## A Report on

# PLANNING IN THE LOCAL LEVEL OF NEPAL

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#### **CHAPTER I**

#### INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Public participation in local level planning is a process of ensuring citizens' participation in local level planning process – the allocation of financial resources – is sometimes called a democratic innovation stemming from the South. It had been introduced in Brazil's local authorities in 1989 and has now spread all over the world (Sintomer et al. 2010a). Presumably, it has become obvious that representative democracy does not fully satisfy citizens despite its worldwide success. It could be the reason behind the worldwide spread of the participatory local level planning. Political dissatisfaction, political distrust, citizens' apathy are the few phrases that could explain today's political characteristic of the democracy. In spite of these deficiencies, public participation in the decision making has become one of the important topics in the political sphere. In the witness of this, open government partnership(Open government Partnership 2015) has affirmed civic participation in public affairs to be one of the building blocks of its program. Participation, however, has its critics as well. Someone can find skepticism focusing on the lack of citizens' awareness in public affairs, lack of the public knowledge about decision making on critical socio-economic and political decisions.

## 1.2 Problem of the Study

Although there is a variety of literatures' describing the application of the participatory planning at local level and its different variations, there is a clear lack of systematic approach to describing the applicability of different models of participatory

planning at local level in different contexts. Hence, this paper attempts to fill this gap by answering the question what are the responsible factors for a particular model of participatory planning to be applicable in a given context. This paper will attempt to answer following questions:

(a) What are the factors that determine the applicability of a particular model of participatory planning at local level?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

Main purpose of the research can be outline in following way:

(a) To find out the variables which determine applicability of a particular model of participatory planning at local level?

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

For the reason that Nepal has faced many political changes in the recent decades, absence of representativeness at local authorities has become a major problem for more than 15 years. Civil officials are acting as the representatives of the citizens. Due to the limitation of given authorities, civil officials can't make any decisions beyond the legal circumstances. In other word, civil service can't make a large change with their chain of authorities and bureaucratic culture. If there is absence of any representative, the system should ensure the representation of the public demands or expectation within the budget and planning. But, Nepal has very limited experience of participatory planning mechanism. To enrich such managerial and political experiences, it is clear that Nepal

has to introduce such participatory mechanisms or system within the local bodies in order to ensure public participation in budgeting and planning.

This paper will attempt to give list of variables which are mainly responsible to determine the applicability of a particular model or scheme of public participation in public affair. It will find out the linkage between the variables and effective implementation of the participatory planning at local level.

## 1.5 Structure of the Study

This report is divided into five chapters as follows:

- **Chapter first**: introduction deals with background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study and the organization of the study.
- **Chapter second**: review of literature deals with concept of the participatory budgeting, identifying process design variables and identifying environmental variables.
- **Chapter third:** methodology deals with research design, sources of data, sample size, data collection procedures and data presentation and analysis.
- **Chapter four**: data presentation and analysis deals with the design variables, and preferences and applicability of the participatory budgeting models.
- **Chapter five**: conclusion presents a brief conclusion of the study based on the findings of the study.

## 1.6 Limitations of the Study

This research is conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Public Administration. In that sense, this research will be completed under some limitations. Because of the time factors and financial limitation, this study will take some secondary data from published documents and official records. Only one local government unit of Nepal will be selected for case study in order to test the relevance of local-level variables on the preference of participatory planning. While selecting the local government, this research will use non-random, purposeful sampling which is supposed to enable researcher to select information-rich case. In other word, the research combines maximum variation sampling with criterion and theory-based sampling i.e. stratified purposeful sampling. In order to test public preferences, a survey among 10 participants will be conducted.

