

**PUBLIC POLICY MAKING PROCESS IN BHUTAN,
1998-2013**

*Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
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BEENA



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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "PUBLIC POLICY MAKING PROCESS IN BHUTAN, 1998-2013" submitted by me for the award of the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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The Bhutan Foundation
Conservation of the Environment
Developing Bhutan's Emergency Medical Services
Enhancement of Education Opportunity for Children and Youth with Special Needs
Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy and its Supporting Activities
Bhutan Youth Development Foundation
Child Protection
Drug Education and Rehabilitation
Empowerment for Employment
Scholarship
Types of Scholarship
Sponsor a Monk
Investment
National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC)

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Asian Development Bank
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
WWF Bhutan
Government of India (GOI)
Danish Assistance
JICA
European Commission Assistance

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Lack of Good Governance and Decentralization Process
Control of Corruption
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(Beena)

New Delhi

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Analytical and Advisory Activities
ACC	Anti Corruption Commission
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BCMD	Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy
BDC	Block Development Committee
BMNP	Black Mountain National Park
BTF	Bhutan Trust Fund
BTI	Bhutan Transparency Initiative
CDM FS	Clean Development Mechanism Feasibility Study
CEDAW	Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
CRC	Committee on the Right of the Child
CSMI	Cottage, Small and Medium Industry
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSOA	Civil Society Organization Authority
DCSI	Department of Cottage and Small Industry
DDC	District Development Committee
DGPC	Druk Green Power Corporation
DIPD	Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy
DPC-2	Development Policy Credit-2
Dratshang	Lhentshog- Ecclesiastic Affairs
EC	European Commission
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunization
ESW	Economic and Sector Work
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FYP	Five Year Plan
G2C	Government to Citizen Services

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGSP	Good Governance Support Programme
GLOFs	Glacial Lake Outburst Floods
GNG	Green House Gas
GNH	Gross National Happiness
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission
GNHPST	Gross National Happiness Policy Screening Tool
GNHSTs	Gross National Happiness Screening Tools
GNP	Gross National Product
GOI	Government of India
GPMS	Government Performance Management System
HDI	Human Development Index
HEPs	Hydro-Electric Projects
HRD	Human Resource Development
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	International Development Association
IDA	International Development Association
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGOs	Inter-Government Organizations
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISDP	Integrated Sustainable Development Project
JICA	Japan International Cooperation
JV	Joint Venture
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LGSP	Local Government Support Programme
LLDC	Least among Less-Developed Countries
MGDs	Millennium Development Goals
MIC	Middle-income country
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children

NFE	Non Formal Education
NGA	Non Government Agency
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NKRA	National Key Result Area
NLTA	Non-Lending Technical Assistance
NMES	National Monitoring and Evaluation System
NRP	National Rehabilitation Programme (NRP)
Nu	Ngultrum
NWAB	National Women's Association of Bhutan
ODA	Official development Assistance
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PlaMS	Planning and Monitoring System
PMC	Project Monitoring Committee
PPP	Public- Private Partnership
PPST	Policy and Project Screening Tools
PTA	Project Tied Assistance
REAP	Rural Economy Advancement Programme
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
RNR	Renewable Natural Resources
RSPN	Royal Society for Protection of Nature
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDP	Small Development Project
SDPC	Small Development Project Committee
SGHN	Strategy for GNH
SJVNL	Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam
Sukha	Happiness
TBF	The Bhutan Fund
TCS	Technical Corporation Scheme
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHDI	United Nations Human Development Index
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UWC	United World College
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
YDF	Youth Development Fund
YWEO	Youth Welfare Education Office

GLOSSARY

<i>Druk Gyalpo</i>	Dragon King (King of Bhutan)
<i>Dzongkhag Yargay Tshogchung</i>	District Development Committee
<i>Dzongkhag</i>	District
<i>Geog Yargay Tshogchung</i>	Village Development Committee
<i>Gewog</i>	Village
<i>Gup</i>	Head
<i>Je Khenpo</i>	Religious Leader
<i>Lhengye Zhungshg</i>	Cabinet Ministries
<i>Lopen</i>	Master
<i>Lyonpos</i>	Ministers
<i>Thrimzhung Chenmo</i>	Supreme Laws
<i>Tsa-Wa-Sum</i>	King, Country, People
<i>Tshogdu</i>	National Assembly
<i>Wang-lung-thri</i>	Blessings and Oral transmission

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Chapter: I

Introduction

Bhutan was one of the last few remaining absolute monarchies in the modern world until recently. However, the year 1998 marked a new beginning in the history of devolution of power for this tiny Himalayan country. In an unprecedented move, the *Lhengye Zhungtshg* (Cabinet Ministries) was dissolved once for all by the National Assembly during its 76th Session through a Royal Edict in the presence of the fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuk. As a result, Bhutan has become the latest entrant to join the list of true modern democratic nations with distinct features.

Image 1: Royal Dynasty



Source: National Council for Bhutan¹

It was during the tenure of Fourth King that the foundation was laid for the future transformation from an absolute monarchy to a working democracy. He introduced many a reform—both parliamentary and juridical— including the strategies to strengthen draft self-ruled constitutions and the Royal resign, which have enabled the smooth transition of a legal monarchy to a functioning democracy in Bhutan. At the resignation of the Fourth King, the head of state has reserved the Royal name, but can no longer reign with complete authority as was the case before.

¹ National Council for Bhutan (2010), URL: <http://www.nationalcouncil.bt/en/page/scroller/?id=58>, Accessed on 15th March 2010.

Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, the fifth and current King of Bhutan, supervised the promulgation of the constitution of 2008 as well as the parliamentary elections to both the Houses of Parliament. He also presented the executive authority in the shape of a Cabinet with the National Assembly electing the members of the Council of Ministers through a secret ballot, with the King no longer selecting them.

The King made this essential decision because he thought that future of Bhutan could not be left in the hands of one person. After the initiative taken by the then King to change Bhutan from complete monarchy to democracy, the country's entire administrative system has been considerably altered.

The trend that was set in the year 1998 onwards had a great impact and played a crucial role in shaping Bhutan's public policy process. By opting for a more democratic political system, the King wanted to establish a unique and permanent administrative system that would provide effective public policies for its citizens. In his words,

“The time has come to promote greater people's participation in the decision-making process. Our country must be ensured to always have a system of government, which enjoys the mandate of the people, provides clean and efficient governance, and also has an inbuilt mechanism of checks and balances to safeguard our national interest and security” (Kuensel 1998:05).

It is important to understand the dynamics of public policymaking and its past and present trends to assess the civil administrative system of Bhutan more effectively.

