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Topic
An Assessment of Administrative Reforms in Nepal
Poor Performance of Leading Institutions: Setback to Improve Public Governance

Paper to be Presented By
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Area of Research: Administrative Reforms and New Public Management in Nepal
**ABSTRACT:** The main objective of this paper is to assess administrative reforms in Nepal and to evaluate the role of reform leading institutions. A number of reform initiatives have been taken place in Nepal since the 1960s and seven reform Commissions have already been formed to reform Nepalese public administration. However, Nepalese bureaucracy is not efficient and effective in delivering public services. The public administration is more centralized in terms of using power and authority, is more rigid in adhering rules and regulations, and public employees are not so much accountable for performing their job responsibilities. Therefore, over all performance of governance in Nepal is poor. The paper sees the main problem with the reform trajectory of the Nepalese public administration is the poor performance of reform leading institutions. Making changes in public sector is a difficult task it is because bureaucratic functions are path dependent. Their focus is mainly on the following once established rules, regulations, structures and work procedures. These path dependent working ways are difficult to change until and unless great efforts are made to reform them. Therefore, to make changes in the public sector through reform programs requires a high performer reform leading institution and its ongoing monitoring. There are some mechanisms for monitoring reform programs in Nepal. However, the performance of monitoring mechanisms is very poor. The study finds that many times committee members could not seat for their regular meetings. Therefore, the paper concludes that, without having effectiveness of monitoring institutions, over all goal of improving public governance through reforms may not be achieved. The qualitative method is used for this study. The information is mainly collected from secondary sources. Primary information is also used to develop this paper.

1. **Introduction**
Nepal is a land locked country located in South Asia bordered by China to the north and India in the south, east and west. The total land area of the country is 147,181 sq.km and Nepal’s population is around 26.4 millions. Population growth rate of the country is approximately 2.25, whereas country’s GDP is around 2.5 percent. Its per capita income is about 383 US dollar. The literacy rate is around 54.1 % (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Most of the services to the citizens are delivered by the public sector. The structure of the administrative system is mainly based on three level-Central, Regional and District Administration. Number of employees working at the public sector is around four hundred thousand including, 87 thousand in Civil Service, 20 thousand in Public Enterprises, 97 thousand in Army Service, 72 thousand Police Services, 105 hundred thousand in Teaching Service and 5 thousand in other Public Services government funded Committees and Board (Source: Ministry of General Administration, 2007).
The general purpose of this paper is to assess administrative reform initiatives in Nepal. The paper reviews the reform programs adopted by the government since the 1960s. The focus of this paper is to analyze the role of reform leading institutions after 1990s reform programs. The study is mainly based on secondary data collected from reform reports, reform policy documents, books and articles. Primary information is also used collected from discussions with purposively selected officials at the Ministry of General Administration. The information from my personal experiences is also used since I have been working in the Nepalese bureaucracy for more than one decade. Looking at the reform efforts made by the government and their effectiveness, my guiding hypothesis is that “leading reform institutions have the major role to make the reform programs more effective in order to bring expected changes in public administration”. Therefore, to this paper, implementation of reform program is dependent variable and performance of reform leading institutions is independent variable.

The history of administrative reforms in Nepal goes back to the early 1960s. At least seven administrative reform efforts have been made since then namely- M. N. Buch Committee-1952, Administrative Reforms Planning Commission-1956, Administrative Reform Commission-1968, Administrative Reform Commission-1975, Administrative Reforms Commission-1991, Governance Reform Program, 2001, and Vision Paper for Civil Service, 2007. The Committees and Commissions came up with a number of recommendations mainly for making public administration efficient, effective, responsive, competent and accountable. The efforts of reform mainly for right sizing bureaucracy, for modernizing civil service rules and regulations, for delegating power and authority, for simplifying work procedures, for developing human resource, for bringing efficiency in services delivery, and for controlling corruption. However, recommendations made by the reform commissions were/are not fully implemented. It can be explained that effective implementation of reform programs is largely depends on performance of reform leading institutions. Therefore, this paper mainly examines the roles and performance of reform monitoring institutions in the process of reforming Nepalese public administration.

