of citizen, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders. People had expected a drastic change in the social, economic and cultural aspects including their stake and participation of the nation following the mass movement of Nepal (Dahal, 2017). However, there was a guided people's participation and the people's representative was sovereign in the decision making. There was a technical and bureaucratic influence in the policy formulation process during this period. However, in the post 1990 phase, people were sovereign and there was a plural democracy in the nation. CSOs got the power during this phase and there was liberal and multiple actors' interest and policy formulation process was much democratic one. There was also the state, market and civil society organizations collaboration during this period. CSOs influence and lobby in the policy making process was seen during this period. Apart from this, there were also the international influences in terms of ideas and resources. However, the situation was a bit fluid around 2006 as political parties, CSOs, private sector and community were powerless and very weak during this period and they had no influences on policies formation and implementation. The decentralization was bureaucratic and local levels were under the influence of bureaucracy; the lack of people participation in decision-making and good governance, the local level failed to deliver development to the local people (Chaudhary, 2019).

The situation has been completely changed in Nepal after the adoption of new Constitution in 2015. Nepal committed to ensure right to education of all at around the same time through the adoption



of Constitution and ratifying the 2030 Agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the key commitments include localizing the policies and building the capacity of local actors to implement right to quality education for all. As Almeida & Gomes (2018) claim, the concept of policy process brings the idea that public policies are shaped at all stages by different types of actors and institutions, the policy making processes in Nepal started recognizing the need of citizen's involvement at different levels and stages so that needs of people could be addressed and the policies would be owned by various stakeholders, which would lead to smooth implementation. However, there were a lot of challenges to realize these principles into practices as the policy alone does not address the issues of marginalization until the policy principles are put into practice. The two-way communication and engagement between policy making body and implementing actors is very crucial. Hudson et al. (2019) highlight the importance of two-way communication processes: progress reports from implementation agencies to the policy-making centre; responses back from the centre to implementing agencies, and use or creation of intermediary bodies between the policy-making and policy implementing levels.

## 1.2 Localization of Education Policies: Global Context

Clear emphasis of key global documents on localizing of Sustainable Development Goal 4 is very crucial to achieve the SDG goals and targets. The SDG key document, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations [UN], 2015) has made following commitment on equitable access to quality education and importance of localizing policies:

*SDGs has considered equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels and women and girls enjoy equal access to quality, as one of the key elements of its vision and education is the on-going priority development agenda for addressing the needs of marginalized communities and leaving no one behind. Governments and public institutions work closely with local authorities and stakeholders on localizing and implementing policies. The policy makers play crucial roles to develop legal and policy framework and allocate resources to adopt and implement SDGs as per their context, and they develop structures and mechanism at various level including the development of necessary Acts, policies and plan at local levels, implement with sufficient capacity of local actors and monitor and review the plans in periodic basis which are inclusive, participatory, transparent and accountable.*

Similarly, Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015) has made following commitment on education including its localization:

*The success of SDG4 - Education 2030 depends on collective efforts and legal and policy frameworks that promote accountability and transparency as well as participatory governance and coordinated partnerships at all levels and across sectors, upholding the right to participation of all stakeholders. The Education 2030 Agenda has clearly stated the accountability of different actors at all levels: education ministry should be accountable to citizens, donors to national governments and citizens, and schools and teachers to the education community and, more broadly, to citizens.*

The empowerment and building the capacity of local government by central governments with close monitoring is very crucial to realize the state's global commitments to right to education for all.

According to UNESCO (2020), school-level service delivery commitments requires central governments to monitor and support them when they struggle to raise the necessary resources; and decentralization can exacerbate inequality when it does not take fully into account local governments' capacity for mobilizing resources.

So, it will be very crucial to localize the Education 2030 Agenda building the capacity of local actors who are on the forefront and frontline responders for the implementation of inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all.

### 1.3 Localization of Education Policies in Nepal

Nepal has committed to ensure right to education for all by signing the SDGs and highlighting it into its Constitution. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 (Government of Nepal [GoN], 2015) has made following provisions including the roles of local and provincial governments to ensure right to education:

*Every citizen has the right to access basic education, right to free and compulsory basic education, free education up to the secondary level; the right of women to special opportunity in the spheres of education on the basis of positive discrimination; rights of Dalits to free education with scholarships from the primary to higher level of education including special provision in technical and professional subjects; rights of economically very poor and communities who are on the verge of extinction, and families of martyrs to special opportunity in education; physically impaired and citizens who are financially poor have the right to free higher education as provided in law; visually impaired person have the right to free education with the medium of brail script; right to acquire education in its mother tongue up to the secondary level; the right to open and run schools and educational institutions as provided for by law; and among others. The state ensures the development of education policies regarding basic needs of citizens which include making education scientific, technical, professional, skill-oriented, and employment and people oriented, and making higher education easily available of high quality and accessible, and gradually making it free. However, provincial level university, higher education, libraries, and museums are under the jurisdiction of provincial government, and basic and secondary education is under the jurisdiction of local government.*

The Constitution of Nepal 2015 presents a good opportunity to ensure right to education for all. The local government has become the leading institution to transform education in Nepal. More than a dozen of education policies developed before and after the promulgation of the Constitution have been unveiled to make them compatible with the current federal structure. If the relevant policies are localized properly and the local governments have capacities to deliver them, right to education will be achieved as per the commitment of the government.

The government has endorsed various policies, plans, strategies and programs to achieve the SDG4 and the government has tried to align the policy instruments with the constitutional and SDG4 commitments which have been discussed below:

## Periodic Plan and SDG Framework

The GoN (2019) has incorporated the SDGs in the five-year 15th Periodic Plan (2019-2022), has developed planning model to guide local and provincial governments to develop their plan for achieving SDGs targets and has focused to develop capacity of local government. Similarly, the government has developed a framework called Sustainable Development Goals, Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030 with targets, indicators, and monitoring framework (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2017). Based on the policy guidance policy and planning commissions have been established in all provinces under the leadership of chief ministers. However, they don't have any designated units and structures at the provincial level, and don't have any specified units and structures to facilitate the SDGs at local level. Though education implementation is a priority agenda within the SDGs, the implementation of quality education will be difficult without clear structure at local level.

**Local Government Operation Act, 2074** ensures, local government is responsible for basic education developing act, law, strategy and plans on early childhood development, basic education, parenting education, non-formal education, open and alternative continuous learning, community learning, special education, and ensure implementation, monitoring and evaluation (MoEST, 2017b). However, this does not explicitly mention, local government is responsible for secondary education, which contradicts with the spirit of the Constitution. This act is not serious on right to education as it promotes private education making them easy to register. It also allows opening tuition and coaching centres which is another form of business in education and contradicts with the principle of education as a public good.

**The Act Relating to Compulsory and Free Education, 2075** has been developed to fulfil the citizen's right to education as provisioned in the Constitution of Nepal 2015 and has following focus (MoEST, 2018a):

*The Government of Nepal, provincial government, and local government have the liability to provide education up to the basic level to every citizen with necessary arrangements in this respect. The Government of Nepal shall make provisions to establish and operate non-formal and open schools on the basis of necessity for the sake of providing secondary education through local level.*

However, this Act is not explicit enough to ensure access of every citizen's to basic and secondary education which is under the jurisdiction of local government as provisioned in the constitution as it doesn't say anything around secondary education.

The **National Education Policy, 2076** has been developed to fulfil the government's constitutional and SDG commitments to right to education, has stated that it would consider the principles of right to education, and committed to increase the budget (MoEST, 2019a). Despite these commitments, the policy is not serious on the principle of right to education especially on education as a public good because it has provided favourable environments for private education to flourish which weakens the public education. Though, it has committed to increase education financing, it didn't commit to increase budget to 20% as per the global commitments. The Constitution is quite clear stating basic and secondary education is under the jurisdiction of local government, this policy didn't recognize the spirit of the Constitution because it is not explicit enough to clarify the roles of local government and other governments to ensure every citizen access to free and compulsory basic education and free secondary education.



The **Sustainable Development Goal 4: Education 2030 Nepal National Framework** has been developed with the following spirit (MoEST, 2019b):

*For the implementation of Education 2030 Agenda, all provincial and local governments develop their respective SDG 4: roadmaps to contextualize the SDG4 agenda by 2020. The framework also emphasizes the Role of Ministry of Social Development for the integration to other indicators and localization of SDG4 targets and indicators. The framework specifies the roles of local governments for mobilizing local instruments, tools, and institutes (e.g. schools, community learning centres, knowledge centres, etc.) and monitoring the achievements and reporting to province and federal governments.*

Despite the claim of this framework of development SDG4 localization guidelines by the federal government to support the localization process, the local governments are not aware of it, are not provided support and they don't have capacity to adopt the framework. So, the framework alone will not serve to the needs of local government, unless, it is complemented with capacity development support with on-going mentoring.

**School Sector Development Plan** (2016–2023) envisions to involve people for the planning, development, and implementation of equitable inclusive and quality education agenda under local governments through jointly developing SIP in SMC's leadership (MoEST, 2016). The SIP serve as a tool includes teacher learning plan, teacher management and development, gender and inclusion, leadership and governance, school safety, plan of education continuity, building responses, community engagement and mobilization, and so on (Ibid). However, Budhathoki (2018) highlights, school stakeholders—head teachers, teachers, SMC and PTA members are unaware of the process and lack capacities in majority of the schools and have no idea to develop and implement plans and the resource persons fail to do their job. This shows weak implementation of plan as envisioned.