This chapter is divided into four broad sections: the first section examines a conceptual study of the term 'public policy' and provides a brief history of the public policymaking in Bhutan (objectives, purpose and determinants); the second section inspects the relationship between 'GNH' and public policy; the third section studies the role of non-governmental institutions and inter-governmental organisations in the policymaking process and the fourth section reflects on the changing structure of government at the local and the state levels, which is crucial to comprehend the relevance of public policymaking in Bhutan in the twenty-first century.

Dynamics of Public Policymaking and Bhutan

“Public policy manifests the common sense and common conscience of the citizens as a whole that extends throughout the state and is applied to matters of public health, safety, and welfare. It is the general, well-settled public opinion relating to the duties of citizens to their fellow citizens. It imports something that fluctuates with the changing economic needs, social customs, and moral aspirations of the people” (Sharma and Arvind 2014: 148).

Policymaking is a process where both technical and political methods of expressing and identifying actors’ objectives and means are used. The process of policymaking constitutes that group of activities which carry objectives and the procedures to complete those objectives in fine or defectively recognized, acceptable, cleared and planned ways. But the definition of public policy given by Thomas Dye is the prominent, easy and short one which says that whatever the government does or does not do comes under public policy (Dye 1972).

Apart from this, many organizations and performers make policies which their members must obey. Public policy is a process in which we focus on the actions and decisions made by the governments that ultimately influence every individual of a nation-state or their authoritative power. But in the case of Bhutan when we are talking about public policy, it is the government decisions to take action or not, in order to modify or keep some features of the status quo (Birkland 2001: 22). According to the definition given by Dye, the main centre or agent of public policymaking is a government authority, rather than any decisions and action taken by other organizations and social communities or groups. But we cannot avoid these organizations and groups which have their own importance and value in the policymaking procedures. These groups and organizations are the mediators between the government and people. Due to their special ability, the governments enjoy a unique position in the public policymaking process. Sometimes, the government will work according to these non-governmental organizations and make the necessary changes to their decisions if something is relevant to the welfare of the citizens. But the governments maintain control over whether, when and how other actors may be involved in this process.

Therefore, for instance, how the medical occupation understands the causes of lung cancer and the results it suggests for its prevention and cure may have a bearing on what a government ultimately does concerning such a problem under the conditions of healthcare policy. On the other hand, the profession's proposed result to the problem is not itself a public policy; only methods that a government actually approves or supports—such as a ban on the sale or use of tobacco—in fact, constitute public policy.

Second, Dye observes that public policy is most connected to the government actions to sort out the problem. For that problem, the government makes and implements various strategies and plans. According to this, public policymaking contains a fundamental choice on the part of governments to do something or to do nothing with respect to a problem and this decision is made by government officials who are involved in the public policymaking procedure. Therefore, an unfavourable decision or a non-decision, or a government's action to do nothing and simply maintain the current course of action or status quo (Dye 1987; Simeon 1976), is just as much a policy decision as the choice to alter it.

There are unfavourable decisions also. Like more 'positive' ones, they must be deliberate, such as when a government decides not to increase taxes or declines to make additional funds available for arts, healthcare or some other policy area. But there are some areas where the government cannot force us to obey its rules and decisions. For example, we have a choice or freedom to paint our homes according to our choice but it does not mean that this gets included in public policy, because the government deliberately decided not to restrict our options in this area.

Third and last closely related to this, Dye's definition also highlights the fact that a public policy is a set of government's purposive choices. But these choices and actions very often contain unintended results; for example, when the government tries to make some policy to control the consumption of tobacco or some other vice that results in the activity 'going underground' and operating illegally as a 'black' market (Dye 197). Therefore, there are many occasions where the government tries to take some actions and activities which are intended by it (these occur when the governments increase petrol taxes to discourage automobile use and thus indirectly promote the use of public transit); the unintended consequences are not public policy

but merely its unexpected byproduct, which may sometimes be beneficial, and sometimes not.

Although Dye's above three points are central to understanding that public policies emerge as the result of governmental decision-making processes, it is less clear how such decisions are arrived at or implemented.

Cochran and Malone (2007) explain public policy with a general introduction, the basic notions and the procedures policymaking process as well as the principles effecting policy options. They explain the theoretical background of public policy and how it appeared as an important subfield inside the discipline of political science in the mid-1960s. "Public policy is the study of government decisions and actions designed to deal with a matter of public concern" (Cochran and Malone 2007: 01). There are issues which ultimately reach the policy agenda (Adolino et al., 2001), after which it is explained in the chapter as to how policies are designed and implemented by the government and non-government agencies. Throughout, the emphasis is on the essential relationship between individual self-interest and the national well-being.

Dye (1987) who tried to connect public policy with political science, stated the skill of the academic order to relate, examine and describe public policy. Public policy is anything that the authorities decide to do or not to do. According to him, government authorities do many tasks which include organizing a group to communicate on disputed issues with different groups to sort out the problem on particular issues within groups and that they also organize a large variety of material favours and symbolic rewards to the different members of the groups. Most often, the government in the form of taxes tries to take away money from the society. Thus, through the government efforts, public policies may organize, manage the behaviour of bureaucracies and issue goods, and remove taxes or all these objects simultaneously. Public policies are not a new concern for political science; the earliest writings of political philosophers reveal an interest in the policies pursued by governments (Aaron et al., 1994), the forces shaping these policies and the impact of these policies on society. The major focus of attention of political science has never been really on the policies themselves, but rather on the institutions and structures of government and on the political behaviours and processes associated with policymaking.

Bhutan and the European Community Co-Operation Strategy (2002-2006) gives the details of a fair balance between “the need to have and the need to be”. Bhutan’s policies have always attempted to achieve a balance among conserving its prosperous cultural tradition and organic habitat and on enforcing economic progress (European Commission 2003). The essential public policymaking notion, therefore, is based on maximizing the GNH, i.e., lengthening the progress focal point clear of simple economic measures in order to comprise small material ideas, such as the people’s ‘cultural, spiritual and emotional’ desires. Chopel (2012) writes with the special reference to happiness that public policy is not just the decisions taken by governments, but also co-relate to culture (Hirata 2006) religion and happiness of the well-being, especially so in the Bhutanese context, wherein the ultimate aim of public policy is happiness. If culture and uniqueness are seen as stationary and permanent, there is the tendency to generate troubles and formulate faulty public policies, which, in turn, adversely influence the pleasure of the individuals. In policymaking, it is essential to recognize and calculate extents or circumstances of pleasure and purify and modify every time what is essential to deal with value disputes and the absence of an ideal way to combine measures for the individual benefit.

Osman (2002) admits to the surviving notions of policymaking, giving a distinctive wisdom regarding the ways for the observed investigation of policy. He tries to demonstrate the allegation of these notions that the case of developing countries is not broad-ranging. Even despite a wide, common acceptance of the actives of the policy procedures of the developing countries (Kraft et al., 2004), they are insufficient for an in-depth study. This is since each policy has its policy system, which differs depending on the policy contexts. The socio-economic and political circumstances of a country form the system of corresponding policies. So, it is extremely essential to know the policy context before employing a notion to examine a policy (Bardach 2000).