2. Why Is Administrative Reforms?
Public administration is the principal state machinery to implement the public policies and to carry out the activities of the national development. Therefore, an efficient, effective, competent, transparent, and accountable civil service can only work to achieve the goal of national development. However, public administration is generally criticized for being too
complex, centralized, bureaucratic, rigid, and incompetent (Brunsson and Olsen, 1993:15). Bureaucrats are also criticized for passing buck, sitting on files, delaying in decisions making, and adhering to rules and regulations (Jamil, 1998). There should therefore be continued reforms in the public sector to overcome in these malpractices. According to Pollitt and Geert (2000: 6), reform is necessary for improving quality of public services, making the operations of government more efficient, implementing public policies effectively and making public expenditure cost effective. Reform is deliberative changes in the structures and work processes of public organizations for better performance (Pollitt and Geert, 2008: 8). Reform is also necessary in an organization for its adaptation in the changed environment. Therefore, it is a continuous process and is undertaken in order to work in the changed context, time and public demand. Reform is a means to make the administrative system more effective instrument for maintaining equality, for bringing justice and for making economic growth (Turner and Hulme, 1997:106). Caiden (1976) defines reform as the artificial inducement of administrative transformation against resistance. There is widespread agreement among the governments regarding the need to reshape the public sector in order to increase efficiency and improve public services (Brunsson and Olsen, 1993:27). Therefore, administrative reform is necessary for bringing change in established bureaucratic practices, behaviours, and structures.

In the Nepalese case, administrative reforms have mainly been initiated along with the changes appear in the political environment. After the changes made in political system, public expectation was high for seeking prompt response from the government to their needs. Following the changes in political regime, making government apparatus faster and efficient was necessary. Therefore, a number of reforms initiatives were taken place in time again. The main priority of the reform programs of early 1960s to 1980s was for setting organizational structures and making civil service acts, rules and regulations. The main focus of the reforms phenomena after 1990s is for bringing change in organizational structures, operating procedures, service delivery systems and decision making processes. If we review 1990 onward reforms, the main objective of the Administrative Reform Commission, 1991 was to make the public sector more efficient, effective, and least cost consuming. Likewise, the main aim of the Governance Reform Program, 2001 was to make Nepalese bureaucracy result driven, people oriented and gender responsive. Similarly, the main thrust of the Vision Paper of Civil Service, 2007 was to make civil service accountable, professionalize and competitive for the prosperous transformation of the nation.
3. Reform Initiatives in Nepal

Reform initiatives in Nepal can be examined in two eras- before 1990 and after 1990. The division is made for making the study convenient to analyze the priorities of the reform programs in these two eras. In general before 1990 reforms are considered as traditional reforms which focus was on setting organizations and making rules and regulations, whereas 1990 onward reforms initiatives are considered as modern managerial reforms which focus is on redefining the role of government and effective service delivery.

3.1 Reform Initiatives Before 1990

Nepal was divided into small States (22 \ 24) before unification in the 18th century. There was no integrated administrative system. After unification of the country, Nepalese administration was characterized by the direct rule of the King and his appointees. In mid 19th century (1846), the Ranas came to power and ruled for almost 100 years or until 1950. The Rana Prime Ministers held all administrative power themselves what we call feudal administrative system was run through “Muluki Sawal and Sanad” (some sort of directives for running day to day administration) on their own intuition. There was no institutionalized administrative system. The people’s revolution of 1950 overthrew the Rana autocratic regime and democratic form of governance established in 1951. Since 1952 a number of reform committees and commissions have been formed time again for reforming public administration.