The **Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Policy, 2063** has been developed with the following purpose (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2006):

*Ensure access of all interested learners belonging to various groups especially poor, women, deprived, marginalized citizens to education through the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system for both school and higher education. This is created to act as alternative to existing conventional education system. This policy has envisioned to create relevant agencies and networks including the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) and the Telecentres at subnational level to implement the programs. At local level, resource centres are established in selected institutions presently dealing with training and research. The ODL system also promotes the recognition of community or institutional schools which are considered as open schools that operate in a flexible mode to work as study and support centre.*

Despite the policy provisions, the government doesn't have clear data of students who would be taking this facility to access education and have not developed tools and processes on how the policy can be translated into action. Pangeni (2016) claims, tapping the possibilities of integrating various interactive learning tools to support student, ODL can foster quality of education, but Nepal government is already late to address the growing educational demand of new generation that wants the culture of learning online.

MoE, Nepal has developed **Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector in Nepal** to achieve the access and equity related objective of education plan of the government with following focus (MoE, 2014):

*Promote local partnership and ownership as it expects from local government bodies to spend at least 10% of the total grant that they receive from Ministry of Federal Affair and Local Development into education also with non-governmental and community-based organization to attain financial support. It is also expected to localize this policy as part of the implementation of SSDP (2016 – 2023).*

Though, it has already been six years of implementation of the Consolidated Equity Strategy, the central government has not clarified the clear targets, local government are found hardly developing plans to implement the strategy, and there is no proper support and monitoring from central government. The School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) identifies key area like equity, quality, efficiency and relevance to achieve the objectives and results, but, for most of these, there are no specific targets or indicators (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MoEST], 2016)

Ministry of Education has developed **National Child Friendly School Framework for Quality Education** with the following spirit (MoE, 2010):

*School management is one of the key components of child friendly school framework (CFSF) to drive inclusion, equity, and quality agenda of education. SMC and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) are responsible to lead the education management of schools. They are responsible for ensuring teacher management, financial management, developing and implementing code of conduct of students and teachers, community engagement, good governance and accountability including social audit, and so on which contribute to the rights of children to learn in safe environments.*

The school management is responsible to develop School Improvement Plan (SIP) as a tool to guide the overall management and development of schools, which promote child friendly environment in schools. Despite these provisions, the local government has not considered the spirit of CFSF and the activities conducted by different stakeholders are against child friendly school, for example, political parties used schools to conduct their political activities; and during COVID-19 schools have been used as quarantine centres. Ghimire (2020) highlights, universities and schools in Nepal have announced their willingness to allow authorities to use their rooms for quarantine facilities in view of a possible outbreak of COVID-19.

**The Student Learning Facilitation Guideline, 2077** has been developed to meet the following objectives (MoEST, 2020):

*Continue learning of children in the context created by COVID-19 to achieve learning outcomes as per the national curriculum framework adopting distance and open learning options. The guideline has specified the roles of all three tiers of governments to facilitate learning of children when the education institutions are closed. The local governments are given roles to take initiation with support from federal and provincial governments.*

However, the governments at all levels need to work in close coordination to empower and build capacity of local government, support teachers and involve parents with clear responsibility to continue learning during difficult circumstances created by COVID-19.

In summary, all the policy instruments developed to achieve the constitutional commitments to right to education have emphasized the need of leadership roles of local government including their capacities to deliver those commitments. However, they lack being clear and explicit on how those are delivered at local levels and didn't provide clear guidance to localize their spirit. In practice, the local governments struggle to localize the policies including developing concrete plans and implementation measures to right to education. The experience in policy making and experience with the rules and regulations of governing are challenges of local governments in Nepal, and the lack of capacity was perceived not only from teachers, but also by government officials themselves (Shangraw, 2019).

As per the commitment of government to localize SDG4 by 2020, some local governments have already developed policies and started implementing those policies. Considering the education sector premise and priorities of local government localizing policies and building their capacity, exploring the nexus of local education policies adopting the principles of right to education into practice is very crucial. The major elements that linked to right to education need to be critically assessed and explored options for ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

## **1.4 Rationalizing the Study**

Based on the constitutional and global commitments of the government to provide free and compulsory education for all, the governments at local level have developed Education Acts, Education Policies, Education Guidelines, Education Bill, and Education Implementation Plans. Some of the local governments have even implemented those policies in their respective areas. Some of the local governments even have developed and implemented certain policies and guidelines for further strengthening the education sector and linking education with cross cutting themes like gender, equity, child protection, financing, governance, etc. However, the policy changes cannot be realized automatically, and local government faces significant challenges as local leaders are not sufficiently experienced to handle these challenges appropriately; more generally, local institutions have shortage of experts and limited human and financial resources (Neupane, 2019).

Despite the progresses in policy development in Nepal at all levels, there are still issues of clarity, capacity, mechanisms, systems, evidence-based planning, participation of stakeholders, etc., which need to be addressed to transform education system. Addressing these needs, local policies which are in place need to be critically reviewed and analyzed which serve as evidences for further improvement of those policies to achieve education goal. In this backdrop, this research has five strategic significance: a) influencing the localization of education policies with clear articulation of principles of right to education, b) influencing the implementation of policy commitments to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, c) influencing the educational priorities which are aligned with Education 2030 Agenda, education policies and plans at local, provincial and federal levels, d) providing evidences to MoEST which is developing 10-year education plan at federal level to achieve its targets on education by 2030, and e) providing evidences to NCE Nepal for further engagement in policy advocacy for strengthening public education in Nepal.

## 1.5 Objective of the Study



The research explores the nexus of quality education, equality and inclusion, teacher management, students' assessment, local curriculum, safe learning environment, privatization, lifelong learning and adult education, governance and accountability, and education financing in the local educational policies as these elements are core to ensure right to education. The local education policies include Education Acts, Education Guidelines, Education Bill, and Education Implementation Plans which have been developed and implemented at local level. The research particularly explores how local education policies are addressing the problems or issues related to the principles of right to education, how they are aligned with national policies, how the systems, capacities, and resources are developed for the implementation, and major gaps in those policies. This gives wider picture of education plans and policies of local governments in Nepal and how they contribute to establish an inclusive free quality education in Nepal. In summary the objective include as follows:

- Explores how the nexus of Quality Education, Equality and Inclusion, Teacher Management, Students' Assessment, Local Curriculum, Safe learning environment, Privatization, Governance and Accountability and Education Financing are addressed by the local policies in Nepal.
- Identify major policy strengths and gaps of the local policies.
- Explores the areas for improvements and recommend NCE Nepal for further engagement in policy advocacy for strengthening public education in Nepal.



## CHAPTER 2: Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design

The study has been carried out using qualitative research design. Qualitative analysis has been done by textual analysis of the local policies. The textual analysis of the policies has followed systematic, careful, and rigorous assessment to obtain evidences. A systemic policy analysis has been done as a means for in-depth study for addressing a social problem. Social problems are considered critical antecedents to policy, and they are typically not viewed or analysed in the same manner as the policies themselves, rather a holistic perspective of social problems needs to be considered including its implications on practice (Barretti, 2016). So, the analysis in this research is done through four multidimensional lenses which include major issues or problems addressed by the policies; alignment of local policies with national policies and priorities especially with the Constitution, Education 2030 Nepal National Framework (MoEST, 2019b) and commitment to SDG4 at global level especially with Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2015); major gaps in the policies; and capacity, mechanisms, systems and resources provisioned in the policies for its effective implementation.

### 2.2 Data Sources and Tool for Data Collection

The data source includes local education policies, education guidelines, education Acts, education Bill and education implementation plans (as shown in table 1) developed and/or implemented by the local government of Nepal to implement the education commitments for ensuring quality public education for all. The empirical review of various policies developed by the government of Nepal, UN agencies, research institutions and academia were done systematically to analyze data alignment, coherence, and triangulation, and to validate the findings of this research. This data and information were reviewed, combined into themes, and presented thematically in a cohesive manner, and then turned into a report.

**Table 1: Education Acts and Regulations of Local Governments**

Education Acts and Regulations	Local Government	Number of Policies
Education Act	Damak Municipality, Shivsatakchi Municipality, Kamala Rural Municipality, and Gaurigung Rural Municipality of Jhapa; Thori Rural municipality and Bindabasini Rural Municipality of Parsa; Nilkantha Municipality of Dhading; Phalewas Municipality, Khusma Municipality and Modi Rural Municipality of Parbat; Rampur Municipality of Palpa; Mushikot Municipality of Gulmi; Tatopani Rural Municipality and Patarashi Rural Municipality of Jumla;  Birendranagar Municipality, Bheriganga Municipality and Panchapuri Municipality of Surkhet	17
Education Guidelines	Birjung Metropolitan city of Birjung; Khaniyabash Rural Municipality, Jwalamukhi Rural Municipality, Benighat Rorang Rural Municipality and Rubivalley Rural Municipality of Dhading; Mahashila Rural Municipality, Jaljala Rural Municipality and Purbakhola Rural Municipality of Parbat; Ramba Rural Municipality and Bagneskali Rural Municipality of Palpa; Budinanda Municipality, Badimali Municipality, Khaptad chededaha Rural Municipality, Swamikartik Khapar Rural Municipality and Himali Rural Municipality of Bajura	15

Education Policy	Paterwa sugauli Rural Municipality of Parsa District	1
Education Bill	Pakahamainpur Rural Municipality of Parsa District	1
Education implementation plan	Kankai Municipality of Parsa District	1

## 2.3 Sampling Technique and Sample

The purposive sampling technique has been used to select the districts and local governments which represent all the seven provinces of Nepal. All together 35 local government units from seven provinces of Nepal have been selected for the purpose of the study. The municipalities are of all three categories: 21 rural municipality, 13 municipality, and one metropolitan city, representing Terai, Hilly and Mountain regions have been selected. The purposive sample has been used to represent the diverse background and context of the country. Among the municipalities, they vary from various ranges from better performing to moderate performing to least performing local governments. The sample size is large enough to be representative of all the local governments that provide greatest opportunity for learning.

