

# Governance Monitoring Centre Nepal

## Methodology Brief

## Introduction

**Governance Monitoring Centre Nepal** (GMC Nepal) is a research initiative by Kathmandu-based NGO **Centre for Social Change** (CSC), and supported by funding partner **The Asia Foundation** (TAF), which aims to create an enabling environment to foster state-society relationships in Nepal.

Despite radical political and structural changes in the last decade, experts believe that Nepal's citizen-government engagement quotient is still severely limited. GMC Nepal aims to boost this engagement by shedding light on the Federal Government's policies, laws, and execution programs in our key areas with the use of rigorous policy & implementation analyses through advanced qualitative research, quantitative statistical, media monitoring, and interview, consultations, and survey data analysis methods. Its focus is shared between the monitoring and consolidating of existing laws and policies across the three tiers of the government as established by the 2015 Constitution, and the implementation of said policies in the following three areas.

### A. Health

The Nepali Constitution and various National Health Policy documents throughout recent history jointly declare access to means of good health as one of the fundamental rights of the citizens of Nepal. Measures of public health systems, service delivery, service quality, personnel availability, and health indicators such as disease prevalence, malnutrition, mortality rates, and hygiene awareness are often used to gauge a society's development and human rights quotients. Given the crucial need for a strong, unified front on Public Health management in a country plagued for centuries by persistent poverty, corruption, geographical difficulties, and economic inequality, especially in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there is an elevated need for effective health governance monitoring in Nepal.

### B. Education

The multitudes of political reforms leading up to and accompanying the 2015 Constitution have brought about substantial changes in Nepal's education governance structure – from planning, monitoring, and execution strategies alike. The Constitution officially declares equal access to quality education as one of the fundamental rights of all citizens and establishes free and compulsory basic education (Grades 0-9) to all citizens. Secondary public education (Grades 9-12) is also free, as per the revised reforms. Even though there has been substantial progress made in the last few decades, the increased localization of the public education sector and implementation issues have caused friction among old & newly introduced stakeholders in the field, which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic induced disruptions. Thus, it is critical to effectively monitoring the ongoings in the education sector at this crucial period.

## C. Migration

The last five decades of Nepali history has seen massive surges in both domestic and international migration volumes. These unprecedented boosts, particularly the migrant-workers leaving home for employment opportunities, has been extraordinary and has thus prompted many academics, advocates, and activists to look further into the problems faced by Nepali migrants and migration aspirants both at home and abroad. With a growing list of human rights issues faced by migrant workers & students, the expanding role of remittance in the national GDP, and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, migration governance has emerged to become one of the key topics of policy discourse in the country.

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## Data Sources

GMC Nepal relies on a number of different secondary data sources to stay up-to-date with the most reliable and accurate data available. The GMC Nepal research team is regularly & thoroughly trained to take exceptional care while sourcing information from credible sources, especially given the problem of misinformation and biased narratives in certain media outlets and independent online portals. For this reason, GMC Nepal rejects any and all data sources that are not intimately associated with one or more credible institutions – including governmental, non-governmental, academic, multilateral, think-tank, media, and transborder partnership research organizations. Data sources used by GMC Nepal fall in one of the following categories:

### A. Government Bodies of Nepal

Various government bodies of Nepal make their data and relevant reports publicly available for research purposes. Certain ministries, departments, and governmental organizations also host open-source datasets and support request-channels using which organizations can access raw data for their own analysis. Additionally, government bodies also regularly produce their own publications. These include monthly, quarterly, or annual reports, as well as more specific, irregularly published analysis reports. Since GMC Nepal's primary mission is to monitor the legal, policy, and implementation ongoing in Nepal governance, government publications are some of the most often used sources. Examples include – *Ministry of Health and Population, The Department of Immigration, District Administration Offices, etc.*

### B. Development, World Governance, & Research Organizations

The United Nations Organization and many sector-specific, development and/or research goals-based organizations under the UN umbrella also regularly produce research findings, studies, analysis, and reports that are used by organizations like CSC as their data sources. Beyond the UN, other multi-lateral organizations formed by nations participating in common-interest projects, whether they be research centric or focused other aspects of world affairs, are also excellent sources for credible, accurate, and up-to-date information. Examples include – *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank Group, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), etc.*

### C. Academic/Policy Research Institutions & Think-Tanks

Research institutions, often either directly or indirectly associated with academic or policymaking researcher groups, are yet another common source of information, facts, and data for use in GMC Nepal's publications. Compilation portals, especially web-based data organization tools, visualization software/AI methods, and statistical tools are also used for analysis, but only in cases with credible and verifiable primary data-sources. Examples of such institutions include – *Nepal Development Research Institute, Nepal Economic Forum, Demographic Health Surveys, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, etc.*

### D. Media Outlets

National and international media outlets form the fourth and final category of information sources used by the GMC Nepal research team. Given the relatively fast-moving pace of the media industry, particularly in cases of regularly scheduled publications, special attention is paid to regular media monitoring of our key focus areas. Any information citing articles and reports published in Nepali/International mainstream media outlets are cross-checked across various sources and confirmed from at least two or more credible institutions before using in any GMC Nepal publication. As a rule, opinion articles and narrative form information is not used for analytical research purposes, but only cited occasionally in the form of quotes or paraphrases to provide a general sense of discourse around a particular subject of interest. Examples of notable media houses include – *The Kathmandu Post, Gorkhapatra, Nepali Times, The Economist, The New York Times, etc.*

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## Publications

Using the data sources mentioned above, GMC Nepal produces/will produce a number of different types of publications aiming to disseminate monitoring information to the general public. Each of these are unique in form, narrative, style, and type of data explored, and thus, each have their own unique methods and tools used, as specified below.

