

4th Conference on Public Policy and Governance in South Asia “Deepening Democracy: Enhancing Voices and Choices of Citizens”

11-12 June 2020

Nepal Administrative Staff College, Jawalakhel, Lalitpur

Background and Rationale:

Recent decades have witnessed a broad acknowledgement that formal processes of democracy are necessary but not sufficient for delivering good governance and societal expectations for development and change. Important lessons have already emerged as to how such formal processes fail to live up to expectations of good governance and efficient and effective service delivery, and on tackling myriad of social, economic and environmental challenges. In South Asia, as elsewhere, this realization has led to arguments that democracies should move beyond the formal constitutional process and periodic elections. It is also essential that democracies allow people to participate in decisions affecting their lives and livelihoods and enable them to have a sense of control over their circumstances. Accordingly, the main concern remains – how we devise government policies and institutions that enhance citizens’ voices and expand their choice?

The conference themed “Deepening Democracy: Enhancing Voices and Choices of Citizens” is the fourth in the series of Conference on Governance and Public Policy in South Asia which has been hosted by Nepal Administrative Staff College in collaboration with Niti Foundation (Nepal), Institute for Social and Environmental Transition, (ISET) Nepal, South Asia Institute of Advanced Studies, Nepal, Institute of Public Enterprises, India; North South University, Bangladesh and BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, Bangladesh. The fourth conference will be joined together by Kathmandu University, School of Management, Nepal Open University from Nepal and other like-minded institutions from South Asia. The fourth conference brings forth the cumulative learning of the previous three conferences to bear on how the governments in South Asia can act to enhance citizens’ voice and choices.

The conference will prove to be opportunity to share innovations in the South Asia region and beyond. It will allow participants share the common challenges of deepening democracy in the region, either as specifically a national character of a particular country, or within each as specific historical, political, social, cultural contexts in the sub-national contexts.

Aim:

This conference aims to bring together researchers, public policy actors and political leaders of South Asia to deliberate and share learning on the particular policy challenges, ground-level experiences, and reform opportunities for expanding citizens’ voice and choice in the South Asian region.

Objectives:

- Deliberate on the larger political context of deepening democracy in the region – especially of the political will, bottlenecks and reform opportunities.
- Share experiences of national and sub-national level practices, innovations or challenges in enhancing government transparency, accountability, and for expanding citizen voice
- Discuss reform opportunities, cross-country learning and collaboration.

Conference Theme:

Deepening Democracy: Enhancing Voices and Choices of Citizens

CHOICES OF CITIZENS

Sub Theme:

1. Democratic institutions
2. Quality of public services
3. Accountability
4. Inclusive governance
5. Public space for contestation and collective action
6. Governance of infrastructure
7. Political economy of representation
8. Deliberate democracy
9. E-governance and citizen's engagement
10. Sub-national governance

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Key Dates:

Submission of abstract: 15th January 2020
Abstract acceptance notification: 15th February 2020
Submission of full paper: 15th April 2020
Conference date: 11-12 June 2020

Conference Venue:

Nepal Administrative Staff College
Jawalakhel, Lalitpur,
Province 3, Nepal

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