**Table 2. Details of the Sample:**

Province	Number of Municipalities			Total Policy Sets
	Rural Municipalities	Municipalities	Metropolitan city	
1	2	3	-	5
2	4		1	5
Bagmati	4	1	-	5
Gandaki	3	2	-	5
5 (Lumbini)	3	2	-	5
Karnali	2	3	-	5
Sudurpashchim	3	2	-	5
Total	21	13	1	35

## 2.4 Data Analysis and Discussion

The information coming out from the review of local education policies were classified, summarized, and presented in the table especially under the major inquiry areas. The analysis is done on the major issues or problems addressed by the policies, alignment of local policies with national and global policy commitments, and capacity, mechanisms, systems, and resources articulated in the local policies because as highlighted by UNESCO (2015) and MoEST (2019b), education agenda of SDGs can only be achieved if local policies and plans are aligned with the core focus of SDG4, address the local issues, develop systems, and give importance of building local capacity and allocating resources for education. Based on the information coming out from the textual analysis of policies, they have been categorized into three different rating scales: a) Average Policies, which have some good aspects for addressing

issues and are aligned with national and global commitments somehow, b) Policy Needed Improvement, which needs a lot of improvement on the areas listed, and c) Poor Policies, which need significant improvements and they are below the standards.

The research ensured ethical standards of collecting and processing data. The data reviewed in this study were collected within the confines of this research. The ideas and information from other documents and researchers are properly acknowledged and referenced using proper citation.

## **2.5 Delimitation of the Study**



- The research is limited to analysing 35 education policies of local governments only.
- The research has limitation of conducting interviews and discussions with local actors including beneficiaries and policy makers, which has limitation for ensuring views and perspectives of these actors.
- The research has a limitation of analysing other supplementary documents like education plans, education master plan, annual budget, and so on of the local government due to their unavailability.

## CHAPTER 3:

### Critical Assessment of Local Policies of Nepal

In this chapter, the study tries to explore the nexus of quality education, equality and inclusion, teacher management, students' assessment, local curriculum, safe learning environment, privatization, lifelong learning and adult education, governance and accountability, and education financing in the local educational policies as these elements are core to ensure right to education. The analysis includes exploring the major issues addressed by the policies, gaps in addressing the key principles of the core issues, their alignment with national and global commitments, and clarity on capacity, mechanisms, systems, and resources factored in the policies.

#### 3.1 Quality Education

The Government of Nepal has committed to localize quality education as highlighted by UNESCO (2015) for improving quality education and learning outcomes, requires strengthening inputs including qualified teachers, processes and evaluation of outcomes and mechanisms to measure progress. It requires sound policies and planning as well as efficient implementation arrangements, and business as usual will not bring quality education to all (Ibid). To adopt the global commitment to Nepalese context national SDG framework has been developed, which is committed to ensure that all individuals are enabled to gain access to and participate in quality education, ensuring completion of education and with intended learning outcomes (MoEST, 2019b). Promoting quality education at local level is very crucial to achieve the prosperity agenda of Nepal government as Rashid (2019) highlights, education is a prerequisite to prosperity and modernization of any country, and quality education enables students to develop all of their attributes and skills to achieve their potentiality as human beings and members of society.

Along with improving the learning outcomes of students, quality education gives equal emphasis on teachers, textbooks/instructional materials, learning environment, school management and capacity building. Despite the focus on different elements to improvement learning of students, the result shown by National Assessment of Student Achievement 2018 (MoEST, 2018b) is not satisfactory as huge mass of students is at the underperforming level, more than half of the students are struggling with the simple Mathematical calculations, and in Nepali language, the students below level 1 can read only a few words or sentences but they cannot write the sentences independently.

*From total number of students, 28.26% of them have adequate Mathematical knowledge and skills who lie in proficient level (24.01%) and advance level (4.25%). Students in basic level (39.56%) have limited basic Mathematical concept however they cannot perform Mathematical calculations of their grade independently. 32 out of 100 students do not get sense of what is taught in the classroom of the total as they lie in below basic level (32.12%). They are struggling with Mathematical concepts and are left behind. Hence, more than 70% of the students are below the level of competencies expected by the curriculum. Only a half of students in grades 3, 5 and 8 meet the academic achievement criteria for Nepali and mathematics.*

Nepal supporting children to attain foundation skills after the completion of primary education. Less than half of students leave primary school with the basic foundational skills one would expect them to



have after completing primary school in Nepal (United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF], 2017).

### 3.1.1 Issues and Policy Alignment

Despite government of Nepal’s commitments at global and national levels, the 35 policies of local governments are at different levels for articulating the principles and issues of quality education. Some policies are at average level whereas others needed improvements on addressing the quality education agenda and have been categorized as average policies, policies needed improvement and poor policies as presented in the Table 3.

**Table 3: Categories of polices articulating major elements of quality education**

Province	Average policies	Policy needed improvement	Poor policies
1	1	4	0
2	1	4	0
Bagmati	2	3	0
Gandaki	0	5	0
5	1	4	0
Karnali	0	5	0
Sudurpashchim	0	5	0

The issues highlighted in the average policies are - conducting enrolment campaigns and other programs like door to door program, listing the out of school children and consulting with parents to send them to schools, awareness program, etc. focusing on motivating children’s enrolment in school, formulating the standard of quality of education aligning with the quality education framework developed by MoEST and curriculum developed by Curriculum Development Centre, operations and management of Early Childhood Development (ECD) with minimum

standard set by schools (wide and open space, safe school building, safe drinking water, playground with compound and garden, clean drinking water, toilets, trained caretaker, and approved curriculum) and providing necessary fund to operate them, having extracurricular activities including inter-school and intra-school competition every Friday in order to promote the extra knowledge among students, and evaluation of teachers to improve learning of students. However, all the policies are at different levels of clarity on these issues – some are at average level, but others need improvement.

#### ***Strengths of polices of local governments:***

1. *Formulating the standards of quality education*
2. *Operations and management of ECD*
3. *Extra-curricular activities as part of quality education*
4. *Promotion of TVET*
5. *improving learning outcomes*

Gaurigunj Rural Municipality of Jhapa District (Province 1), Birjung Metropolitan City of Parsa District (Province 2), Birendranagar Municipality of Surkhet District (Karnali Province), and Khaniyabash Rural Municipality of Dhading District (Bagmati Province) have clearly articulated Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Moreover, Rampur Municipality of Palpa District (Province 5) has also incorporated the TVET program in its policy.

There are some levels of alignment with the national policies and framework specially on considering free and compulsory basic education, promoting ECD, extracurricular activities, organizing enrolment

campaign, developing quality education standards, improving learning outcomes, and so on. However, this does not apply to the policies of the majority of the local governments.

The local policies are not fully aligned with the national education policy and framework as they lack clarity on the key elements of quality education. Many policies are focused more on access rather than quality. Slade (2017) says, a quality education is supported by three key pillars: quality teachers, use of quality learning tools and professional development, safe and supportive quality learning environment. However, the policies are not explicit enough on improving intended learning outcomes and ensuring completion of education, strengthening inputs, processes and evaluation of outcomes and mechanisms to measure

progress, foundational skills of literacy and numeracy as well as analytical, problem solving and other high-level cognitive, interpersonal and social skills, enable citizens to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global challenges.

#### ***Areas for policy improvement:***

- 1. Lack of clarity on the core principles of quality education*
- 2. Not clear on how intended learning outcomes are achieved*
- 3. Not clear on inputs including teaching force, process, and evaluation of learning outcomes*
- 4. Not clear on how foundational, cognitive, interpersonal, and social skills enable citizen to respond local and global challenges*
- 5. Not clear on capacity, mechanisms, systems, and resources need to implement quality education agenda*

### ***3.1.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems, and Resources***

The policies envisioned to establish Municipal Education Committee (MEC)/ Rural Municipal Education Committee (RMEC), Ward Coordination Committee (WCC), School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) as mechanisms to support for the effective implementation of quality education. However, they didn't mention anything on their capacity, development of systems and resources needed for quality education.

The policies of Shivsatakchy Municipality of Jhapa District, Birjung Metropolitan city of Parsa District, Nilkantha and Benighat Rural Municipality of Dhading District and Rampur Municipality of Palpa have highlighted enrolment campaigns which would be the responsibility of MEC/RMEC and the members of Education committee, school supervisor, resource person and the teacher of the community school should supervise and monitor the status of children's enrolment within the catchment areas. Nikantha Municipality and Benighat Rural Municipality highlighted that the municipalities would formulate the quality education standards which would be passed by the municipality assembly annually and would follow the quality education framework developed by MoEST and curriculum developed by Curriculum Development Centre. The municipalities in Dhading would give responsibility to one of the members of Municipality Education Committee to provide annual update on the progress of framework and coordinate with the chief administrative officer who is appointed in each municipality to ensure quality of the framework. Additionally, Municipalities in Dhading have also considered mother tongue as medium of instruction.

However, the local policies are not clear on how these committees work together, what mechanisms, systems and resources are needed for them to be effective and the capacity needed to implement the quality education agenda at local level.

## 3.2 Equality and Inclusion

The GoN has signed the global commitment to gender equality in achieving the right to education for all and has committed to supporting gender sensitive policies, planning, and learning environments, and mainstreaming gender issues in all areas (UNESCO, 2015). It ensures equity and inclusion in and through education and address all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparity, vulnerability and inequality in education access, participation, retention, and completion and in learning outcomes (Ibid). Similarly, MoEST (2019b) ensures that education policies and sector plans and their budgeting promote non-discrimination and equality in and through education and the development and implemented of targeted strategies for vulnerable and excluded groups with special interventions to the targeted groups. Moreover, given the significant challenges faced by persons with disabilities in accessing quality education opportunities, particular attention will be given to ensure access to and outcomes of quality education and learning for all children, youth, and adults with disabilities (Ibid).