**Buch Committee was formed in 1952** after the fall of Rana regime. There was a lack of indigenous experience for reforming public administration. Therefore, Nepalese government requested the government of India to assist for the initial reforms in Nepalese public administration. A group of experts led by M. N. Buch came from India. The main terms of reference of this committee was to study the existing civil service and make recommendations for its reorganization. The committee recommended a number of reforms mainly in recruitment system, training, integration of public services, finance and accounts, central and district administration, police and jail system, reforms in the judiciary, and measures to control the corruption (Poudyal, 1989:47). However, very few recommendations including the creation of the post of the Chief Secretary at the Cabinet Secretariat and abolition of Hajiri Goshwara were implemented (Poudyal, 1989: 49). There was no separate mechanism for monitoring proposed reforms made by this committee.
Administrative Reorganization Planning Commission was formed in 1956 on the chairmanship of Prime Minister Tank Prasad Acharya in order to strengthen the administrative system. Having broader objective of streamlining Nepalese administrative system, the Commission made various recommendations for making Civil Service Act, and Rules, for setting Organization and Methods unit for the studies and analysis of the administrative system, for establishing Civil Service Training Centre to provide training for civil servants. Most of the recommendations including Civil Service Act, Rules and Training Institute made by this Commission were implemented which became instrumental for building foundation of modern public administration in Nepal (Pandey, 2000). But there was no separate provision for monitoring mechanism to the reform programs.

In 1960, Mahendra banned all political parties and imposed an autocratic regime in place of multiparty democracy. The King promised that he would fight against corruption and brings out such administrative reforms, which would make the administrative machinery efficient and capable (Poudel, 1989: 85). In 1968, Administrative Reform Commission was set up for seeking recommendations to make civil service efficient, effective, and competent. This Commission recommended, among others to reduce the number of ministries, to creat zonal and district level administration, to bring reform in financial sector, to make civil service officer and action oriented, to make recruitment on the recommendations of Public Service Commission, and to implement performance budgeting. However, recommendations made by this Commission could not be implemented. There was also not any mechanism for monitoring proposed reforms.

After four year of assuming Crowned, King Birendra formed another Administrative Reform Commission in 1972 to find out the solutions for decreasing efficiency and diminishing competency of the Civil Service and to make the administrative system more development oriented (Poudyal, 1989: p.47-95). The main recommendations were to streamline public service commission, to set up the Ministry of Human Resource and General Administration, to strengthen planning units, to simplify work procedures, to form Office of the Accountant General. Establishment of the Nepal Administrative Staff College in 1982 and Seventy-Five Treasury and Account Control Offices were the results of this Commission (Pandey, 2000: 4). There was a provision for high level Committee for monitoring reform, but it was not implemented.
Following table summarizes the major reform initiatives initiated from 1952 to 1975.

**Table-1**

**Summarization of Reform Initiatives 1952 -1975**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reform Committee/Commissions</th>
<th>Main Terms of Reference</th>
<th>Implementation Status</th>
<th>Provision of Monitoring Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. N Buch Committee 1952</td>
<td>To study existing organizations of public administration</td>
<td>Very Few recommendations implemented 2 out of 10</td>
<td>No separate organization for monitoring reform programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Reorganization Planning Commission, 1956</td>
<td>To formulate Civil Service Act and Rules to strengthen administrative system</td>
<td>Many recommendations were implemented 11 out of 13</td>
<td>No separate monitoring unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Reform Commission, 1968</td>
<td>To recommend the reform measures for making civil service effective and competent</td>
<td>Partly recommendations were implemented 26 (Partly) out of 38</td>
<td>No separate organization for monitoring reform programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Reform Commission, 1975</td>
<td>To make administrative system more development oriented</td>
<td>Partly recommendations were implemented 9 (partly)out of 17</td>
<td>Provision for monitoring Committee, but not implemented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


To sum up, reform initiatives before 1990s show that administrative reform committees and commissions were frequently set up and made a series of recommendations. Most of the recommendations made were more or less similar- formation of rules, regulations, and creation of public organizations. However, very few recommendations were implemented and no mechanism made for monitoring reform programs.