Chakrabarty and Agarwala (2003) highlight the public policy as a course or pattern of action and not as a set of decisions taken by governments. They say that from the political perspective, a policy is a public requirement that has presumptuous significance and, as far as possible, should be properly evaluated for its real achievement. It requires a recognized and specific public trouble and the research of

the state to get its act together in a specific manner. According to them, it designs a line of actions to accomplish a definite consequence—harmful or helpful—or to disclose or to resolve to abstain from performing on a definite matter or topic. The policymaking procedure is obtainable as a policy sequence—a series of practical actions commencing with difficulty recognition and programme structure, and closing with the assessment and the maintenance, alteration or ending of policy. The authors explain and examine the political background of policymaking and observe a few of the rational features of policymaking such as popular structure, cost-benefit analysis and decision-making (Anderson 2006).

Bhutan became a democratic country with the initiative of the fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuk; from that point of time, the Kings were not to elect ministers (*lyonpos*) who had to be elected through the National Assembly. The notion of a cabinet with selected ministers came as a surprise to many Bhutanese who were not well-known for political ideas. Giving the National Assembly (*Tshogdu*) the authority to elect ministers, still on a pre-selected basis, has contributed in initiating a big sense of political dependability in its members. The *Tshogdu*, which has increasingly appeared as a lead performer in the political process of Bhutan, had been mainly traditional. Nevertheless, it was now affected to accept the latest viewpoints (Mathou 2008).

According to Thierry Mathou (2008), the result of this improvement was moreover significant for the ministers and for the official procedure. Even though the King implored the various members of the assembly and the association to remain behind the Cabinet's chairmanship, he also insisted on leaving his role as the head of the state. He was strong-minded that the chairmanship of the Cabinet would be assumed through the ministers who would be elected on an annual rotation basis. The situations of a real premiership structure were formed, however, for an extremely small period. The Cabinet members had to reluctantly discover liberating themselves from the King's direction. Democratization was the latest action taken, as displayed in the new improvements. It was then necessary to encourage the bureaucratic elites that they could perform their roles free from the King's direction. These days, it is also become essential to educate the individuals to participate in the open general elections.

Tsa-Wa-Sum:

Tsa-wa-sum (*rtsabagsum*) accurately means the three heredity or basics. The tantric Buddhist *Tsa-wa-sum* denotes the harmony of *guru* or *bla ma*, *devatā* or *yi dam* and *dākinī* or *mkha' 'gro*. They are hereditary since they provide the origins of protections, achievements and actions, respectively. Therefore, the *Tsa-wa-sum* in the tantric Buddhist structure is a vital group very much like the Three Ornaments in broader Buddhism and the notions of trinity in other religious convictions. The *Tsa-wa-sum* examined here is an overall changed group even though there is no doubt that the language has been appropriated from the tantric concepts of spiritual harmony (RGoB 2014: 15).

The initial state of *Tsa-wa-sum*, was described primarily on paper in the 1950s. In the *Thrimzhung Chenmo*² the Country, King and Government are stated as the *Tsa-wa-sum*. Dasho Singkhar Lam, though, comments that the third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk's purpose was to itemise the Government, Country and People as *Tsa-wa-sum*. The Third King, he recalls, reasoned that the King, as a component of the administration, requires not be removed from the administration. In addition to these two written and verbal sorts of calculation of the *Tsa-wa-sum*, there is the current detail of *Tsa-wa-sum* containing the King, Country and People (Whitecross 2008).

Therefore, in the context of Bhutan, public policy refers to the *Tsa-wa-sum*, i.e., the King, Country and the People. It means that the King is elected by the people and is responsible for the people because the people give him the mandate for their welfare, GNH and sustainable development. This mutual relationship between the King and the people defines the concept of nationhood.

The King

As a conventional organization, the monarchy represents the Bhutanese nationhood, independence and state individuality and has been termed as 'indispensable'.

Bhutan is known globally for its development philosophy of the GNH, its immaculate environment, its civilization as well as the unparalleled mode of change to a democracy.

² *Thrimzhung Chenmo* is a first ever comprehensive codified law of Bhutan.

The country:

The second important component of the *Tsa-wa-sum* is the country. Bhutan benefits from peace, affluence and contentment since there is no risk and proper outer protection due to the well-manned protection and rule of law and order in Bhutan.

Bhutan's well-equipped armed forces have been watchful and work around the clock to conquer safety risks, emergencies and natural and manmade tragedies. Bhutan has constantly been a calm and pleasant-sounding country with its increasing urbanization and instances of offences gradually rising. The government continues to work with the support of the security and law enforcement agencies, applying the basic resources in the direction of building and keeping its people secure, which is one of the National Key Result Areas in Bhutan's 11th Five-Year Plan.

The People

The third and last important component of the *Tsa-wa-sum* is People. As of January 2016, the population of Bhutan was estimated at 781,168 and the growth rate was pegged at 1.46 per cent. Given the small population, the country has ensured free health, free education and welfare for all its citizens.

In the words of the Fourth King (Druk) Gyalpo:

“For the future of our country, the most important thing is our people and the destiny of our country lies in our hands” (Whitecross 2008: 10).

The meaning of self-determination and prosperity has been suitably authorized in Bhutanese society. Bhutan is known to have valued harmony above liberty; thus, the transition to democracy has been peaceful and coherent. However, the intrinsic challenge of a King arranging democracy means the pursuit of the King's order since he realizes what is most excellent for the individuals. Therefore, to go in the direction of democracy knowing that the citizens are most excellently suitable to rule themselves, still impacts their awareness of authority. The nation's history of isolation is another source of apprehension, if not concern. The Bhutanese people have been so unaccustomed to the nuances of a democratic administration, having no experience in voicing opinions or protest to such a great extent, that the government had to conduct

mock elections to teach the citizens and ensure an arranged change to general elections for the National Assembly.

Foreign Relationship

Foreign relationship is rather a vital feature for an undersized kingdom such as Bhutan to follow and defend its countrywide welfare. Now, Bhutan has political relationships with 53 nations, of which 28 recognized it between 2011 and 2013. Bhutan's relationships are value-aligned and, thus, more than development, the government determined to focus on the relations that Bhutan already had by developing them and focusing on trade, savings and tourism. While establishing the smooth relationship and other form of collaboration with the rest of the world, Bhutan constantly benefits from extremely warm and affable ties with all nations.

The outstanding relationship that Bhutan has with the rest of the world and the optimistic picture it benefits from is mainly due to its royals who construct ties with nations and organizations in a slow and purposive way, so as to make sure that development support arrives at the grassroots.