### 3.2.1 Issues and Policy Alignment

The Human development index of Nepal has rose from 0.380 to 0.579(from 2018 to 2019), meaning, people are living longer, are more educated and have greater incomes; when the value is discounted for inequality, the index falls to 0.430, a loss of 25.8 percent due to inequality in the distribution of the human development index dimension indices (The Kathmandu Post, 2019). This shows that there are a lot of issues of inequality in Nepal and there are a lot of barriers to enrolment and attendance which include poverty, social exclusion, disability, migration, child labour, social norms, and gender bias.

The local policies articulating equality and inclusion issues are at different levels – from average to policy needed significant improvement. The categories of local policies based on the articulation of key element of equality and inclusion in education has been presented in the Table 4.

**Table 4: Categories of polices articulating major elements of equality and inclusion**

Province	Average policies	Policy needed improvement	Poor policies
1	2	3	0
2	2	3	0
Bagmati	2	3	0
Gandaki	0	5	0
5	1	4	0
Karnali	1	4	0
Sudurpashchim	1	4	0

As shown in the Table 4, only nine local polices have addressed some issues related to equality and inclusion. The issues include scholarship facilities for girls, Dalits and disadvantaged, economically poor and Children with Disability (CwD), private schools allocating 5 to 10 percent scholarship for marginalized children, conducting programs on non-formal education, distance education, inclusive education, continuous education, open and alternative education program as well as managing community learning centres and necessary infrastructure for the same, and making head teachers responsible for the study and health care of orphans and street children of catchment areas. However, 26 policies are at different levels of including some of the above issues, so they need to be improved to



respond the issues related to equality and inclusion. The provisions of scholarship for all girls, Dalit and children with disabilities are emphasized in the local education policies as the schools receive budget from MoEST annually through inter-governmental fiscal transfer to implement these provisions.

Moreover, Birgunj Metropolitan City of Parsa District (Province 2) has mentioned that out of 10% scholarship scheme, 5% would be for girls from various categories like marginalized, economically poor, Girls with Disabilities (GwD), and so on. Additionally, Gaurigunj Rural Municipality of Jhapa District (Province 1) Swamikartik Rural Municipality of Bajura District of (Sudurpashchim Province), Rampur Municipality of Palpa District (Province 5), Bherigaya Municipality of Surkhet District (Karnali Province), and Khaniyabash Rural Municipality of Dhading District (Bagmati Province) have specified school buildings, classrooms and toilet facilities are child friendly and disable friendly, separate toilet for girls with sanitary facility, and regular health check-up and first aid treatment. More specifically, the policies of Kamal Rural Municipality of Jhapa District (Province 1), Pakahamainpur of Parsa District (Province 2), and Jwalamukhi Rural Municipality of Dhading District (Bagmati Province) have mentioned about special textbook and teaching learning material for CwD. The policy of Damak Municipality of Province 1 only has incorporated the provision of providing free mid-day meal up to grade 5. Apart from these local governments, other governments need more attention for addressing the issues related to equality and inclusion with clear provisions.

#### ***Strengths of policies of local governments:***

- 1. Scholarships for girls and marginalized children including private schools allocating 5 to 10 %*
- 2. Programs on non-formal, distance, inclusive, continuous, and alternative education*
- 3. Making HTs and teachers responsible for the education of marginalized children*
- 4. Child friendly including disability facilities and separate toilets for girls*

#### ***Areas for policy improvement:***

- 1. Lack of clarity ensuring access of marginalized to quality education*
- 2. Lack of considering gender equality and inclusion as part of quality education*
- 3. Lack of mainstreaming gender and inclusion issues in teacher training and curriculum*
- 4. Lack of addressing inequality in education and discrimination based on gender, caste, class, poverty, etc. through education*
- 5. Lack of clarity in giving equal opportunity, addressing the needs of diverse learners, and leaving no one behind*
- 6. Lack of sufficient provisions for marginalized children*

Providing children with a quality education that is rooted in gender equality and inclusion is a valuable end, and it also creates a ripple effect of opportunity that impacts generations to come (UNICEF, 2016). However, the policies of 35 local governments have not recognized importance of gender equality in achieving the right to education for all, mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula, eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools, stigma on menstruation, attention to the rights and needs of children, youth and CwD, giving everyone an equal opportunity and leaving no one behind, efforts especially aimed at reaching those marginalized or in vulnerable situations, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, addressing all forms of exclusion, discrimination and marginalization, disparity, vulnerability and inequality in education access, designing and implementing transformative approaches to respond to learners' diversity and needs, life skills for children, continue education in difficult circumstances, and so on.



### **3.2.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems, and Resources**

MEC, WCC, SMC and PTA expected to ensure the commitment of local polices with MEC responsible to manage mid-day meal as per the need, identify and support children with special need for their engaging in teaching learning activities, and identify and enrol out of school children from marginalized communities/groups in schools. To make the scholarship facility effective and transparent, there is a provision of forming scholarship selection committee. Additionally, the policies envisioned to establish education development fund at local and school levels for the effective implementation of equality and inclusive agenda of quality education. However, majority of the local policies have not provisioned to establish education development fund. The local policies are silent on building local capacity, developing effective mechanisms including for resource generation, and establishing systems to promote equality and inclusion in education.

## **3.3 Teacher Management**



The roles of teachers in implementing the Education 2030 Agenda is very crucial. As Haris & Jones (2019) say, effective management and development of the teachers is defined as conditions that are emphasizing upon and advantageous to proper learning. So, teachers play vital roles to improve the learning outcomes. UNESCO (2015) highlights, the development and implementation of inclusive, equitable and gender-sensitive teacher management policies that cover recruitment, training, deployment, remuneration, career development and working conditions, are major areas under teacher management. Similarly, MoEST (2019b) highlights, teacher licencing has been made mandatory to join teaching profession and teacher training is a prerequisite for obtaining the license. The Government has the provision of qualified teachers through continuous professional development and exchange programmes, and has developed the Teacher Development Policy Guidelines, 2010, for teacher professional development, as well as the Teacher Competency Framework, 2015, to guide teacher management (Ibid).

### **3.3.1 Issues and Policy Alignment**

There are a lot of issues related to teacher management in Nepal as there is still lack of adequate and trained teachers including the capacity development of teachers. According to MoEST (2018c), continuous teacher training is the responsibility of the government, however, upgrading the skills of teachers is a constant struggle; and the major problems faced by teachers were lack of resources, inadequate training including inclusive education and inadequate professional development. However, teacher management issues have been politicized due to various factors despite the commitments of government to provide qualified teachers with continuous professional development.

Considering the key elements that the local education policies included on teacher management, the policies have been categorized as average policies, policies needed improvement and poor policies as presented in the Table 5.

**Table 5: Categories of policies articulating major elements of teacher management**

Province	Average policies	Policies needed improvement	Poor policies
1	1	4	0
2	0	5	0
Bagmati	0	5	0
Gandaki	2	3	0
5	0	5	0
Karnali	0	5	0
Sudurpashchim	2	3	0

*Strengths of local policies:*

1. Local government responsible for teacher management including HTs – recruitment and development
2. Teachers in public schools are not allowed to invest in private schools
3. Teachers to have knowledge and skills on listening, speaking reading, and writing, and technology

Though the policies are at different levels for articulating the agenda of teacher management, only five local policies have highlighted that the local unit has right to determine the necessary seat of teachers in the schools within its location including teacher service, terms and conditions, qualification and capacity of teachers to be as per federal and provincial education policies, formation of teacher selection committee in each local unit in order to take overall responsibilities of the teacher placement, development, utilization and management, the policies provisioned different categories of teachers like contract teacher,

mobile teacher, volunteer teacher and municipality reserves right to appoint them, the salary and other benefits of teachers to be as per the policy of local unit, teacher selection committee to follow standard of selecting teachers and staffs if it is circulated by teacher service commission, teaching licence, no teachers and staffs working in public school are permitted to invest in private school, teacher need to have knowledge and skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) in English language and also need skill regarding technology, the code of conduct, remuneration, promotion, motivation, transfer and leave to be as per policy, and the service, terms and condition, qualification and capacity of Head Teacher (HT) of public school to be as per policy.

Only Damak Municipality of Jhapa District (Province 1) has mentioned about formation of local teacher training centres but others have only mentioned necessary of teacher training to be as per the need and policy provision mentioned in the education policies. The policies of Province 2, Gandaki Province, Karnali Province and Sudurpashchim Province have mentioned that local teachers can establish their associations/unions as per the policy in order to work for the welfare of teachers.

The above issues on teacher management are articulated by limited policies. 30 local policies have addressed some or few of the issues mentioned above.

*Areas for policy improvement:*

1. Lack of clarity on inclusive, equitable and gender-sensitive teacher management
2. Lack of being explicit on teacher development including training needs
3. Lack of provision of qualified teachers with continuous professional development
4. Lack of clarity on management and development of teachers linking it with classroom
5. Terms and conditions and qualification of teachers and HTs to be as per local policy, which unclear
6. Not clear on resource allocation

The articulation of those issues is not explicit enough to address the issues around teacher management and majority of the policies have not addressed the key elements of teacher management. The local policies have failed to align their focus on teacher management with national policies (Development Policy Guidelines, 2010, for teacher professional development, as well as the Teacher Competency Framework, 2015, to guide teacher management) especially on inclusive, equitable and gender-sensitive teacher management that cover recruitment, training, deployment, remuneration, career development and working conditions, and improve the status of teachers and educators and the quality of teaching, and ensuring provision of qualified teachers through continuous professional development and exchange programmes and strengthening teacher management and redeployment. The management and development of the teachers focus upon the quality of the classroom, influence upon the performance of the students, leadership, interpersonal relationships, and personality development (Kapur, 2018). So, the management of teachers should focus on how they would support enhance quality learning and support students, however, the local policies have failed to articulate this element explicitly.