### 3.2 Reform Initiatives After 1990

Three major reform initiatives have been carried after 1990 to modernize Nepalese public administration. Administrative Reform Commission, ARC was formed in 1991. Again in 2001, the government introduced Governance Reform Program, GRP. And a Task Force to prepare a Vision Paper for Civil Service, VPCS was formed in 2006. Following sub-sections discuss the reform programs introduced by these three reform initiatives from 1990 onwards.
3.2.1 Administrative Reform Commission (ARC), 1991
The people's movement of 1990 restored the democratic political regime that was suspended by the then King Mahendra in 1960 and followed by his son King Birendra for 30 years. Right after the change made in political regime from an authoritative to a democratic one in 1990, it was realized that a number of profound changes was necessary to reform Nepalese public sector. Accordingly, a high level Administrative Reform Commission (ARC) was formed under the chairmanship of the then Prime Minister, Girija Prasad Koirala in 1991. In view with the changed context, the Commission recommended various reform measures mainly in the areas of redefining the role of government, public service delivery, re-structuring public organizations, right sizing bureaucracy, privatization of public enterprises, procedural simplification, efficiency in decision making, delegation of power and authority to the line agencies, human resource development, corruption control, modifications on performance appraisal system and monitoring of reforms (ARC Report, 1992).

Table-2
Summarization of Reforms, Main focus and Implementation status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Proposed Reforms</th>
<th>Main Focus of the Reforms</th>
<th>Implementati on Status</th>
<th>Leading/ Monitoring Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing the role of government</td>
<td>Transfer of government activities to the non-government sectors where private sector can work.</td>
<td>Partly implemented</td>
<td>Administrative Reforms Monitoring Committee, ARMC Led by Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructuring public organizations</td>
<td>Merging and reducing of public organizations (Reducing Number of Ministries 21-18</td>
<td>Not-implemented Increased 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rightsizing the bureaucracy</td>
<td>Reduction of number of government employees Target 25% reduction out of 102000</td>
<td>Partly implemented 84000-87,000 in Civil Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public service delivery</td>
<td>Effective service delivery and prompt response to the public needs</td>
<td>Not implemented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural simplification</td>
<td>Reduction of decision making layers and paperwork, Target to keep 3 layer out 5/6,</td>
<td>Very few implemented Only 1 layer reduced</td>
<td>Administrative Reform Committee, ARC Led by Ministry of General Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralization</td>
<td>Devolution and delegation of managerial activities to the line agencies</td>
<td>Partly implemented Law made but could not be effective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resource development</td>
<td>Increasing capacity of public employees and making them more efficient</td>
<td>Not-implemented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatization</td>
<td>Privatization of Public Enterprises</td>
<td>Partly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.1 Governance Reform Program (GRP), 2001
Governance Reform Program (GRP) was introduced for the duration of 5 years under the soft loan assistance of the Asian Development Bank. The broad objective of the GRP was to make the Nepalese bureaucracy more result-driven, people-oriented, and gender-responsive. Within these broader objectives of the reform program, following five components were focused:

A) To develop an internal capacity for leading reform: The objective was to improve the management structure at the center of government to lead the reform efforts.  

B) To improve efficiency of the civil service: The objective was fiscal savings by rightsizing the government and improving the personnel management systems to increase performance.  

C) To enhance overall competence and motivation of civil servants: The objective was to motivate and improve skills of civil servants by adopting modern principles of human resource management and pay scale.  

D) To improve governance and reduce corruption in government: The objective was to strengthen legal framework for combating corruption.  

E) To improve performance of the key Ministries of the government. The objective was to deliver better services to citizens by reinforcing a New Public Management, NPM culture (GRP Document, 2001).  

A Road Map that includes more than 60 reform measures was developed within these broad reform components to carry out various sectoral reform programs in 2004.