As the leader of the country, the King makes visits for encouraging companionship, mutual understanding and generating friendliness with different nations and organisations as well as welcoming the visits of innumerable foreign celebrities and delegations.

Gross National Happiness

Apart from the *Tsa-wa-sum*, another important part of the Bhutanese public policy is the concept of the GNH introduced by King Jigme Singye Wangchuk in 1972. Its main aim was to build an economy that would benefit Bhutan's culture based on non-material spiritual Buddhist values. In addition, in 2008, Jigme Y. Thinley, the Prime Minister, launched a GNH Index to guide public policies.

McDonald (2005) states that the GNH is not a unique concept, but rather a common goal of societies and cultures around the world. At present, Bhutan's state development has raised an objection to the shift to democracy, seeking to continue the

direct pre-eminence of happiness as state objective. In its present formulation, the GNH rests on four pillars—culture, governance, environment and economy.

Hirata (2005, 2006) highlights two problems while co-relating GNH with public policy. First and foremost is the issue of ensuring that the exact happiness-based policies and the broad policy references are not in disagreement with the democratic values. The other is the issue of ensuring that the maintenance of the GNH is based on every individual's own attitude and that its performance is not false and/or unlawful. At last, it was found that happiness-inspired policy recommendations are neither unlawful nor false, as long as they are accepted as necessary ideas for the democratic decision-making system (Headey 2006). So, the development process cannot be completely without the proper coordination of rules set by the government organizations and citizens who care about moral rights and values. Therefore, by addressing and balancing both sides of the equation, it is proved that the GNH is not only providing a balanced environment to the policymakers but it also a big step towards a more comprehensive conception of development in Bhutan (Richardson 2010).

Priener (1999) has given a generalized comparison of the Bhutanese development process in the late 1950s and in the late 1990s. Through many questions, he discusses the missing link between the development process and policies adopted by the government organizations. He raises the question of why the development process took the shape it did and why certain policy priorities were adopted by the government while others policies were neglected. A few Bhutanese tend to consider that the idea is “engrained” in their traditional values and therefore cannot stand the test. A flourishing progress plan needs both—an idea of the presentation, which is required or wanted on the one hand, and a reason and effect-analysis to efficiently apply the idea on the other. Only if both features are assembled can the GNH test the complicated influence of conservative approaches in a significant method and put down its impression on Bhutan's future path of progress (Davidson 2005).

Ura and Galay (2004) say that to understand public policy, it is necessary to know about the operationalization of the idea of GNH. This presumes that the GNH is an exclusively Bhutanese approach to development. The GNH could have claims further than Bhutan, except that that is vital neither to its meaning nor to its

operationalization. It further presumes that GNH is a plan for societal and economic modifications in Bhutan and, thus, must be operationalized in plan conclusions and performances. To argue this, the authors place the idea of GNH in the background of Bhutanese history and of the broad history of the idea of development. Hirata (2003) says that happiness in GNH appears to give a particularly capable viewpoint to approach the challenge of growth facing Bhutan. By accepting GNH as its overarching development idea, Bhutan speaks aloud in favour of a people-centred viewpoint on development. Though, as the GNH turns into a quantifiable goal, a few policy modifications may be required in Bhutan. The main objective of the GNH is to make sure that the policymaking and main issues which are affecting the good governance structure should be well matched with each other. But, still, there are a set of policies which are ultimately producing a conflicting situation due to the difference between public policy and the overall objective of the GNH approach (Hershock 2006). At the end of the day this conflicting situation can convert into a huge problem if the policymakers of Bhutan do not address these challenges punctually and suitably. Along with this, the GNH concept is not helping the policymaking process but is also influencing or designing the bureaucratic and ministerial behaviour, as they attempt to tie in their performances to the GNH structure. There may also be a difference among competence and equal opportunity inside the GNH structure. The GNH creates an important primary move in the direction of operationalizing the idea of good development by choosing as the major objective of growth, human well-being rather than material prosperity. The idea of GNH is thus mainly well-placed for creating good development (Vorster 2012).

Brassard (2008) outlines that Bhutan's contribution to public policymaking is actually involving around the concept of GNH. In Bhutan though, people are struggling to match the speed of transformation, led by none other than their own King. In the previous few years, a recent constitution passed and the procedures of decentralizing spending and democratization have together met with speed (Gastil 2006). However, it has focused on the fact that 33 years following its formation, the original development structure in Bhutan is no longer just a philosophy. However it is becoming an actual quantifiable objective, just in moment for the monarchy's centenary celebrations. In addition, (Inglehart 1999) there are some questions to be raised: how will the GNH structure affect and form the policymaking procedure; how

can balances certify among competence and equity inside this structure and how can external assistance affect the GNH? (Bracho 2004).

This approach has been stimulated by conventional values like reconciliation, practicality and concern. The benefit of the community is a contemporary description of a Buddhist principle (the elementary requirement of harmony in human relationships). Even though the idea was initially established in the 1980s, the phrase has been “a popularization of the distinct Bhutanese perception of the fundamental purpose of development which can be traced throughout the period of development” (Priesner 1999). The Buddhist cosmology is the ultimate reality of Bhutanese civilization which is highly influenced by the Buddhist practices and principles (Thinley 1999), such as, the approach of conservation of environment. The concept of welfare state and its functions which is presently adopted by the Bhutanese government has also come from the conventional independent local communities. This concept is also helping in the process of a unified Bhutan. It has provided the logical political foundation to the Bhutanese government which is now visible in its policies and plans. The concept of GNH has provided a complete framework to structure the potentially substantive political and social discussions in this regard (Ura et al., 1999).

The Bhutanese government places an emphasis more on public welfare and on providing better polices through the Five Year Plan and it is quite true that social development and welfare of the people have been a major priority of the Bhutanese state. With the formal institution of the Constitution in 2008, the state’s responsibilities in this area have been reiterated, thereby enhancing social protection measures for the entire population. The Bhutanese government always wanted to work for the welfare and development of its people.

Areas of GNH

In Bhutan, contentment encloses nine areas or settings of well-being, which are calculated next to contentment in life as well as optimistic and unconstructive influences. The GNH areas are (a) “standard of living, (b) good governance, (c) environment and access to nature, (d) community, (e) culture, (f) access to education

and learning, (g) psychological healing, (h) physical health, and (i) time balance” (Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs 2000: 15).

According to this description, happiness is the contentment in the ecological, social, economic, and individual situations affecting an individual’s life. The concept of GNH in Bhutan can be seen as identical with a holistic approach to sustainability. This viewpoint is comparable to those set in 1972 by Donella Meadows in a book.

The policy of GNH and Happiness in Bhutan start with its charter. The next section of the Ninth Article states, “The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of GNH” (The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008: 02).