### ***3.3.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources***

As per the local education policies, teacher management issues would be addressed by MEC to prepare the policy for teachers training and prepare the appreciation as well as punishment provisions for the teachers, staffs, and students, SMC to manage the vacant teacher seat as per the instruction from MEC, and formation of Teacher Selection Committee (TSC) with responsibility of creating vacancy for teacher position, selection, recruitment, deployment, development and utilization of teachers. The regular meeting and operation modality of the TSC will be determined by the committee itself and the municipality will be responsible for providing local teaching approval letter. The policies don't talk much about teaching licence as teaching licence, teacher position, and training standards are set nationally. However, the policies mentioned that the contract teachers need to take the local teaching approval letter compulsorily and for other permanent teachers, the letter is optional. In order to attain the teacher approval letter, the teacher need to have knowledge and skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) in English language and also the skills on technology. However, all the local education policies are not clear on how teachers are managed, who is responsible for teacher development, what are the mechanisms and systems and what resources would it require to support and manage the teachers.

## **3.4 Students' Assessment**

UNESCO (2015) emphasized the development of comprehensive assessment systems to assess learning outcomes and improving practices for assessment of quality learning that include evaluation of inputs, environments, processes, and outcomes. Similarly, MoEST (2019b) committed to strengthen the assessment system of students through Continuous Assessment System (CAS), National Assessment of Students Achievement (NASA) and letter grading system at all levels, undertaking assessment of student achievements in grade 3, 5, 8 and 10 using standardized test items. .

### ***3.4.1 Issues and Policy Alignment***

Having effective student assessment system is an important component to improve quality and learning outcomes of children. However, in Nepal there is a weak system and institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices. There is a partially stable standardized examination system in place, and a need to develop institutional capacity to run the examination. The

current examination practices of school will not only assess the real performances of the students, so, there should be compulsory provision for adopting CAS in each school through which each individual student can be assessed on regular basis by preparing the portfolio. The GoN claims that the policies of CAS are in practice with implementation in schools. However, in practice, no visible practices and results are seen in this regard. Likewise, peer to peer learning and remedial classes should be provisioned to increase learning achievement of children.

The local education policies have been categorized as average policies, policies needed improvement, and poor policies based on the articulation of key element of students' assessment as presented in the Table 6.

**Table 6: Categories of policies articulating major elements of students' assessment**

Province	Average policies	Policies needed improvement	Poor policies
1	0	4	1
2	0	1	4
Bagmati	0	5	0
Gandaki	0	5	0
5	0	3	2
Karnali	0	4	1
Sudurpashchim	2	3	0

***Strengths of local policies:***

- 1. Policy and standard for secondary level exams*
- 2. Formation of examination committees*
- 3. Examinations to be conducted by schools*
- 4. Implementing the local curriculum and its assessment done by schools*

The issues on students' assessment mentioned by 27 local education policies are examination of public schools to be held as per the provision of the federal government, formation of examination conduction and coordination committee at local level who is responsible for management and smooth accomplishment of examinations, basically local unit

focused on the examination of basic level for grade 5 to grade 8 and the remaining examinations of the school to be done by HT in supervision and guidance of SMC. The policies provision to charge annual exam fee for grade 5 and 8 from student which is to be deposited in the reserve fund of the local unit/municipality and the fund collected in the name of registration fee and certificate need to be compulsorily deposited in the reserve fund which will be used for the construction of school building. The secondary level exam to be held as per the Federal education policy and standards set by central government and those schools which implement the local curriculum to be responsible for conducting the exam by themselves. However, education policies of seven local governments are

***Areas for policy improvement:***

- 1. Narrow understanding on students' assessment as they focus mostly on conducting exams*
- 2. Lack of clarity on having proper assessment system to assess learning outcomes on cognitive and non-cognitive skills and overall assessment of students*
- 3. No clarity on evaluation of inputs, environment, processes, and outcomes*
- 4. Lack of clarity on formative and summative assessments as an integral part of the teaching and learning process at all level*
- 5. Not clear on CAS and letter grading system*



even poor in highlighting the core element of students' assessment as they have only included to conduct local level exam as per the policy of federal government and no other specific provisions have been mentioned.

The majority of the education policies of local governments have failed highlighting the core element of students' assessment, as they didn't mention evaluation of inputs, environments, processes and outcomes; more robust, comprehensive assessment systems to assess learning outcomes on both cognitive and non-cognitive skills including assessment of foundational reading, writing and numeracy skills and socio-emotional and behavioural learning using existing and proven tools or development of new tools. A portfolio of student work can be used as both a formative and summative form of assessment (Richmond et al., 2019) which support to improve the overall development of students. However, the local policies didn't mention, designing formative and summative assessments as an integral part of the teaching and learning process at all levels with a direct link to pedagogy. They also didn't mention to promote Continuous Assessment System (CAS) and letter grading system at all levels.

#### ***3.4.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources***

The education policies of the local governments envision to form examination conduction and coordination committee at local level who will be fully responsible for the overall management and regulation of examinations within the authority and limit of local government so that exams are conducted in a systematic and fearless environment. Basically, this committee focused on the examination of basic level (grade 5 to grade 8) and remaining examinations of the school will be done by HT in supervision or guidance of SMCs. Additionally, WCC to monitor examinations conducted in its respective Ward, and the examination conduction and coordination committee has overall responsibility of conducting the basic level examination and provide facilitation support during exam. However, these policies didn't mention capacity, mechanisms, systems, and resources needed to improve assessment systems, rather their focus is limited to conducting exams.

### **3.5 Local Curriculum**

The commitment of government is seen to promote local curriculum as MoEST (2019b) emphasized the need of development model local curriculum at Federal level and development of local curriculum at local level. To support local government in developing local curriculum MoEST (2019c) has developed Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines 2076 which emphasised to promote local knowledge, skills, products, culture, arts, local languages, and so on. The guideline has clarified the major responsibility local government for local curriculum. The federal government prepare national framework of curriculum and the province and local government has the authority for the development and implementation of curriculum aligning with the national guideline. The local curriculum development centre has been formed at local unit which has the overall responsibility of need assessment, development of the curriculum. The local unit also reserve right to prepare local curriculum, textbook and teaching material in local level as per the local need based on the geographical, socio-cultural, and other dimensions for developing the curriculum.

### 3.5.1 Issues and Policy Alignment

Despite these provisions, there is a huge capacity gap at local level for developing and implementing local curriculum.

All the local education policies mentioned that the local government reserve right to prepare local curriculum, textbook and teaching material at local level as per the needs based on the geographical, socio-cultural and other dimensions for developing the curriculum. Specifically, Rampur Municipality of Palpa District (Province 5), Patarashi Rural Municipality of Jumla District (Karnali Province), and Khaptad Chedeha Rural Municipality, Himat Rural Municipality and Swamikartik Rural Municipality of Bajura District (Sudurpashchim Province) have mentioned to provision local curriculum based on local requirements for 100 full marks or four credit hours. However, other policies are not clear and specific the key elements of local curriculum as they are too generic. These policies also didn't clarify the roles of federal level in developing model local curriculum.

### 3.5.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources

The policies mentioned that local curriculum development centre at local level is responsible for supporting the development of curriculum. However, the policies lack detail clarity on how local curriculum is developed, how it is implemented, how the schools are supported, how the assessment is conducted, and how the resources are generated for the effective implementation of local curriculum.

## 3.6 Safe Learning Environment

### 3.6.1 Issues and Policy Alignment

The government committed to the need for education to be delivered in safe, inclusive, supportive, and secure learning environments free from violence and recommends a sufficient crisis response, from emergency response through to recovery and rebuilding as highlighted by UNESCO (2015). Similarly, MoEST (2019b) emphasizes strengthening education system and capacity to identify and address special needs with sensitivity to safe learning environments and build facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, and effective learning environments for all.

Despite government commitments to provide safe learning environments for students, there are a lot of causes where students right to learn in safe and secure environments has been compromised. According to NCEN (2018a):

*Marginalized children including girls, Dalits, religious minorities, etc. have been facing more severe nature of unsafe and insecure conditions in their contexts of learning due to poverty and socially rooted stereotype. They are excluded groups who have been discriminated and thus denied their development opportunities. They are deprived of their basic human rights such as right to education, health, protection, development and so on. Physical access of girls to school is hampered by lack of safety and security. Travelling to schools with sexual/harassment that is at a distance, physical punishment, and bullying, different forms of exploitation, abuses and violence, hampered learning outcomes of the girls.*

The above example is a representative example. However, the marginalized children have faced a lot of issues of discrimination and their rights to get education in safe environments have not been considered by the government at all levels.

Based on the articulation of key element of safe learning environment as presented in the Table 7, the local education policies have been categorized as average polices, policies needed improvement, and poor policies.

**Table 7: Categories of polices articulating major elements of safe learning environment**

Province	Average policies	Policies needed improvement	Poor policies
1	0	4	1
2	1	4	0
Bagmati	0		5
Gandaki	1	4	0
5	0	5	0
Karnali	2	3	0
Sudurpashchim	0	5	0

***Strengths of local policies:***

- 1. Promote safe and secure teaching-learning environments*
- 2. Declare school as a zone of peace*
- 3. Punish to conduct prohibited activities*
- 4. No child to be expelled from schools*

Education policies of 29 local governments have mentioned to promote safe and secure teaching learning environments, declare school as a zone of peace, punish to conduct prohibited activities that are harmful for children, banned corporal punishment, and no child to be expelled or restricted from schools. Additionally, Thori Rural Municipality of Parsa District (Province 2) and Birendranagar Municipality and Panchapuri Municipality of Surkhet (Karnali

Province) has mentioned that child abuse and bullying in schools are strongly punishable. However, education policies of six local governments as shown in the Table 5 have completely ignored safe learning environment.