### 1. Monthly Reports

Beginning with December 2020, GMC Nepal will publish one monthly document exploring certain thematic elements within the spheres of health, education, and migration governance in Nepal. The first report, titled 'Governance at a Glance' is an attempt to present concise summaries of each of the three focus areas in Nepali governance, focusing on Constitutional and National Policy level declarations, historical trends, observed progress, some key status-defining indicators, and brief discussions of likely challenges faced in the future. Future monthly reports will focus on specific themes that will be explored from the lens of the three focus areas. Some examples of report themes.

#### a. Gender

Exploring the gender-based dimension of Nepali governance would entail cross-sectional quantitative indicators by sex/gender to investigate differences in opportunities and outcomes.

b. *COVID-19 disruptions*

A report focusing on pandemic-induced governance disruptions is likely to rely heavily on latest datasets, interviews with consultants and experts in the field, and media reports to critically assess the government's response policies in the health, education, and migration sectors.

c. *Climate Change*

Exploring Nepal's climate vulnerabilities, heavy reliance on natural systems and low preparedness for extreme weather events, such a report would make use of the latest climate data, Nepal's national emissions reduction commitments according to the Paris Accord, media reports on issues faced by rural communities falling victim to unpredictable weather patterns, and relevant impacts on our three focus area sectors.

d. *Latest Global Developments and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

Aside from the thematic governance and development dimensions often explored in such publications, the monthly reports are also an opportunity to explore previously unpredictable governance developments in real-time. Examples could include political systems disruptions, COVID-19 vaccination and recovery programs, etc. Likewise, GMC Nepal publications will also be focused on the analysis of Nepal's SDG targets under the themes of health, education, and migration – and how latest developments affects our ability to stay on track to meet the goals.

A combination of cross-variable analysis, quantitative data visualization tools, and statistical methods such as linear regressions, non-parametric regressions, and econometric tools will be used as needed to analyze the available data. Additionally, expert consultations, interviews, media monitoring, and survey-data will be used to enhance quantitative findings with narrative based mechanisms explorations.

## 2. **Infographics**

GMC Nepal will also publish one infographic per quarter-year period that will condense the most important long-term findings from our ongoing monitoring activities. These publications will follow the same methodologies as the monthly reports, as mentioned above. A quantitative and qualitative mixed methods approach will be used for analysis.

However, the difference between the two mediums lies in the presentation and information dissemination techniques used. The GMC Nepal team will make heavy use of latest data visualization, graphic design, and aesthetic tools in order to make attractive, concise, and easily shareable infographic content that will present a holistic, all-encompassing view of the most important datapoints, findings, facts, and latest developments in the health, education, and migration governance spaces in Nepal.

### 3. **Media Engagements**

Throughout the year 2021, GMC Nepal will actively engage with the Nepali media, both mainstream as well as independent outlets, to participate in the national political discourse in the Nepali governance sphere and to effectively disseminate key takeaways and lessons learned from our research explorations to the general public. This communication can take the form of newspaper/magazine articles, interviews, participation in events, and contributions from the GMC Nepal to other platforms, in the form of opinion pieces and articles based on specific policy criticism and/or recommendations.

### 4. **Blog Posts & Social Media**

The GMCNepal Web Portal also hosts an independent weblogging platform. Our research team utilizes this space as a platform to share short, descriptive, human-interest based pieces that are less research intensive and more narrative-based in structure. There are currently a number of articles already published – including ones exploring the potential role of e-commerce data in Nepal’s development and governance research sector, a historical analysis of Nepal’s steady path towards a federal government structure, and an introspective piece on the role played by affirmative action and community/ethnicity/gender-based reservation systems in ensuring equity in the education systems in developing countries characterized by social inequality like Nepal. These articles can be accessed at [GMCNepal.org/blog](http://GMCNepal.org/blog).

Aside from our blogging platform, GMC Nepal is also active on social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, where dissemination of quick information, data analysis visuals, new publications, upcoming events, and latest relevant socio-political updates are easily shared across a wide range of interested users from all over and beyond Nepal.

### 5. **Policy Brief**

Using the findings from GMC Nepal’s yearlong governance monitoring projects, an all-encompassing Policy Brief document will be published at the end of the calendar year 2021. This document will thoroughly review the key laws, legal instruments, government structures, and policies enacted in each of our three focus areas. Additionally, it will also contain a detailed yearlong history of key political and socio-economic developments that have or have the potential to affect either the present or future political landscape in Nepal. A thorough discussion of the challenges, opportunities, and corresponding policy recommendations will be included as well.

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## References

As mentioned previously, Governance Monitoring Centre Nepal works with and/or relies on a number of partner organizations, open data sources, government and quasi-government institution reports, policy-briefs, multilateral organization reports, and mainstream/independent media houses – including digital, print, and audio/video content producing publications for information.

GMC Nepal is grateful to the following organizations for making datasets, analyses, reports, and information available for use in analyses and publications so far.

1. Constitution of Nepal
2. International Labour Organization
3. National Planning Commission
4. National Law Commission

### Health Governance:

5. Ministry of Health and Population;
6. World Bank Development Indicators;
7. Nepal Economic Forum;
8. Demographic Health Surveys (DHS Nepal 2016);
9. UK-AID & Nepal Health Sector Support Programme
10. International Health Organization
11. Public Health Perspective Nepal (PHP-Nepal)
12. Global Burden of Diseases Study, University of Washington

### Education Governance:

13. Ministry of Education
14. Education in Figures (MoE, 2017)
15. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
16. World Bank World Development Education Indicators
17. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
18. Nepal Education Sector Analysis (NIRT, AIR, 2017)

### Migration Governance:

19. Ministry of Labour
20. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
21. Employment and Social Security Organization
22. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)