"Challenges of Governance in South Asia"
Kathmandu, Nepal (December 15 - 16, 2008)
CALL FOR PAPERs

A universally accepted and agreed upon definition of 'governance' still remains elusive as it is defined and conceptualized in various ways. However, governance is a major agenda for discussion and discourse in the context of development and service delivery. Challenges of governance in the South Asian countries are many and "good" governance is realized as vital for improving public service delivery, and responding to citizens' needs and demands. However, in spite of different programs and policies of reforms and reorganizations to streamlining public administration, governance in the South Asian countries has failed to address adequately such issues as reducing poverty, equality of access to public services and fairness, security and safety of citizens, democratic institution building, participation in the decision making, and implementation of policies. It is often highlighted that the absence of good governance in the South Asian region is because of lack of capacity of civil servants, hierarchic decision making process, non-accountability of public servants and politicians, non-transparency and opaque official procedures, and corruption. As a result, governance in the South Asian countries is at the crossroads with serious consequences for administrative performance and the functioning of the government as well as for other actors involved in the development process such as the private sector, NGOs, civil society and community based organizations.

It is in this context very pertinent to take stock of governance as developed and practiced in the South Asian region. What are the recent trends in governance? Is governance based on ideas, concepts, and practices borrowed from the developed countries? Is there a model of governance unique in the South Asian region? Are public policies donor driven? Can South Asian culture help in developing a more society and citizen friendly governance? In short, the conference would be a forum to ask: What are the lessons to be leaned, how and from where?

The conference is organized under the project "Governance Matters: Assessing, Diagnosing and Addressing Challenges of Governance in Nepal" – a Joint research project of the Central Department of Public Administration,Tribhuvan University, Nepal and the Department of Administration and Organization Theory, University of Bergen, Norway. The Conference will be held on December 15-16, 2008 in Kathmandu, Nepal. A number of scholars, experts, and practitioners as well as invited key note speakers will participate in the conference.

The conference will be organized in both plenary and breakout sessions to address each of the four sub-themes. The key note will also cover vaious practical and philosophical aspects of New Public Management and beyond. The conference calls for papers that encourages both conceptual and empirical studies on such issues as the impact of governance policy, local capacity building, applicability of new public management,

accountability, constraints and impediments to the implementation of public service delivery in the South Asian Region. The sub-themes are as follows:

Sub-theme of the conference

1. *Strengthening Local Capacity for Local Governance:*
   This sub-theme would explore the status of local capacity for strengthening local governance in South Asian context. It will discuss on the following aspects:
   - **Challenges of Local capacity building**
   - **Scope and challenges of local resources mobilization,**
   - **People's participation in Development**

2. *Application of New Public Management:*
   This sub-theme would discusses on philosophy, concepts and the applicability of New Public Management. Some of the issues under this sub-theme will cover:
   - **Administrative reforms**
   - **Administrative culture**
   - **Policy transfer**
   - **Constraints and possibilities of policy implementation**

3. *Accountability of institutions:*
   This sub-theme would discuss on the accountability theme that often captures the issues of different institutions. Areas to be covered under this sub-theme will be as:
   - **Establishing responsive governance**
   - **Ensuring citizens' trust in Public Institution**
   - **Efficiency vs. Inclusion in governance**

4. **Public Service delivery:**
   This sub-theme would discuss on the issue of service delivery that often becomes the subject matter of public debate. Following dimenstions will be covered under the Public Service Delivery sub-theme:
   - **Challenges of service delivery**
   - **Scope of implementation of citizen's charter**
   - **Public-private partnership in development**

Paper submissions:
- **Papers should support the main theme, and should relate to a specific sub-theme.**
- **Papers should be contemporary and should have central argument and lessons drawn from the implementation study.**
- **Papers should specify the methodology clearly**
- **Papers dealing with conceptual and empirical approaches to the themes will be given priority.**

- A pannel will review the submitted papers.

Submission of abstract/proposal:
The deadline for submitting abstract/proposal is <u>October 1st, 2008</u>. Authors will be informed by the end of October 2008 whether their submission has been accepted. (please also visit the webpage: *www.pactu.edu.np*).

Submission of paper:
The deadline for submitting the paper is <u>1st December, 2008</u>.

Submission should be made via E-mail attachment to (any one of the email given below):

1. *dhakaltn@gmail.com*
2. *srdp@ccsl.com.np*
3. *ishtiaq.jamil@aorg.uib.no*

For any queries/questions, please contact:

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