Ekeke & Telu (2017) highlight, local education authority has the primary responsibility to ensure a safe and secure environment for students with specific actions to identify possible warning signs of students-at-risk and provide support who do not feel that they belong in the school community. However, despite the local policies mentioning to promote safe learning environment, they have not fully aligned with national and global commitments to provide supportive environments which is free from violence, sufficient crisis response from emergency response through to recovery and rebuilding.

The training and awareness activities for education professionals in order to build and promote safety culture and to facilitate the introduction of a

***Areas for policy improvement:***

- 1. Six local policies completely ignored safe learning environment*
- 2. Lack of clarity to provide supportive environments which is free from violence and discrimination including gender*
- 3. Lack of clarity stopping child abuse and bullying*
- 4. Lack of clarity to promote safety culture*
- 5. No ideas to introduce comprehensive safety plan*
- 6. No clarity on systems, mechanisms, and resources to continue education during difficult circumstances*

comprehensive school safety approach in day to day school management system is very important (Diaz-Vicario & Sallan, 2017). However, local policies in Nepal have not given consideration for the development of comprehensive risk reduction and mitigation measures to ensure that education is maintained during difficult circumstances, and upgrading education facilities for CwD, gender sensitivity to provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

### **3.6.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources**

The local education policies envisioned that the Education Committee at Municipality/Palika level is responsible to maintain healthy educational environment in order to increase the learning achievement, prepare minimum standard for sanitation and latrines, and prepare policy to ensure the access, quality and security in education. However, the policies didn't mention capacity development, clear mechanisms, systems, and resources to promote safe learning during normal and difficult circumstances.

## **3.7 Privatization**

UNESCO (2015) emphasizes the role of the state in setting and regulating standards and norms for private sector including its support to mobilize additional resources for public education in line with right to education, including by paying fair taxes, and focus those resources on priority areas. MoEST (2017b) provisions to open and run private schools and the government takes responsibility of monitoring them and MoEST (2018a) allows private actors to open and run school with private investment, but to be service-oriented and those schools are required to submit annual report to local government. Similarly, MoEST (2019a) emphasizes the needs of creating synergy through the fusion of existing best practices in both public and private education sectors, effectively mobilizing and regulating private educational institutions and enabling the transformation process of public education system in Nepal. These evidences show that the policies of the GoN have provisioned to promote private education and schools, and the policies are not explicitly clear on how they regulate private education. This raises question to the GoN commitments to ensure education as the fundamental right. The policy guidance of national/federal contradicts with the principles of right to education and creates confusion to local governments.

### **3.7.1 Issues and Policy Alignment**

The policies of government at federal level are not very specific and clear around privatization and private education. The local governments are also not supported to develop their policies and they have to develop their polies being in a confusion. Nepal's commitment is not clear on whether it regulates private sector or promote its engagement. National Campaign for Education Nepal demanded government to take appropriate regulatory measures to ensure that private providers of education do not further threaten social cohesion and are not a cause of segregation and discrimination (National Campaign for Education Nepal [NCEN], 2016). The segregation and discrimination engendered by the privatised Nepalese education system is both a human rights violation, and a source of other human rights breaches (Ibid). So, the clarity of the government on regulating private sectors is very crucial.

Except two municipalities of Jhapa District (Province 1), all other municipalities have made some provisions for private schools to operate in their areas. The two municipality of Jhapa District are completely silent on private sector and schools. The major provisions developed by rest of the municipalities for private schools are in the following box:



### Strengths of local policies:

- The private schools can take fee from students based on the facilities provided by them. However, the fees need to be discussed and agreed with parents and then get approval from municipalities before its application.
- The private schools are not allowed to collect fund from students for construction of building, classroom, playground, etc. If any private school is found taking unnecessary charge from students, it will be treated as violation of the Act and such schools are compelled to pay penalty amount of NRS 25,000 to 100,000, and the amount of the students is paid back.
- The private schools should allocate at least 5 to 10 percent of budget based on the total number of students to provide scholarship support to students from marginalized communities and groups like girls, Dalits, CwDs, poor, Janajati and other marginalized. The selection committee and standards of the scholarship will be as per the provision of municipality. However, Birgunj Metropolitan City has mentioned that out of 10% scholarship, 5% should be allocated to girls coming from various marginalized communities including GwD. For the transparency in distributing scholarship, approved selection criteria, the list of needy students and the documents should be submitted to ward coordination committee and village education committee.
- The curriculum and textbook of private need to be approved by the local government.
- No elected representative can have any direct or indirect connection with the private education institutions.
- The private schools should have SMCs to manage, monitor and regulate the private schools.
- If any private institution is found acting against the policy, it will be dismissed.

### Areas for policy improvement:

1. *Are not explicit enough on regulating private schools by developing standards in line with right to education.*
2. *Didn't mention anything about paying taxes.*
3. *Lack of clarity on how private sector in education address the issues of inequality and exclusion.*
4. *Lack of clarity on allocation of resources by private sector on priority areas for the transformation of quality education.*
5. *Didn't analyze the contribution of private sector equitable quality education critically.*
6. *No clear system, mechanisms, resources, and capacity to monitor private sector.*

Prabdeep (2020) claims, though private sector has some contribution in education sector, but it does uplift the burden of public schools and does not comply with human rights regulations. So, the government policies need to be explicit enough on how it regulates private sector. The local policies have made provisions for their operations, they didn't explicitly mention about regulating the private sector and schools developing standards of regulation in line with right to education, including by paying fair taxes, addressing the issues of equality and inclusion and allocation of resources on priority areas for the transformation of quality education. The local policies talk much on fees of private schools and have not critically analysed their contribution in promoting equitable and inclusive education. So, the local policies are not fully aligned with national and global commitments regulating private sector and schools.

### 3.7.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources

The Education committee at Municipal/Palika level is a key contact for private schools. SMC with seven members is formed in private school. However, the chairperson of SMC will be appointed by the founder or investors. The local governments do not have clear mechanisms, structures, systems and capacity on how they would regulate private sector and schools in their areas. They have very limited understanding on regulating private sector as they only talk of private schools and fees that the private school should charge. They are not serious on putting systems on place and building capacity and mechanisms to regulate private schools and resources needed to implement the commitments.

## 3.8 Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning and adult education have been one of the major agenda to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all as envisioned in the Education 2030 agenda. According to UNESCO (2015), promoting lifelong learning requires a sector-wide approach that includes formal, non-formal and informal learning for people of all ages, and it is necessary to provide opportunities for equitable access to education for older adults, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups. Similarly, MoEST (2019b) focuses promoting technical education and training opportunities for young people and adults of all ages and socio-cultural background so as to enable them to continue up/re-skill themselves, with particular attention to gender equality, and to vulnerable groups and people with disabilities.

The local policies have mentioned non-formal and alternative education. However, they have not specifically mentioned adult education and lifelong learning education and are not fully clear on promoting adult education and lifelong learning. Major issues which are close to lifelong learning and adult education included in the local policies are:

- Non-formal or alternative education - municipalities/palikas make necessary arrangement to conduct programs on non-formal education, distance education, inclusive education, continuous education, open education, and alternative education program.
- Bring all the age group, differently able people, economically backward or marginalized group in accessing quality education.
- Establishing community learning to provide alternative education.
- Specifically, Gaurigunj Rural Municipality of Jhapa District (Province 1), Birjung Metropolitan City of Parsa District (Province 2), Birendranagar Municipality of Surkhet District (Karnali Province), and Khaniyabash Rural Municipality of Dhading District (Bagmati Province) have mentioned about providing resources to implement technical and vocational education. Additionally, Rampur Municipality of Palpa District (Province 5) has also incorporated the CTEVT program along with technical and vocational education.

The above evidences show that the local policies and actors are not clear promoting lifelong learning and adult education. The policies have following gaps:

- Majority of the local policies did not specifically mention lifelong learning and adult education.
- The policies included that the community learning centers which will be monitored by municipality education committee but are not clear on how those centers would be operationalized with sufficient resources and capacities.
- Though policies have included SMCs to be responsible for the alternative education classes, there are no further details on facilitators, capacity and resources.
- The policies are not clear on resources, systems, mechanisms, and capacities to implement non-formal or alternative education provisions at local level.
- The local education policies are completely silent about establishing libraries, learning centres, and reading corners in schools and communities neither to support adults' learning nor for children

### 3.9 Governance and Accountability

Governments should strengthen education systems by instituting and improving appropriate, effective, and inclusive governance and accountability mechanisms and improving governance and accountability can increase efficiency and effective use of existing resources and ensure that financing reaches in the classroom (UNESCO, 2015). Participatory governance and coordinated partnerships at all levels upholding the right to participation of all stakeholders will need to be established or further developed in consultation with civil society (Ibid). Similarly, MoEST (2019b) committed to adhering to the principles of good governance, accountability and socially responsible partnerships, accountable teachers and human resource, transparent and accountable in public funding, and ensure a shared responsibility and accountability of all levels of governments.

#### 3.9.1 Issues and Policy Alignment

There are a lot of issues of good governance and accountability in education systems of Nepal. The participation of stakeholders is still an issue to hold government accountable at all levels. According to KC (2018), although majority of schools in Nepal have formed SMCs and PTAs, they lack capacity to develop strategies and plans, they are formed just for the sake of formation and they are not able to ensure good governance and accountability. Moreover, the communities are not aware of the importance of their engagement in schools and quality education, which need attention in the new policy environments at local level as they have greater roles to contribute in quality education.

Based on the articulation of key element of governance and accountability as presented in the Table 8, the local education policies have been categorized.