#### **CHAPTER II**

#### **LITERATUREREVIEW**

## 2.1 Concept of the Participatory Planning

Participatory planning at local level is about to participate the ordinary citizens in making decisions about making development plan and budget allocations. The point of reference is Porto Alegre that has become "the symbol of a possible alternative way to govern a place" (Allegretti, Herzberg 2004, 6). The number of participatory planning models in Europe has reached the landmark of 200 by 2009 and the corresponding number of worldwide initiatives has exceeded 1000 cases (Sintomeret al. 2010a). Furthermore, the number of cities planning to adopt participatory instruments has been increasing. There is no universal definition of participatory local level planning as its models and practices vary all over the world and depend on local contexts and conditions (Matovu 2007). The differences in participatory local level planning practices range from the form of citizen participation in the budget allocation procedure to the control once the project has been approved (Sintomer et al. 2005; Cabannes 2004, 28). Sintomer et al. give a broad definition of Participatory budgeting (here, the term 'participatory budgeting' is taken as an interchangeable term for 'participatory planning'): "participatory budgeting allows the participation of non-elected citizens in the conception and/or allocation of public finances" (Sintomeret al. 2005). Additionally, they propose five criteria for successful implementation of participatory local level planning: (1) the financial dimension has to be discussed, (2) the city level has to be involved, (3) the process has to

be repeated, (4) there has to be some form of public deliberation, and (5) some accountability is required.

Someone can raise a question how participatory planning at local level mechanism differs from traditional government-citizens interactions. The participatory planning is ascribed to the reforms in the budgeting mechanism so that is called "empowered deliberative democracy" or EDD. These reforms are fundamentally democratic in their "reliance on the participation [...] of ordinary people", deliberative because they promote "reason-based" decision-making and empowered as they try to "tie action to discussion" (Fung, Wright 2003, 7). While discussing on participatory democracy and governance there is very much similar opinion in the statement that participatory planning could be found helpful for fighting against such problems like political apathy, distrust, dissatisfaction, etc. Furthermore, in terms of modernization of public service, the participatory planning could be a capable mechanism for enhancing transparency and accountability. It charges citizens with new responsibilities of "coproducers" of public services and in general "co-deciders" in political/administrative decisions which in turn fits with the "post-post-NPM" rhetoric called New-Weberian-State (Pollitt, Bouckaert 2004; Herzberg 2011).

## 2.2. Design Variables

As Max Weber argued in his famous work "Economy and Society" in order to give meaning to any phenomenon it is necessary to "formulate pure ideal types of the corresponding forms of action" (Weber 1978, 19-20). Sintomer, Herzberg, Röcke and Allegretti (2005, 2010a, 2010b) have been attempted this. The scholars have distinguished the participatory planning models between 6 models of European

participatory planning experiences. However, this study analyzes about only five variables that are common in all participatory local level planning models. Therefore, the sample of 5 variables fully covers the variety of participatory local level planning experiences. To show the linkage of the variables, the paper at hand discusses the following models: Porto Alegre adapted for Europe, proximity participation, consultation on public finance, community participatory planning at local level and multi-stakeholder participation. The description of the models will be based on the literature by Sintomeret al. (2005, 2010a, 2010b) but adjusted to the framework of process design variables. The other reason for such a compressed presentation is a purely practical one – the limited space of this paper. Porto Alegre adapted for Europe model can be considered the "genuine" type of participatory planning as it has preserved the basic features of the Brazilian case, where this participatory process has its roots. The other models are grouped on the basis of two features: proximity participation and consultation on public finance are purely of consultative nature (rather than implying binding constraints on the elected representatives), while multi-stakeholder and community **PARTICIPATORY** PLANNING are oriented towards organized citizens only (rather than individual citizens). Here all models of participatory planning are presented only for analyzing the variation of public choices in our context.

This type of participation can be considered as participatory local level planning only in case the larger part of financial resources comes from the local VDC.