GNH and Environmental Policies

According to Article 5, Clause 3 of the Constitution, 60 per cent land of Bhutan is set aside for forests (2008). The use of plastic bags has been banned in Bhutan for environmental concerns (Chhetri 2011). The Bhutanese government, from time to time, makes policies that promote environmental awareness among the people, such as the Pedestrian Day (on that day many vehicles would be banned except public buses, ambulances, fire trucks and tourist taxis). This initiative was taken by the current elected (2013) government. The Pedestrian Day was celebrated on the World Environment Day in order to promote and spread environmental awareness among Bhutanese people (Pelden 2013). On June 4, 2014, the Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay posted a photo of himself on FaceBook bicycling to work with the caption,

“I know that *Ped* Day will inconvenience many, even if only once a year. The idea is that today, we join hands, to celebrate and commit ourselves to protecting our environment” (Tobgay 2014).

Policies of Energy under the GNH

The policymakers of Bhutan in their financial policies have always demonstrated that development and environment can be linked together and achieve the goals of progress. To fulfil this goal and idea, some businesses, including a marble mine and particle board manufacturer companies, were shut down when deemed unsustainable (Chhetri 2011). Along with financial policies, the Bhutanese government also looks

after hydropower policies because an important part of Bhutan's revenue is produced from hydropower, but hydropower schemes and policies remain mainly contentious.

Big hydropower dams, distinct as being over 30 MW, are not measured as being renewable under:

“The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol) used in Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and the United States, or the Climate Registry (Daigneau 2013). Bhutan's state-run power corporation functions four dams managing between 40 MW and 1,020 MW (Aiyar, 2009). Three additional dams are projected to carry Bhutan's ability from 1,500 MW to 10,000 MW (Agence France-Presse 2013). It is said that at least one of very large dam project was not undertaken when it became clear the negative impact on the culture and the environment outweighed the financial benefit” (Bagga 2011: 50).

Therefore, the Bhutanese government tries to keep the balance between the improvement of the country and preservation of the environment for the sustainable growth of the nation and the objective of happiness for the country.

The Cultural Policies under GNH

According to the Bhutanese people, happiness which is the important part of GNH philosophy, is assumed to be the active key factor by encouraging and preserving the rich culture of Bhutan. The government has tried to make policies and plans that are more resilient in their nature and which could deal with the challenges and difficulties from other norms and ideals. This approach is also helping understand the culture's capacity to maintain and develop cultural identity, knowledge and practices. Therefore, cultural expression has a very unique place and position in Bhutan which is also visible in the day-to-day lifestyle such as the one where during working hours, the Bhutanese people have to wear traditional clothing, and where all buildings have to adhere to the national architecture standards and where there is mandatory mindfulness training in schools.

GNH Education Policies

For preserving their national religion and traditional values, the Bhutanese children in their schools are taught mindfulness in an effort (Herman 2010). During their schooling the youngsters are taught the importance and meaning of GNH philosophy for the well-being of the person and the state. Courses comprise significant thought

abilities to environmental awareness and the art of meaningful survival (Schneider 2011).

Health Policies under the GNH

The Bhutanese government is very much concerned about the health of its people. Due to the health issues and well-being of the people of the Bhutan, the use of tobacco is banned in Bhutan by the Tobacco Act of 2010 which is also an important part of GNH philosophy (Parliament of Bhutan 2010). This act has been disapproved for the severity of penalty, which expands further than a simple certification or fines, to custody (Ongmo 2011).

Foreign Direct Investment Policy under GNH

“In 2010, the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Policy was adopted as part of a plan to realize Bhutan’s Vision 2020 to ‘maximize the happiness of all Bhutanese and to enable them to achieve their full and innate potential as human beings’. The focus areas of the FDI are (a) the development of green and sustainable economy, (b) promotion of socially responsible and ecologically sound industries, (c) promotion of culturally and spiritually sensitive industries, (d) investments in services that promote Brand Bhutan, and (e) creation of a knowledge society” (Ministry of Economic Affairs 2010: 20).

The Bhutanese government under the FDI policy plans to open markets of organic agriculture, sustainable tourism, and hydropower as except for fast food, pornography and arms companies which are promoting businesses in Bhutan. Due to this policy, the Agriculture Minister of Bhutan declared the goal of 100 per cent organic agriculture in Bhutan (Vidal and Kelly 2013). Along with this, the minister also knew that two-thirds of the 700,000-strong population in Bhutan depend on agriculture and that merely 3 per cent of its soil is available for farming, due to the hilly areas. Therefore, the minister called for an increase in yields and agricultural exports in the next 10 years (Lamsang 2013). Between 2010 and 2013, about 26 projects passed the FDI screening for alignment with the GNH, while over 100 FDI projects were rejected (Plowright 2012).

Small and Average Industry Policies under the GNH

To balance between development and the GNH philosophy, the Cottage Industry Plans, for undersized and average industries were accepted in 2012 to support entrepreneurship, make profits and prosperity, create employment, and ease poverty (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012); “The rationale for the policy is cottage, small and medium industry that stimulate pro-poor growth with equity and inclusion, promote balanced regional development and help strengthen our rich cultural heritage. They contribute meaningfully towards the realization of the noble vision of achieving GNH” (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012: 19). The policy identifies a complete set of performances that vary from setting up commerce incubators to initial cooperatives, placing the methods for financing and in producing a promise to company social accountability.

The Status of GNH in Bhutan

The idea of GNH carries a very unique position in Bhutan which can be easily visible in every policy, scheme and project. The current administration system of Bhutan has more emphasis on the singular GNH measure, which directs policies (Harris 2013). The Gross National Happiness Commission in October 2013 presented the new administration system which provided the information about the processes and functions of that commission (GNH Commission 2014). In this new administration, the government only aims to focus internally to elevate the nation’s well-being rather than expending resources spreading the GNH to other countries. Prime Minister Tobgay, on the importance of GNH in Bhutan, said that he believed that it is not the job of the government to do that (exporting GNH) and “What we know of it we’ll seek to aggressively implement for (domestic purposes only). While the elected government would focus internally, the “King may continue spread the concept of GNH abroad. Government officials who are working to spread Bhutan’s GNH model do not offer it as an ideal but rather propose it as an idea to share and develop” (Fahsi 2014: 78).

Religious Institutions and Other Inter-Governmental Organisations in the Public Policymaking Process

Bhutan is a religious country and along with the GNH concept, it also has a great influence of non-governmental institutions which are helping in public policy formation. And after 2008, both the monarch and monasteries as the supreme religious institution in Bhutan have supervision, direction and control over the public policy. The primary concern of the monasteries is the conservation of cultural uniqueness and spiritual principles. “Existing religious institutions are being expanded and new ones established in fulfilment of the command of the king and the wishes of the people in order to ensure that the *Dharma* teachings will continue to flourish” (Mathou 2008: 07).