**Table 8: Categories of policies articulating major elements of governance and accountability**

Province	Average policies	Policies needed improvement	Poor policies
1	1	4	0
2	4	1	0
Bagmati	1	4	0
Gandaki	0	5	0
5	1	4	0
Karnali	0	5	0
Sudurpashchim	1	4	0

***Strengths of local policies:***

- 1. Mentioned to give priority to good governance and accountability*
- 2. Transparency while forming different committees*
- 3. Performance review of HTs and teachers*
- 4. Formation of monitoring committees with clear roles*

The issues covered by the local policies on governance and accountability are: along with teaching learning, good governance and accountability should be equally prioritized; formation of the committees should be transparent; participation of stakeholders in schools; review of performance of HTs and teachers, frequent monitoring visit to schools by the education monitoring committee which includes members from education committee and education officer at Municipality, resource person, school supervisor, and

so on to hold stakeholders accountable and support schools; and clear roles and responsibilities of each committee to make them responsible and accountable.

The municipalities of Parsa District (Province 2), Dhading District (Province 3), Palpa District (Province 5) and Jumla and Surkhet Districts (Karnali Province) provision for schools conducting social audit annually where income, expenditure, learning achievement, school internal activities, and overall progress, and developing action plan including financial for the upcoming year to be shared with all education stakeholders; and village education committee to select auditors from the roster to conduct social and financial audits and the audit report to be submitted to municipality education committee within 15 days after the completion of audits. The municipalities of Parsa District of Province 2 have specifically mentioned about submitting periodic progress report by the education monitoring committee to the municipality and village education committee. In addition, Gaurijung Rural Municipality of Jhapa District (Province 1) has stated forming child clubs in schools and conducting various children related activities in leadership of child clubs. Additionally, Gaurijung Rural Municipality of Jhapa, Thori, Bindabasini, Pakahamainpur and Kaliakamai Rural Municipalities of Parsa, Benighat Rural Municipality of Dhading, and Budinanada Municipality and Himali Rural Municipality of Bajura have mentioned about conducting social audit annually where income, expenditure, learning achievements, school internal activities, next year action plan including financial and overall education progress to be shared with all education stakeholders. For the social audit and financial audit, the auditor will be selected by the village education committee through roster. The audit report should be submitted to municipality education committee within 15 days after the audit report.

Managing stakeholder relationships and their engagement in schools is an important component and strategic driver for school governance (Salvioni & Cassano, 2017). Hutton (2015) adds, the government must continue to deepen their attempts to develop a culture where stakeholders who are directly affected by the education process are fully involved

***Areas for policy improvement:***

- 1. Lack of clarity of stakeholders' engagement including parents, community, CSOs and so on*
- 2. Lack of clarity holding duty bearers to account*
- 3. Lack of understanding on collective accountability and evidence-based planning*
- 4. Not clear on different levels of governance and accountability*
- 5. Lack of clarity on accountable in public funding*
- 6. No clear mechanisms, systems, resources, and capacity to ensure good governance and accountability*



in governance, management, and accountability. Despite some good aspects of good governance and accountability, the local policies have not talked about partnerships and roles of communities and CSOs to hold duty bearers to account. As committed nationally and globally, the principles of good governance and accountability are not explicit in the policies, for example, collective accountability, evidence-based planning, allocation of responsibilities. The local policies failed to be explicit and clear on the governance and accountability at all levels of local government and transparent and accountable in public funding.

### ***3.9.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources***

The local policies envision MEC, WCC, SMC and PTA responsible to ensure education governance and accountability at local level. The major roles of MEC include appointing auditor including remuneration, providing guidance to SMC, establishing education management system where the data of teachers, students and educational matters are kept, developing programs as per approved plan for the welfare of the teacher, staff and students, reviewing social audit and audit submitted by auditor, and recommending to close down school (if any). The WCC plays the role mediator in case of dispute between parents and teachers and the PTA creates environment for interaction between parents, teachers, and students. The SMC is responsible for overall management – quality education, infrastructure, and finance of school, implementing codes of conduct of HT, teachers, staff, and students, conducting social and financial audits, and implementing the guidelines developed by the education committee.

The policies didn't talk about the capacity of the committees who are responsible for ensuring governance and accountability at school level. They also didn't mention anything about the accountability and governance of those committees which are responsible for accountability. The policy also didn't mention how the overall governance mechanisms at local level function at local government level for ensuring equitable access to quality education.

## **3.10 Education Financing**

UNESCO (2015) emphasizes allocating at least 4% to 6% of gross domestic product (GDP) to education and allocating at least 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education. It further stresses that the governments must have clear commitment to provide equitable financing adequately supporting national educational priorities, needs and capacities to advance the progressive realization of the right to education (Ibid). Similarly, MoEST (2019b) envisions that the government's share on education will progressively increase from the current level to 20% of the total government's budget to achieve the sustainable development goals in education. The programmes related to SDG4 will be addressed through the annual plan and budget, the periodic plan, and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) which will be ensured by the government at all levels of as a shared responsibility (Ibid).

### ***3.10.1 Issues and Policy Alignment***

If we look at the last five years of education budget of Nepal, the budget is in decreasing trends, which is very discouraging. In on hand, the government has committed to ensure the right to education, on the other hand, it has reduced the budget every year. This trend will raise serious question on the commitment of the government to right to education.

**Table 9: Education budget of Nepal from 2015 to 2020**

Year	Total budget (in billion)	Education Budget (in billion)	Percentage
2015/16	819.46	98.64	12.04%
2016/17	1048.9213	115.83	11.04%
2017/18	1278.9948	126.74	9.91%
2018/19	1315.1617	134.1875	10.20%
2019/20	1532.9671	163.7559	10.68%

Source: Extracted from the government budget from 2015 to 2020

According to NCEN (2018b), at present, more than twice the current school budget is required to maintain free and quality education in terms of financial obligations and the State is required to mobilize resources for ensuring such investment. However, the government of Nepal is not serious to take any steps on this.

If we look at the allocation of budget at local level, it looks low as we need to allocate majority of the budget for the implementation.

**Table 10: Share of education budget at different Governments**

Units in billion	2019/20		2018/19	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Particulars				
Total Budget	163.7559		134.1875	
Federal	65.2817	39.87	46.2152	34.44
Province	4.2532	2.6	2.8573	2.13
Local	94.221	57.54	85.115	63.43

Source Red Book, GoN: 2019/20

If the government fails to invest more on education at local level, the right to education will be limited on papers, but, not in practice. The local governments fail to clearly articulate share of education budget. Most of the local government has accumulated education budget in the social security hence there is no mention of separate budget for education. There are some local governments (see table 11) who have at least allocated education budget but unfortunately the allocated budget in education is less than 5% which is insufficient to ensure right to education and achieve targets of SDG4.

**Table 11: Local Government Education Budget 2019 Local Governments**

	Province/District	Total Budget (RS)	Education Budget (RS)	Education budget (%)
Mushikot Municipality	5 /Gulmi	625475310	26324874	4.2%
Badimali Municipality	Sudurpachim /Bajura	407402000	13253100	3.3%
Budinanda	Sudurpachim /Bajura	392464170	17650000	4.5%
Swamikartik Rural Municipality	Sudurpachim /Bajura	386290600	10977000	2.8%

The local education policies have been categorized as average policies, policies needed improvement, and poor policies based on the articulation of key element of education financing as presented in the Table 12.

**Table 12 : Categories of policies articulating major elements of education financing**

Province	Average policies	Policies needed improvement	Poor policies
1	1	4	0
2	1	4	0
Bagmati	1	4	0
Gandaki	0	5	0
5	0	5	0
Karnali	0	5	0
Sudurpashchim	4	1	0

***Strengths of local policies:***

1. *Mentioned that the federal, provincial, and local governments provide operating grant to schools*
2. *Local resource mobilization*
3. *HTs leading to develop annual budget*
4. *Establishment of village education fund and education development fund in school to support marginalized children*

All the education policies of 35 local governments have mentioned that the federal, provincial, and local government can provide grant for the operation of schools annually. The accumulated fund (collective fund received from federal/provincial/local unit) has been termed as accumulated fund should be presented and passed by the annual assembly of municipality and then transfer to schools. The funding for schools will be based on the number of students, number of teachers, learning achievement, annual academic and economical status, and physical infrastructure, etc. Once the fund has been separated for school, it will

not be refunded but if the learning achievement decreases in comparison with previous year, the funding of schools will be cut off for the upcoming year. The schools also need to mobilize its local resources for the construction of school building, furniture etc. The policies made compulsory provision of HT leading to develop annual school budget which is submitted to village education committee and school should establish education development fund in the school.

Majority will be palika village education fund established in the respective municipality and the collected fund will be used for buildings and other infrastructure and for enhancing quality education in schools. SMC Chair, HT and one of the selected members of SMC will be the signatories of the school account. The school will also establish education development fund to provide access and quality education for the economically poor, marginalized, CwD, orphans, victims of natural calamities and best performing students. The provision education fund is in Education Act (MoEST, 2017a) but it is not reflected in the Local Government Operation Act. So, it creates confusion to the actors. They may say why to establish the fund because they all have their own Sarbasanchit *Kosh* in each level.

For the transparent and proper management finance, HT should appoint an accountant or assign specific staff to look after it and establish separate account section. The transaction of funds to the public school should be done through bank. There will be joint signatures of accountant and HT for secondary level and HT and SMC chairperson for basic level. The head teacher and accountant will manage the accounting work.

The local government receives fund from federal government, provincial government, private school, and other sources like education tax, donation, charity etc. There will be separate educational fund

in each public school. The schools receive funds from federal government, provincial government, municipality, private school, other sources like education tax, donation, charity, etc. However, all these funds are channelled through local government treasury system.

Moreover, Parsa District (Province 2) has been flexible giving options to schools whether the schools would demand quota of teachers or lump sum, it is up to schools and the municipality support for this especially for the teachers who are supported by Municipalities. However, there should not be any issues in schools for the management of teachers. The schools which are operating under the Trust model will get fund from municipality for school construction. The fund allocated for the specified heading should be spent on the same heading and if there are any different arrangement, education department should be informed timely manner. The local resources collected by school should be used for school building, furniture and 2% of the total collection need to be deposited in the education fund for scholarship.

