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Recommendations for Manifesto

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

1. Research Funding Reform and National Priority Alignment:

Research funding is limited, fragmented, short-term, and poorly administered, with review systems lacking credibility.

a) Establish an Office of Research Funding within MoEST to manage grant administration, logistics, and outcome reporting.
b) Adopt a three-year core grant cycle with annual review and the potential for a conditional extension of up to two additional years based on progress.
c) Implement independent external peer review using standardised rubrics, strict conflict-of interest rules, and mandatory participation from diaspora reviewers.
d) Define broad national priority research sectors (e.g., health, agriculture, climate) focusing heavily on applied and translational outcomes.

2. Labour-Aligned Public Education:

Public schools, CTEVT, and public universities operate weakly linked to domestic labour demand. This produces skills mismatch and weak employment outcomes.

a) Pilot conditional scholarships and tuition reimbursement tied to verified domestic employment in priority sectors and underserved regions.
b) Introduce forgivable public student loans that convert to grants after verified domestic employment.
c) Embed mandatory, paid, and credit-bearing work-based learning, such as internships and apprenticeships, into CTEVT and public university programmes.
d) Establish a graduate outcome tracking system within MoEST using payroll records and placement data to enable outcome-based financing.

3. Compulsory Community Service (Shram Daan) in School Education:

School education produces academically assessed graduates but neglects civic values, community engagement, and collaborative skills. Students complete their schooling with little direct experience of serving or contributing to the society they live in.

a) Design age-appropriate service activities such as neighbourhood clean-ups, tree planting, elder care visits, and local infrastructure support, coordinated through schools in partnership with local governments and community organisations.
b) Embed teamwork, coordination, and civic responsibility as assessed learning outcomes within the Shram Daan framework, ensuring service is not treated as a symbolic exercise.
c) Require students to complete a minimum number of documented service hours per academic year as a condition for grade progression, with school-level supervisors responsible for verification and reporting.
d) Publish annual district-level summaries of Shram Daan participation and community

impact to build public visibility and institutional accountability.

4. Higher Education Governance, Quality, and Demand Recovery:

Undergraduate enrolment is declining, graduate programmes are hollowing out, and students exit abroad due to disrupted calendars, politicised governance, credentialism, and unregulated foreign affiliations.

a) Enforce transparent, merit-based university governance and professional leadership appointments to eliminate direct political control and nepotism.
b) Regularise academic calendars to reduce avoidable delays and embed earn-while-learn pathways to alleviate student financial pressure.
c) Professionalise the academic workforce with coherent career pathways and selectively revitalise graduate programmes to align with national workforce needs.
d) Regulate foreign-affiliated programmes by introducing clear accreditation standards, auditing them, and suspending those that fail to fulfill minimum standards.

5. Digital Transformation and NSTI Delivery Agenda:

Nepal's AI, cyber, data, and NSTI ambitions face institutional fragmentation, outdated legal frameworks, weak infrastructure and cyber resilience, inconsistent data governance, and skills shortages.

a) Establish an Innovation and Information Technology Secretariat hosted in MoCIT and co-mandated with MoEST to consolidate roadmaps and coordinate budgets.
b) Enact a unified "Digital, Data and AI Law and Standards" instrument covering data protection, AI risk tiers, baseline technical standards, and procurement clauses.
c) Publish a National Digital Infrastructure and Cyber Resilience Plan, alongside a National Data Governance and Transparency Framework.
d) Establish a National AI Governance, Skills and Innovation Programme, and limit blockchain implementation to high-value use cases like decentralised identity and registries.
e) Consider the optional structural reform of establishing a dedicated Ministry for Innovation and Information Technology to consolidate IT operations and infrastructure planning.

6. Implementation Discipline:

a) Execute all reforms by piloting first, then scaling, ensuring that public spending is linked to outcomes.
b) Publish quarterly progress updates against measurable indicators to maintain accountability and transparency.

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