Table 3

Governance Reforms Program, GRP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Proposed Reforms</th>
<th>Main Objectives</th>
<th>Implementation Status</th>
<th>Leading/Monitoring Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To develop internal capacity leading reform institution</td>
<td>To improve management structure of leading reform institutions</td>
<td>Partly implemented</td>
<td>Governance Reform Coordination Unit, (GRCU) at the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve efficiency of the</td>
<td>To enhance performance of</td>
<td>Not-implemented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.3 Vision Paper for Civil Service, 2006

In 2002, King Gyanendra followed his father’s legacy suspending the elected government and imposed his authoritarian regime. The King’s direct rule could not be sustained for a long period. After four years, Nepalese people fought against the King's direct rule and restored democratic political regime again in April 2006. Along with the change in the political regime, it was also realized that a number of profound reforms need to be introduced for modernizing the public bureaucracy. Girija Prasad Koirala, after assuming his forth tenure as the Prime Minister of the nation, in his first meeting with top bureaucrats, asked them to work for a Ten Years Vision Paper to modernize Nepalese Civil Service in August, 2006. Following the instructions of the Prime Minister, a Task Force was formed to prepare a Vision Paper for Civil Service to carry out various reforms in public administration.

The main term of reference to the Vision Paper Task Force was to work on the following areas- to find out the rationale of existing number of ministries and central level organizations, to identify the ways to transfer the centralized administration to decentralize one and to identify the areas that can be devolved, to find out the ways in order to make the civil service more client oriented, accountable and responsive, to work for the balance between merit based civil service and social inclusion, the ways to re-engineering on the structures and modus operandi of the government, the ways to make the decision processes less lengthy, to find out the reform measures that bring changes in the behavior and develop positive thinking of civil servants, to find out the point of departure of public administration while following the federal structure of the state, and to find out the indicators to map the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To enhance over all competence and motivation of civil servants</th>
<th>To increase motivation and improve skills of civil servants by adopting modern human resource management</th>
<th>Not implemented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To improve governance and reduce corruption in government</td>
<td>To strength legal framework for combating corruption. Special Court</td>
<td>Partly-implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve the performance of the key Ministries of the government</td>
<td>To deliver better services to citizens based on New Public Management work culture-Performance based management.</td>
<td>Not-implemented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

performance of civil service. The Task Force has submitted its report, but the government has not indorsed the report for its implementation yet.

The flowing table summerises the reform programs, their main focus, implementation status and monitoring mechanism.

Table-3  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reform Programs</th>
<th>Main Focus of Reforms</th>
<th>Implementation Status</th>
<th>Monitoring Mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Reform Commission-ARC, 1991</td>
<td>Redefining role of Government and providing role for non-government sector in the governance Recommendations made more than twenty areas of reforms</td>
<td>Partly implemented 14 (partly)out of 24</td>
<td>Administrative Reform Monitoring Committee, ARMC Led by Prime Minister Administrative Reform Committee, ARC, Led by Minister for General Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance Reform Program-GRP, 2001-2005</td>
<td>Making bureaucracy result-driven, people-oriented, and gender-responsive A Road Map including 5 main and 69 sub-components for reforming public governance</td>
<td>GRP Road Map Partly implemented 28 (partly) out of 69</td>
<td>Governance Reform Co-ordination Unit, (GRCU) At the Ministry of General Administration. Change Units, CU in the Key Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Paper for Civil Service-VPCS, 2006</td>
<td>To find out core areas and non-core areas of governance To make Civil Service client oriented, accountable and responsive</td>
<td>The task force has submitted its report to the government. in April 2007 has not been indorsed the report yet for its implementation.</td>
<td>Need for permanent mechanism for coordination and monitoring of reform policies and programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following table compare the reform initiatives before and after 1990s, their main focus and leading institutions for monitoring reform program.