According to NCEN (2018), there is a huge gap on school financing which will have a huge implication to impart free and compulsory quality education. So, the financing for schools and resource generation need to be guided by local policies clearly, otherwise the free and compulsory education goals will be attained only on papers. Despite the importance of financing, the local policies are clear on how resources would be generated and managed. The local policies failed to commit allocating at least 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education, providing equitable financing appropriate with local priorities, needs and capacities to advance the progressive realization of the right to education, addressing the core issues of marginalization and financing towards where there is greatest needs, evidence based financing, monitoring and reporting mechanism, considering education plan as a part of overall plan, exploring different options like private sectors to complement the government budget.

### 3.10.2 Capacity, Mechanisms, Systems and Resources

- The policies envisioned that the Education Committee at Municipality/Palika and SMC The local policies should focus on access and quality equally with clear provisions for improving intended learning outcomes and ensuring completion of education with foundation skills which enable students to lead healthy and happy lives and make informed decisions.
- The policies should be clear on promoting gender equality and addressing all forms of exclusion and discrimination in and through education to achieve right to education for all agenda of the government.
- The policies should make clear provisions and additional support for the children coming from marginalized community including girls, CwD, Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesi, etc. to ensure leave no one behind in education.
- The policies should make special provisions like mid-day meal facility for poor children, sanitary

#### ***Areas for policy improvement:***

1. *Lack of clarity and guidance on resource generation and management*
2. *Policies failed to commit 20% budget to education*
3. *Didn't mention equity-based financing*
4. *Lack of clarity on financing for progressive realization of right to education*
5. *Lack of clarity on evidence-based financing*
6. *Not clear on private sectors' liabilities to allocate resources for education transformation*
7. *Not clear on mechanisms, systems, resources, and capacity to ensure effective financing*



pads for girls, child friendly/disable friendly infrastructure and environment, sufficient scholarship facility for girls, Dalit, CwD, other marginalized children, etc.

- The government should develop gender responsive policies, planning, budgeting, curriculum, pedagogy, teacher instruction, etc.
- The government should follow the guideline developed by MoEST on local curriculum development and implementation.
- The government should ensure safe learning environment with supportive environment which is free from violence, discrimination, child abuse and bullying, harassment, etc.
- The government should introduce comprehensive safety plan and should make clear strategy, mechanisms, and systems with resources to continue education during difficult circumstances.
- The local policies should explicitly mention lifelong learning and adult education with clear commitments on resources and capacity.
- The policies should clearly mention allocating at least 20% budget in education as per the Constitutional and global commitment.
- The policies should clearly highlight systems, mechanisms, resources, and capacities needed to implement free and compulsory basic education and free secondary education to implement right to education commitments of the government.
- The policies should be clear on the roles and coordination of government at all levels.

### **Recommendations to NCE Nepal**

- NCE Nepal should develop working definition of quality education, equality and inclusion, teacher management, students' assessment, local curriculum, safe learning environment, privatization, governance and accountability, lifelong learning and adult education, and education financing, and make available to its members and concerned stakeholders. It should also help to clarify the key elements or principles of these areas.
- Based on the above, NCE Nepal should build the capacity of its members, partners, staff, and other relevant actors who are part of the campaign led by NCE Nepal.
- NCE Nepal should use the findings of this study to advocate improving local policies which should be aligned with the commitments to right to education.
- NCE Nepal and its partner organization should work together to prepare recommendation based on the findings of this study to influence the 10-year education plan which is being developed by MoEST.
- NCE Nepal should use the findings of this study to influence other local governments who are developing their education policies.
- NCE Nepal should reflect on CSOs' engagement on policy dialogues in education and identify strategies for the effective policy advocacy at all levels.

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## Annex 1: List of Local Government Education Acts and Policies Analysed

Province	District	Local Government	Specific Policies Analysed
Province 1	Jhapa	Damak Municipality <a href="http://damakmun.gov.np/">http://damakmun.gov.np/</a>	Basic and Secondary Level Education Act 2076
		Kankai Municipality <a href="http://kankaimun.gov.np/">http://kankaimun.gov.np/</a>	School Education Implementation Plan 2074
		Shivsatakhyi Municipality <a href="http://shivasatakshimun.gov.np/">http://shivasatakshimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2076
		Kamala Rural Municipality <a href="http://kamalmun.gov.np/">http://kamalmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
		Gaurigung Rural Municipality <a href="http://gaurigunmun.gov.np/">http://gaurigunmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
Province 2	Parsa	Birjung Metropolitancity <a href="http://birgunmun.gov.np/">http://birgunmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
		Thori Rural municipality <a href="http://thorimun.gov.np/">http://thorimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
		Pakahamainpur Rural Municipality <a href="http://pakahamainpurmun.gov.np/">http://pakahamainpurmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Bill 2076
		Bindabasini Rural Municipality <a href="http://bindabasinimun.gov.np/">http://bindabasinimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
		Paterwasugauli Rural Municipality <a href="http://paterwasugaulimun.gov.np/">http://paterwasugaulimun.gov.np/</a>	National Education Policy 2076
Bagmati Province		Nilkantha Municipality <a href="http://neelakanthamun.gov.np/">http://neelakanthamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2074
		Khaniyabash Rural Municipality <a href="http://khaniyabasmun.gov.np/">http://khaniyabasmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2076
		Jwalamukhi Rural Municipality <a href="http://jwalamukhimun.gov.np/">http://jwalamukhimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2075
		Benighat Rorang Rural Municipality <a href="http://benighatrorangmun.gov.np/">http://benighatrorangmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
		Rubivalley Rural Municipality <a href="http://rubivalleymun.gov.np/">http://rubivalleymun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
Gandaki Province	Parbat	Phalewas Municipality <a href="http://phalewasmun.gov.np/">http://phalewasmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2074
		Kushma Municipality <a href="http://kushmamun.gov.np/">http://kushmamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
		Mahashila Rural Municipality <a href="http://mahashilamun.gov.np/">http://mahashilamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
		Modi Rural Municipality <a href="http://modimun.gov.np/">http://modimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
		Jaljala Rural Municipality <a href="http://jaljalamun.gov.np/">http://jaljalamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074

Province 5	Palpa	Rampur Municipality <a href="http://rampurmun.gov.np/">http://rampurmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2074
		Purbakhola Rural Municipality <a href="http://purbakholamun.gov.np/">http://purbakholamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
		Ramba Rural Municipality <a href="http://rambhamun.gov.np/">http://rambhamun.gov.np/</a>	Local Education Guideline
		Bagnaskali Rural Municipality <a href="http://baganaskalimun.gov.np/">http://baganaskalimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
	Gulmi	Mushikot Municipality <a href="http://musikotmungulmi.gov.np/">http://musikotmungulmi.gov.np/</a>	Local Education Act 2074
Karnali Province	Jumla	Tatopani Rural Municipality <a href="http://tatopanimun.gov.np/">http://tatopanimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074 & Education Act 2074
		Patarashi Rural Municipality <a href="http://patarasimun.gov.np/">http://patarasimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
	Surkhet	Birendranagar Municipality <a href="http://birendranagarmun.gov.np/">http://birendranagarmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2074
		Bheriganga Municipality <a href="http://bherigangamun.gov.np/">http://bherigangamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
		Panchapuri Municipality <a href="http://panchapurimun.gov.np/">http://panchapurimun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2075
Sudurpashchim Province	Bajura	Budinanda Municipality <a href="http://budhinandamun.gov.np/">http://budhinandamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
		Badimali Municipality <a href="http://badimalikamun.gov.np/">http://badimalikamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Guideline 2074
		Khaptad Chededaha Rural Municipality <a href="http://chhededahamun.gov.np/">http://chhededahamun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2074
		Swamikartik Khapar Rural Municipality <a href="http://swamikartikmun.gov.np/">http://swamikartikmun.gov.np/</a>	Education Act 2074
		Himali Rural Municipality <a href="http://himalimun.gov.np/">http://himalimun.gov.np/</a>	Local Education Act 2074

# **National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE- Nepal)**

National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE- Nepal) in UN ECOSOC special consultative status is a civil society movement with mandates to lobby and advocacy for ensuring quality education for all. The history of NCE-Nepal traced back in April 2003, after obtaining membership from the international network, Global Campaign for Education (GCE). As GCE Nepal network decided to broaden its spectrum on advocacy, all coalition members felt a need of it legal identity. As a result, NCE-Nepal was formally established on 2010 as civil society movement to ensure the right to equitable, inclusive quality education for all.

NCE-Nepal is a campaign for undertaking collective efforts and coordinating among individuals/ organizations engaged in promoting the human rights to quality education in Nepal. It works as a watchdog to ensure everyone's rights to education and advocates for the same. It focuses on strategic interventions related to policy advocacy, networking, lobbying and campaigning at the district, regional, national and international levels. Currently, it has 409 member organizations including 48 General members and 361 affiliated members ranging from international and national non-government organizations, federation, education media organizations and teachers' community to grassroots institutions working in the field of education and child rights. Besides, it has district coalition in 30 districts covering 7 provinces of Nepal. NCE-Nepal is also a member of Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and Global Campaign for Education (GCE). In addition to this it has recently registered as a member of Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). Being a member of GCE and ASPBAE, NCE-Nepal has access to engage to debates on education issues at local, regional and international forums. It is one of the recognized CSO network to contribute in the national policy making process for education in Nepal as acknowledged by the Government.

## **Vision**


Equitable inclusive quality public education for all in Nepal.

## **Mission**

Lead the creative campaigning to hold the government accountable and to ensure right to quality public education in Nepal with civil society organizations, social justice movements progressive academia and marginalized communities.

## **Goal**

To ensure equitable, inclusive, free, compulsory and quality education for children, youth and adult as their fundamental right to education in Nepal.



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