The monasteries’ political influence cannot be changed, particularly under the current framework. The important role of the monastic institution is to conserve the culture, uniqueness and spiritual values of Bhutan which are being affected by the reforms happened in Bhutanese society. In this regard, during the last few decades, the conservative approach has expanded its roots. In 1989, the introduction of the Code of Etiquette was a reflection of the establishment of monasteries which are based on the principles and values of Bhutanese culture. In the early 1970s, this caused all Bhutanese officials at the time of their duty hours to wear the traditional Bhutanese dress. Therefore, the approach to conserve the country’s rich cultural heritage and principles is easily visible in the public policies which define the place and position of religion in Bhutan. Particularly in 1984, the Council of Ecclesiastic Affairs was formed to deal with religious matters, headed by the *Je Khenpo* who is called as the religious leader of Bhutan and plays an important role in religious matters. Monks also play an important role in the day-to-day life of the Bhutanese. There have been various efforts to polish the status and position of monks for understanding and dealing with the issues of development and to make their position strong among the Bhutanese people as well as to encourage the individuals about environmental awareness, well-being and issues which are affecting the public policies (Mathou 2004). The voting in 1996 of a younger *Je Khenpo* supported the monastic organization to turn into a further self-motivated one. In front of thousands of followers, the *Je Khenpo* performed the spiritual ceremonies of communal blessing

and desires (*Wang-lung-thri*) all around the state, and stated that it was the actual time for the monks to turn into role models for the public.

Dargye (2010) specially discusses the role of monastics in the education system. The author says that the monastics always try to put pressure on the government to make a better education policy which can be easily integrated with the modern education system without any conflict.

“For the rightly educated Buddhist, there remains no place for remorse. He is balanced, virtuous, mindful, ardent and modest. With the Buddhist education, it becomes easier for him to handle and solve any day to day problems. He develops as a perfect social being, capable of generating social harmony, spiritual calm and mutual understanding; thereby bringing goodwill, peace and harmony to society. He is in possession of the capacity to mould himself as he likes by directing his activities in the right direction. Thus Buddhist education is not only an indispensable aspect of the path to the Buddhist highest spiritual goal but also a way to live in harmony with the world. These entire things will not be possible without implementing a better education policy without the inputs from these monasteries” (Phuntshoi Karma, 2000: 108).

“The state carries gives some financial help to monasteries and religious performances. The law has been influenced by Buddhism, but the rule of law applies in the country and legal institutions are entirely separate from religious institutions. There is religious freedom in Bhutan, but missionaries are banned and there are restrictions on the construction of religious buildings other than those associated with Buddhism” (Phuntshoi Karma 2000: 112).

For the help of these monasteries there are a few governmental organizations, i.e. the GNH Commission (GNHC) and the Planning Commission. “In 2008, Bhutan established the GNHC as the country’s top strategic body for national development planning and to guide the public policy. GNH committees were set up at the ministerial, district (*Dzonkhag*) and block (*Gewog*) levels. These changes aimed to create stronger and clearer links between the concepts of GNH and their application to policy and programs, while ensuring that GNH had a stronger impact on the country’s economic, political, social policies and its legal, health and education system” (Phuntsho 2000: 101).

Country Profile (2005) has given a report which explores the role of state government in the policymaking procedure. This provides a brief idea to understand the structure of the public administration of Bhutan and focuses on the legal structure. It covers the participation of the local government and how they both work together and coordinate

with each other for implementing policies in various areas (Denman and Namgyel 2008). It also gives the information about civil society, NGOs and other government organisations, which are actively participating in the policymaking procedure of Bhutan (Perjore 2005). The main criticism is that it only focuses on the structure of administration like how it works but not discusses the relevance and importance.

Bergh (2004) says that the linkages between decentralization, democracy and participation are important to understand the role of state government in policymaking. It has worried the intrinsically political character of democratic decentralization and other improvements. “It provides a clear link between democratic decentralization reforms and an increase in popular participation. However, while different electoral systems present their own problems in terms of popular and institutional accountability, the presence of a strong public ‘culture of accountability’—generally fostered by a strong central political force—is the most important factor in explaining good government performance at the local level” (Phuntsho 2000: 120). The entire issue on the subject of the connection among decentralization and democracy is that which asks ‘how do individuals turn into people rather than being managed as subjects?’ This issue might begin the public discussion that is essential if the dialogue on decentralization is to go further than technical, administrative and economic measures and shift in the direction of a really ‘participatory’ performance. Theodoulou (2013) highlights the link between theory, practice and models of policy making. He looks at the sequential stages that the policies pass through, and the role of institutional and non-institutional players which play a crucial role in the policy making process (Theodoulou and Cahn 2013).

Bowornwathana and Poochareon (2006) lay stress on the role of government in the context of bureaucracy. They discuss that without the main pillar of bureaucracy, the government would not be able to make and implement policies. They define the role of administrative machinery that is part of the government. Its primary function is to execute the will of state or in other words, with the support of the bureaucrats, the government makes policies and implements them. The bureaucracy directly and indirectly shapes the discourse of public policies. Indirectly, during the policy formation stage, it can influence the discourse of broad policies through its communications with the politicians and the wider public. After broad goals have

been set, it plays an important role in outlining policy details through the design of specific programmes. It is precisely that the bureaucracy will largely influence the overall policy outcome and citizen's perceptions of the policy and the government. This incorporates "three aspects of public policy study, government institutions and the policymaking process, the concepts and methods of public analysis and the choices that we make collectively about substantive public policies at all levels of government" (Bowornwathana 2004: 03). The relationship of government institutions, the interests and motivations of policy actors both inside and outside the government, and the role of policy analysis in clarifying the public problem and helping citizens and policymakers choose among policy alternatives is highlighted (Kraft and Furlong 2004).

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have played a major role in pushing for sustainable development at the national and international level. They are becoming the link between the government and people. In Bhutan, there are many NGOs working for the welfare of the Bhutanese. The NGOs have helped to focus attention on the social, economic, environmental and other activities. The National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) exploring the nexus between human trafficking and HIV and the issue of human trafficking and violence against women is gaining attention due to the efforts of the NCWC (NCWC 2013). The TBF (The Bhutan Foundation) is engaged in the conservation of natural environment, sustainable development (education, youth healthcare, and economic opportunity), good governance, preservation of culture and art (Bhutan Foundation Annual Report 2013). Tarayana is working to uplift and enhance the lives of people in rural communities and it is also engaged in other social activities (Tarayana Foundation 2009). The YDF (Youth Development Fund) provides financial support for youth development activities like leadership skills, drug rehabilitations, and special education. The TBF broadly focuses on three major development areas—health (primary health and vaccinations), youth development and child care and welfare of women (National Health Policy 2012).