Table-4  
Comparison of Before and After 1990s Reforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Focus: Setting organizational structure of public administration and</td>
<td>Major Focus: Redefining role of the government, reduction of size public organization of bureaucracy and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
making rules of regulations | need to reform on the behavioral aspect of public employees.  

| Monitoring Institutions: No Separate mechanism for monitoring reform programs. | Monitoring Institutions: Administrative Reforms Monitoring Committee- ARMC, Administrative Reform Committee-ARC, Governance Reform Co-ordination Committee, GRCC and Change Unit-CU |

Source: Reform Reports and Policy Documents of Reforms, 1952-2006


Despite various reforms made in order to make Nepalese public administration effective and efficient, overall governance system is not effective in terms of delivering goods and services, making prompt official decisions, and making public employees accountable to their jobs. Therefore, public organizations in Nepal are sharply criticised for being irresponsive for their roles and responsibilities. Existence of aforementioned symptoms of bureaucratic incompetence may be the results of ineffective administrative reforms. Why reform initiatives could not be effective to bring changes in Nepalese public administration? The study shows that the poor performance of reform monitoring institutions is may the main reason for ineffectiveness of reform programs. A number of reform programs were launched time and again, but these reforms initiatives could not be monitored and led by an active reform institution. It can be explained that reform policies and programs require a very strong monitoring mechanism to make the changes process effective in the public sector.

The efforts for bringing changes in the public sector may confront with path dependency nature of public administration. Path dependency means holding once established structures, policies, modus operandi, rules and regulations very strictly. There may be a relationship between reforms and path dependency characteristics in the public sector. According to Peters (1999:p.349) once chosen particular path of policies, structures and operating procedures are difficult to change in the public sector. Characteristics of path dependency may also be seen in the case of administrative reforms in Nepal. Hierarchy based organizational structure and pay system, centralized management and decision-making process, rigidity in rules and regulations, excessive paper works are some of the paths of Nepalese public administration based on the Weberian\(^2\) model of bureaucracy. Despite a number of reform initiatives, these

\(^2\) Fixed division of labour, Hierarchy of offices, Set of general rules that govern performance, Separation of personal from official property and right, selection of personnel on the basis of technical qualification, Employment viewed as a career by participant.
bureaucratic features are being almost difficult to change. For example, during 1990 it was realized that the 5/6 layers of the decision making process caused delay in ministerial decision-making and ARC, 1991 recommended only for three levels of decision-making. However, only one layer\(^3\) reduced in 1993. Rest of the layers in decision-making have not been changed.

In addition, it may be common problem is that during the reform process resistance comes from various sides as argued by Brunsson and Olsen (1993: p.5). In the case of the Nepalese public sector reform, both political and bureaucratic resistances have been experienced in the reform trajectories. Political resistance took place for not following reform agenda adopted by the earlier government after changes made in the Government. This situation can be explained for a lack of commitment of political institution to implement reform package to improve the public governance. From path dependent perspective, sufficient political force requires to overcome possible resistances and bring changes in the public sector (Peters, 1999: p.349). Bureaucratic resistance, for example, is experienced for delegating power and authority from the centre to line agencies. There may have fear of loosing power, position, and influence of those who were/are holding higher position in bureaucracy. Therefore, to cross the resistances coming from political and bureaucratic actors in the reform process, reform monitoring and leading institution with strong commitment may require.

According to Peters (1999: p.349) once a policy or practice follows a particular path is likely to remain on the same path until and unless strong effort is made to change it towards intended direction. Making changes in the particular path of administrative system requires a greater effort and regular monitoring. From the study, in the process of reforms in Nepalese administrative system, it can be explained that there is a lack of effective monitoring and follow up. If we look at before 1990 reform, there was lack of institutional set up for monitoring reform programs. If we look at reform initiatives after 1990 we can see various institutional set up, but these mechanisms were not active to lead and monitor reform programs to achieve desired goals. For example, as recommended by Administrative Reform Commission of 1991 Administrative Reforms Co-ordination Committee (ARCC) chaired by the Prime Minister was formed. Likewise, Administrative Reform Committee (ARC) on the Chairmanship of Minister for General Administration was set up. However, these two

\(^3\) Assistant under secretary
committees were unable to meet even for their regular meetings and could not be active to lead reform programs and their monitoring. The credibility of these two Committees in connection to implementing and monitoring of reform agenda was always questioned.