**Table 1: Participatory Budgeting Models** 

Veriables	Adaptation of Porto Alegre	Proximity Participation	Consultation on Public Finance	Participatory Planning	Multi- Stakeholder Participatory Planning
	Council	Local	Local	A committee	A committee

	composed of	administration	administration	composed of	composed of								
	composed of elected	administration	administration	composed of	composed of								
Danisian				representative of	representative								
Decision	delegates			LG, NGOs, state	of LG, NGOs,								
making body				organizations	state								
					organizations								
					and private								
		sectors											
	Self	Self selection	icipants selection m Random	Targeted	Target selection								
	selection	Sen selection	selection	selection	ranget selection								
	Sciection	Scope of Participation											
	Single active	Organized											
	citizens	Single active citizens	"ordinary" citizens	Organized citizens	citizens								
			Citizens		together with								
					private								
Participation					enterprises								
•	Participation mechanisms												
	Open	Open meeting	Open meeting or	Different types	Closed								
	meetings at	at settlement	citizens' forum at	of meetings at	meeting at								
	settlement	and VDC level	VDC level	settlement level									
	level,			and delegates at									
	delegates at			VDC level									
	VDC level												
	Focus of decision												
	Public	Micro-local	Overall budget or	Concrete	Concrete								
	investment	public	offer of services	community	projects								
		investment or		projects	financed								
		board			public-private								
		guidelines of			partnership								
D 111		VDC's policy											
Deliberation	Desiles		ethods of communic										
	Develop	Listen as	Listen as	Express, develo									
	preferences	spectators,	spectators, express	preferences	develop								
		express	preferences		preferences								
		preferences											
	Droinata		ormality of the prod		Drainata								
	Projects	No ranking of	No ranking of	Projects ranked,									
	ranked	investment or	services, possible	formal rules	ranked,								
	according to criteria of	actions, informal rules	ranking of		formal rules								
		informal rules	priorities, rather informal rules										
	distributive		informal rules										
	justice, formalized												
	rules												
Empowerment	Decision-	Consultation	Consultation	Co-governing	Co-governing								
ruho wei inent	making	Consultation	Consultation	partnership	partnership								
	power			partitership	partitership								
Control and	Council	Local	Local	Local	Local								
monitoring	composed of	administration	administration	administration	administratio								
	citizens'	administration		and donors	n and donors								
	elected				ii alia dollois								
	delegates												
		101 > 3 / 1'C' 11	e hasis of Cahannes	(2004) F (2010)									

Source :Sintomer et al. (2010b);Modified on the basis of Cabannes (2004),Fung (2010), Franklin (2006).

#### **CHAPTER III**

#### **METHODOLOGY**

#### 3.1 Research Design

This research combines both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to examine the implications of national- level and local level variables in to the model of participatory budgeting. The research entails three different methods i.e. theory-building, case study and a survey. It was proceed in two phases - firstly, discussion of the conceptual framework and its variables and secondly, an empirical test of public opinion about the impact of different variables of participatory budgeting through examination of existing statistical data and empirical findings regarding the preferences of the citizens. For this purpose, a local government unit (VDC) of Nepal was selected for the case study in order to test the relevance of the variables. Local body was selected by non-random purposeful sampling. Such sampling enables to select information-rich case for illumination of issues of central importance.

#### 3.2 Sources of Data

This research relies on the different sources of data. The preferred sources are broadly categorized as below:

(a) *Primary Sources:* Primary data were collected through semi-structured interview with the responsibleofficialsor the chief of the local body of the government or responsible person of the local body. Furthermore, a survey was conducted among 10 persons in order to know citizens' view about the participatory planning at local

government. Other information was collected during the case study of the selected local government unit of Nepal.

(b) *Secondary Sources:* Secondary data was collected from different government reports related to participation and local governance. Websites of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local developmentwas taken as the sources of secondary data. Some data were taken from published reports and the websites of international organizations.

### 3.3 Sample Size

For the purpose of testing relevance of local level variables on the on the preference of participatory planning at local level, one local government unit: Turmakhand VDC, Achham was selected. While selecting the unit, the study used non-random, purposeful sampling. Furthermore, a survey was carried out among 10 participants selected randomly from the people who have experience of the local administration or local planning in order to test their preference on participatory planning at local level.

## 3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The research entails two different methods i.e. theory-building and empirical study like case study, a survey, etc.