Along with governmental institutions there is a great contribution of international organizations in the public policymaking process of Bhutan. Some international agencies, countries and organisations like the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Denmark, Japan, Government of India (GOI), Asian Development Bank, International Development Association and European Union, etc. are providing assistance to Bhutan. Without the help of these organisations it would have been difficult for Bhutan to achieve and complete its development journey.

The widely held view that the deprived live in rural cultivation regions where study growth, scientific shift and agricultural mechanization are slow. "The mentioned subjects entail many obstacles and urgently require human resource development. Bhutan concentrates on developing the central and eastern areas where nearly 40 percent of the total population lives but the farmers' income and their standard of living are low due to the slow development of agriculture compared to the western area. Topographical constraints delay the implementation of mechanized agriculture in Bhutan, which causes the high labour input per agricultural plot. The shortage of farmers is becoming serious as the young work force moves to other industries" (Bhutan ODA 2011: 33). Therefore these countries and organisations keep on prioritizing agricultural and rural growth since the declining figure of the farmers still accounts for a number of the whole population and it is linked with poverty. These organisations incessantly give help for the growth and development of agricultural skills by implementing scientific collaboration plans and that of other programmes in the central and eastern areas.

The social sector of Bhutan is also not in a good situation.

"Education, human resource development and health in social sector have been crucial in Bhutan. Though the situation has improved in these fields, there are still many challenges, including lack of basic educational facilities and teachers' capacity, especially in vocational schools. The data says that more than half of the nation's unemployment rate is made up of young people. There are two main reasons for this; (a) labour type mismatch of supply and demand and an excess of labour force over demand; (b) human resource development is needed in the labour market at the vocational level" (Bhutan ODA 2011: 20).

Therefore the cooperating organisations are applying technical collaboration plans for getting a better occupational education structure in place.

The main reasons behind poverty in Bhutan are firstly, the economic infrastructure—road, power, and telecommunication—which is poor all over the state. Farmers, particularly in the unreachable rural areas, have been missed with no reimbursement of growth. Due to this situation, there are gaps among urban and rural areas. The eastern areas of Bhutan are the worst affected. The road system creates a financial gap among cities and rural areas, the case of which can be perceived among the eastern and western areas. Roads are the only means of transportation in Bhutan due to the geographical situation. But the condition of the roads is not up to the mark which creates a serious hurdle in the process of development. The present picture of roads and bridges is bad with a high danger of them collapsing in situations of natural tragedy. Infrastructure growth is the next main concern. The international organisations have not only provided support to the agricultural sector but have also provided their support for the transportation network as well.

These broad gaps among the cities and rural areas are a cause of concern for the democratization process. Decentralization is a significant issue for the solidification of democratization and an equivalent sharing of assets. Bhutan has a high expectation from the international organisations in the field of good governance. These organisations will maintain their aid on the ground to implement their plans. They assist the setting up of a human resource growth scheme for reinforcing local governance and decentralizing power. The other areas where these organisations are providing their assistance are the natural environment of Bhutan which is at risk level. Located in the active zones and exposed to Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) accelerated by global warming, the natural environment can dramatically affect the lives of people in Bhutan. Landslides and floods often occur during the rainy season, with road surfaces freezing and road closure due to heavy snow in winter. (Kuensel 2009: 05). Most of the countries and organisations have good information and knowledge in the field of disaster management. So, the Bhutanese government welcomes collaboration in this area.

European Commission (2010) report gives a general idea of the earlier period and the progress of the EC collaboration with Bhutan in political as well as economic, social and environment sector that gives a brief idea of Bhutan's development status in various areas and how it is overcoming the challenges with the support of its

neighbouring countries and international organisations. The EC is now following good governance schemes at both the Dzongkhag and Gewog stages (Jonathan, 2011). “The EC will focus on best practices in good governance, decentralized decision-making and best practices in development, including innovative methods to improve delivery of services to address poverty, gender issues, institutional reforms and public sector management. This assistance could come in the form of budgetary support” (European Commission 2010: 12).

Wangdi (2010) critically looks at the WTO membership of Bhutan. From the international point of view, the membership of the WTO permits a way in the market, a high playing ground, policy improvements and the right to use fairness and mechanical aid. Though, a few members are more advantaged than the others. Besides, small countries like Bhutan face difficulties in meeting the cost of the WTO compliance, in addition to the loss of policy autonomy, because policies have to align to that of the WTO. This study gives negative impacts of the WTO membership on Bhutan. It suggests that if Bhutan joins the WTO, the kingdom will need to spend huge resources in obliging the WTO rules and regulations without any corresponding concrete benefit. If no help is forthcoming from advanced countries, Bhutan’s economic development would be seriously hampered as precious funds will have to be diverted to fulfilling the WTO requirements. Vijayesh (2011) says that the profits and challenges of Bhutan joining the WTO were discovered in the backdrop of the FDI atmosphere in Bhutan. He raises certain questions as to how Bhutan would really benefit after joining the WTO and getting assistance from other international organisations and what will be the impact on the agricultural products in Bhutan and what kind of positive and negative impacts it might bring on their polices? Is the country economically ready and politically committed to move in line with WTO regulations and demand from the WTO member countries? WTO is born out of negotiations and how much benefits Bhutan will be able to enjoy will ultimately depend upon the assistance of the partners and negotiations with other WTO members.

The Bhutan Information and Communications Technology Policy and Strategies (2004) report says that Bhutan’s political and financial system has a relationship with the adjoining nations in the region which also influences policymaking. Its gives a

general idea of Bhutan's economy examining its dimension and environment, its slow financial integration, macroeconomic presentation and future viewpoint, as well as its expansion outline of more than the previous four decades. It also discovers Bhutan's financial relationships with the neighbouring nations by looking at different stages of Bhutan's participation in regional integration, and particularly emphasizes Indian participation in Bhutan's economic and political relationships (RGoB 2004).

The Bhutan Country Strategy (2010-2013) report says that Denmark, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria goes are the ten mainly significant mutual Official Development Assistance (ODA) associates of Bhutan. In the energy areas, India is the major depositor and the mainly significant consumer of energy created in Bhutan. The main multilateral contributor institutions are the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Development Association (IDA) and the European Union (Royal Government of Bhutan, 2010). "Austria is a member of all of them and contributes actively through the relevant administrative councils to these institutions. Austria also signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding in support of a Partnership for Good Governance in Bhutan' that defines alignment and harmonization as one core aspect of the cooperation in the governance sector, as well as it contributes to mutual accountability. Annual review meetings and technical working groups enable an overall monitoring framework and strategy" (Aus AID 2008: 17). Domestic answerability will increase through the recently recognized parliament and through the civil society.