Looking at the reform case of 2001, Governance Reforms Program (GRP) had focused on developing internal capacity of reform leading institutions. Following the provision, Governance Reform Co-ordination Unit (GRCU) has been set up at the Ministry of General Administration. The Government has also made various monitoring units responsible for following up the reform process in the key Ministries\textsuperscript{4} of GRP. The structures of these monitoring institutions are there, but they are sharply criticized for not being able to carry out the reform programs effective. In the case of Vision Paper of Civil Service (VPCS) 2006, there was a high attention while forming Task Force to work for Vision Paper of Nepalese Civil Service. The Task Force submitted its report to the Government in April 2007, but the report has not been indorsed for the implementation yet. The proposed Vision Paper has mentioned the needs for a permanent mechanism for co-ordination and monitoring of reform policies and programs. There was also a Committee on Administrative Reforms and Monitoring in the Interim Parliament. But the Parliamentary Committee was also not active for monitoring reform programs of the Government. Therefore, all these situations can be explained for lacking performance centered reform leading institutions which is a serious set back for the reform trajectory to improve public governance in Nepal.

5. Conclusion
A number of reform initiatives have taken place since early 1960s for reforming Nepalese public administration. However, service delivery of bureaucracy is too slow, decision making in public organizations is time consuming, employees are irresponsive for their job responsibilities, and accountability is considered whether rules and regulations are followed or not rather than service standards met or not. All these administrative deficiencies indicate that the time and again made reform initiates have not been successful to bring changes in governance system. Throughout the discussion in this paper, it may explain that the main reason for ineffectiveness of change process is the poor performance of leading reform institutions to bring changes in Nepalese bureaucracy through reforms. The work method of Nepalese bureaucracy is path dependent where bureaucrats are very strict to follow once

\textsuperscript{4} Ministry of General Administration, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health
established rules, regulations and operating procedures. Once rooted operating legacies in bureaucracy may be very difficult to change until and unless greater efforts are made to change them. To keep up the change process intact and make successful, a strong monitoring is required which is lapsed in the reform journey of Nepal. Reform initiators before 1990 did not realize the needs of the separate mechanism for monitoring reform agenda. Although the reform actors of after 1990 reform initiatives made some mechanisms that responsible for monitoring reform process, but they could not work effectively. Therefore, lack of working institutions for leading and monitoring reform programs may be the main deficiency to improve public governance through administrative reforms in Nepal.

The end

References


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Reports
Dear Sir/Madam

Let me allow to introducing myself, this Bharat Gautam from Nepal. I am a PhD student at the Central Department of Public Administration, Tribhuvan Univeristy Nepal. My area of research is administrative reforms and new public management in Nepal. I came to learn that NAPSIPAG is organizing a Conference on “Strengthening Governance in Asia-Pacific: Public Sector Administrative Reforms and Capacity Building to Improve Transparency and Accountability” on 5-7 December, 2008 New Delhi, India. In this Conference, I am interested to present my paper on the topic- An Assessment of Administrative Reforms in Nepal, Poor Performance of Leading Institutions: Setback to Improve Public Governance.

My supervisor Associate Professor, Dr. Tek Nath Dhakal, at the Central Department of Public Administration Campus, Tribhuvan University, Nepal and the Member of NAPSIPAG has also encouraged me to present paper in this Conference.

Please find the attachment of my Paper on the aforementioned topic.

I look forward to your response and confirmation.

Sincerely Yours

Bharat Gautam
Central Department of Public Administration
Tribhuvan University
Nepal