The case Study: The case study was preceded in two stages. First, it covers country-level variables on a choice of participatory planning through examination of existing statistical data and empirical findings regarding financial autonomy and political culture in Nepal. Secondly, a local government unit of Nepal

wasselected for the case study. The Turmakhand VDC was selected for comparative case study.

Turmakhand VDCwas selected non-randomly since, for the researcher, it ismore convenient VDC for visit during the study. Its office was visited and some semi-structured interviews were taken with the secretary of the office. Some official data were collected by the researcher during that visit. Some information and data about its plan and progress were taken from its yearly progress report and its portfolio book.

- *Sampling:* While selecting a local government unit, non-random, purposeful sampling, was used. Such sampling is supposed to enable researcher to select information-rich cases.
- *Interview:* For a part of the case study, individual and group semi-structured interviews with the officials and with the secretary of the VDC were taken. These interviews were conducted during field visit of the office.
- *Survey:* As a part of the study, a survey among 10 persons was conducted in order to test the preference of the local people regarding the participatory budgeting system. A questionnaire was sent to the respondent via e-mail and hard copy by hand. Ninety percent of the targeted persons filled up the questionnaire and sent it to the researcher.

## 3.5 Data Presentation and Analysis

This paper has used tabulation or quantitative analysis and qualitative discussion methods while presenting and analyzing the data. It tests different variables using

different statistical tools like averages, standard deviation, comparing tools, etc. It uses different parameters like percentage, mean, median and standard deviation to test the implications of the given variables on a particular model of participatoryplanning. While analyzing the public opinion, this paper has used qualitative discussions although the quantitative data are used for the justification of the given arguments.

#### **CHAPTER IV**

#### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

We have discussed about different variables in the context of different models of participatory local level planning, this section will examine the public preference about the participatory planning at local level. The facts collected from the case study of Turmakhand VDCand the preferences of people expressed in the survey will be analyzed in this section.

## 4.1 Degree of the Impact of Different Variables

A survey among the ten persons who are directly or indirectly experienced in the field of local governance was conducted during this study. Questionnaire for the survey (see: Annex-1) consists of six sections which cover the system design variables: decision making body, participation, deliberation, empowerment, control and monitoring and personal information of the respondents, in order to examine their preferences for the components of given models of Participatory Planning. The result of survey is summarized in the following table-2.

**Table 2: Preferences for the Participatory Planning Models.** 

		Adaption of Porto- Algeree		Proximity Participation		Consultation on Public finance		Community Participatory budgeting		Multi- stakeholder participatory		Overall Weight given by People
	,	Over all score	Rating scale (agree/ disagre	Over all score	Rating scale (agree/ disagree		Rating scale (agree/ dis-	Over all score	Rating scale (agree/ dis-	Over all score	Rating scale (agree/	(Average of all Percentag e)
Deci	ponents sion ing body	83.57	e) Somewha t agree	40.00	Mostly disagree	75.71	Some- what agree	87.14	Mostly agree	94.29	Mostly agree	78.141
ion	Participant selection methods	83.21	Somewha t agree	33.57	Mostly disagree	93.21	Mostly agree	92.50	Mostly agree	91.07	Mostly agree	80.713
Participation	Scope of participation	74.29	Somewha t agree	72.86		68.93	Neutral	84.29	Mostly agree	79.29	Some- what agree	72.931
Pa	Participation mechanism	92.50	Mostly agree	72.50	Some- what agree	42.14	Some- what disagree	87.50	Mostly agree	28.21	Mostly disagree	66.57
on	Focus of decision	75.00	Somewha t agree	74.29	Some- what agree	86.79	Mostly agree	83.21	Some- what agree	94.64	Mostly agree	84.786
Deliberation	Methods of communica -tion	72.86	Somewha t agree	31.76	Mostly disagree	84.29	Mostly agree	86.07	Mostly agree	87.86	Mostly agree	74.564
De	Formality of the process	72.86	Somewha t agree	34.29	Mostly disagree	68.93	Some- what agree	85.71	Mostly agree	89.64	Mostly agree	72.283
Emp	owerment	30.71	Mostly disagre e	90.36	Mostly agree	91.07	Mostly agree	93.21	Mostly agree	97.14	Mostly agree	82.497
cont	rol and itoring	85.71	Mostly agree	80.00	Some- what	87.86	Mostly agree	87.50	Mostly agree	86.07	Mostly agree	87.425

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Above rating by participants of the survey shows that there is no one-size-fits-all model of participatory budgeting. Since the local variables differ from one LG to another, the preferences for the Participatory planning models and their applicability vary from one LG to another LG. Above result suggests that the control and monitoring is the most prominent variables of the plan decision making. Even though the empowerment provides much more opportunities for enhancing the significance and implacability of the projects,

controlling and monitoring mechanism in participatory planning is rated as the most influencing factor of participatory planning. This shows that control of people over the governance system or meeting agendas of local peoples is the most important factors to ensure the implacability of a particular model of public participation. In other word, people want more participation and representation in monitoring and controlling the public purse.

If we see the weight given to each variable which are responsible to determine the applicability of a particular model of participatory planning at local level, we can see the following result.

Table 3: Rank of variables by their weight given

Variables	Rank	Given Weight	Interpretations of variables
		(Out of 100)	
Controlling and	1	87.425	Who controls the implementation of the
monitoring			budget?
Focus on	2	84.786	What is being deliberated? (Investments or
decision			service deliver, projects or general areas)
Empowerment	3	82.497	What role does the civil society play?
Participation	4	80.713	How are participants being selected?
selection			
Decision	5	78.141	Who sets up "the rules of the game"?
making body			
Scope of	6	77.931	How do citizens participate? (direct or
Participation			indirect)
Methods of	7	74.564	How do participants communicate and
communication			make decisions?
Formality of	8	72.283	How much formal / legal procedures are to
the procedures			be followed?
Participation	9	66.57	How are the meetings organized?
mechanism			(territorial or thematic logic, city, district
			or neighborhood level)

If we see the above table people think that the controlling and monitoring factor is most important and vital although other variables are also given high weights.

## **4.2** Preferences to the Participatory Planning Models

If we see(at table-2) what component of which model is rated high by the participant, there is no single model whose all components are mostly liked or there is no model whose all components are mostly disliked. If we collect the mostly agree ratings we should collect the components from all models. However, comparing above ratings of participants, we can see that the community participatory budgeting model is ranked in the first and multi-stakeholder participatory model is ranked in the second. This shows that the co-governing partnership in development work is highly accepted by the people.

Applicability of a particular model depends upon how the environmental variables interact with the design variables of the participatory planning model. These variables obviously do not constitute a comprehensive list of factors that influence the applicability of a particular participatory planning as well as the choice of the suitable model. Neither can they be investigated in detail due to the limited scope of this paper.

#### **CHAPTER V**

#### **CONCLUSION**

#### 5.1 Conclusion

From the analysis, the variable which indicates the power of local level participation is much more preferable in the context of Nepal since most of the LGs have either lower or average level of public awareness. Controlling and monitoring is mostly preferred while the better practices from other model could be taken in the process. On the basis of this analysis, it can be concluded that if we adopt any model of participatory planning, the power of the decision making should be given to the public in order to ensure that the model is a more applicable and suitable mechanism which will be fit in the local context.

Furthermore, one can conclude that there is no one-size-fits-all participatory planning model for LGs in Nepal. Overall, the relevance of the national-level as well as the local-level variables generated in the theory-building part of the paper has been at least partially confirmed. Curiously, the only local-level factor that was not considered important by the LG representatives was ethnic diversity. Political will and the size of LG unit seem to be the primary factors influencing the suitability of participatory planning models in Nepal.

Future research could focus on the analysis of environmental variables in other countries as well as investigate if there are other variables that might influence the feasibility of participatory local level planning and the choice of the model.

As for Nepal, in spite of the complexity of factors for and against participatory planning implementation, there is still hope that this mechanism could serve as a vehicle for developing the civil society as well as could enhance budgetary leeway of Nepalese LGs.

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