Apart from these donor countries there are other UN agencies which are helping to Bhutan in many areas. The main UN agencies present in Bhutan are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and Food and Agriculture Organization (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group 2007). "A common Country Programme Action Plan has been signed between the government of Bhutan and the UN agencies to enhance the development of UN activities. The UN agencies' support focuses on the priority areas of Poverty Reduction, Health, Education, Governance as well as Environment and Disaster Management" (Asian Development Bank 2010: 23).

With the help of these international organisations Bhutan's status in various areas is improving. These international organisations are providing funds to the Bhutanese for their health and education and to improve the infrastructure, good governance and development programmes.

Structure of the Bhutanese Government

Here, three levels of administration need to be noted. The first level of administration starts at the central level which comprises the King, Prime Minister and Parliament. The second level of administration is known as the district administration and the last and third level of administration is governing through block administration. The newly made Parliamentary system in Bhutan consists of the King of Bhutan and a bicameral parliament. This bicameral parliament consists of two houses called the National Council as the upper house and the National Assembly as the lower house. The present parliamentary structure has changed from the unicameral *Tshogdu* in 2007 to the bicameral legislature in 2008. At present, Bhutan is a democratic state having a parliamentary structure of administration.

Within a democratic structure, like that of Bhutan, the actual political authority rests in the decision-making organ of the administration. The legislature comprises two chambers: the National Council and the National Assembly. The Council (effectively the Upper House) consists of 25 members, with 20 elected from the 20 districts and 5 eminent persons nominated by the King. All are elected and selected for 5 years. The National Council meets at least twice a year. In addition to its law-making responsibilities, the National Council shall continue as the House of review on matters which are affecting the state's security and sovereignty. Along with this, it also takes care of the individuals and their happiness. The Assembly is accountable for bills and other legislations and for continuing national growth plans and policies. The legislature composes and articulates the spirit of the State through its policies.

Image 2: Bhutan Parliament



Source: National Assembly of Bhutan³

The judiciary is not directly involved in policymaking but indirectly influences the process by giving various interpretations to constitutional provisions. These interpretations are of vital importance for framing a policy. Judges are not entitled to enter the policymaking domain because they are neither elected nor are accountable to the people and policymaking is the exclusive domain of the legislature or the executive. The judiciary is expected to adjudicate or evaluate the policy promulgated by the legislature or executive and checks the excesses committed by the other two branches. The real business of policymaking in the Central/State Government takes place in the Cabinet Committees. Many policy decisions are finally settled by the responsible minister in consultation with the Prime Minister.

The court authority of Bhutan is vested in the Royal Courts of Justice including the Supreme Courts, the High Courts, the *Dzongkhag* Court and the *Druk Gyalpo* on the suggestion of the National Judicial Commission which could set up such other Courts and Tribunals as from time to time. On every occasion, where any policy is quiet on a matter or is not in equilibrium with other policies, it is the courts, which provides its

³ National Assembly of Bhutan, URL: http://www.nab.gov.bt/en/media/photo_gallery.

explanation in the light of base grounds fundamental to the Constitution. The courts are advised by the principles of equal opportunity and justice. Their results give authority to the governmental organizations for different policies. The power of judicial review speaks of the function of the judiciary in policymaking.

Apart from the three parts, there is other important part of the government—the monastic body that plays a vital position in the policymaking procedure.

“Monastic Body comprises of the Central Monastic Body and the *Rabdeys (Dzongkhag Monastic Body)*. The Central Monastic Body receives annual subsidy from the Government to manage and run its day to day affairs. The Monastic Body is the sole arbiter on religious matters. The *Je-Khenpo* (Chief Abbots) is the head of the monastic body and is responsible for the nation’s religious affairs. He is chosen from among high ranking monks. Apart from being thoroughly versed in all branches of religious scholarship and practice the candidate must also have undergone prolonged mediation” (DESA, 2005: 05).

The present *Je- Khenpo* Trulku Jigme Chhoeda is the 70th in succession. He was appointed in 1996.

There are five senior levels of masters (*Lopen*) who are helping the religious leader (*Je-Khenpo*). In that list, the senior level, the *Dorji Lopen* is the first one who performs the role of deputy religious leader along with the Chief of All Masters. The second senior level master is known as *Yangbi Lopen*, and heads the liturgical division inclusive of sacred dances, ritual arts and metrical rhyme. The third senior level master or *Drabi Lopen* heads the division of lexicography that contains literature, metrics and prosody. *Tshenyi Lopen* is the fourth senior level master who heads the division of metaphysics and logic. The last senior level master known as *Tsugla Lopen*, deals with the matters related to the higher studies of the monastic body. In Bhutan, there are also some monastic bodies which are situated in districts and they are operated by the *Lam Neeteen*. He is assisted by the *Kudrung* and other masters of various parts (Chua 2008).

In the apparatus made up of executive, legislative, and judicial organizations, the Bhutanese administration prepares the policies. The functions of the organizations have an important position on the whole environment and background setting in a provided structure.

Local Administration in Bhutan

Apart from governmental, non-governmental and international organisations, local bodies also play a crucial role in policymaking through District Development Committees (*Dzongkhag Yargay Tshogchung* – DYT) and Village Development Committees (*Geog Yargay Tshogchung* – GYT) working as the local government in Bhutan, which play a major role in implementing policies.

The local government comprises of District Councils (20 *Dzongkhags*) containing the *Dzongkhag Tshogde*, *Gewog Tshogde* and *Thromde Tshogde*, each led by a *Gup* (head). In 2002, at the Gewog stage, the National Assembly made for a recent system for local governance. Every local district is accountable for making and applying its own growth plan, in coordination with the district administration.

Image 3: Bhutan's 20 Dzongkhags



Source: National Portal of Bhutan⁴

Traditionally, the foundation of 20 District Development Committees (*Dzongkhag Yargay Tshogchung* – DYT) in 1981 first presented the institutional structure as essential for decentralization. “The committees were empowered to formulate plans, propose agenda and make decisions on the socio-economic development of the district. Thus, the establishment of the DYT’s did away with the traditional practice of

⁴ National Portal of Bhutan, URL: <http://www.bhutan.gov.bt/index.php>.

central planning for the whole country. In the 2002 elections, the chairperson of the DYT was elected from amongst the members of the DYT, shifting the pivotal role in a DYT from the district's top civil servant to an elected official" (Gallenkamp 2010: 15).

Structure of the Thesis

The proposed study aims to highlight the public policymaking process in Bhutan 1998-2013, and how the monarchy, monasteries and government policymaking institutions, local bodies, NGOs and civil society will play a crucial role in the public policymaking process in Bhutan. It will concentrate on how the GNH philosophy correlates with public policy and it will also concentrate on how external assistance determines the policymaking process of Bhutan.

The rationale of this study is to enrich understanding about public policymaking process in Bhutan. The purpose of proposed the study explains how public plans and rules are affected and prepared, to explain a sequence of significant matters that were come across in the revision of the public policy of Bhutan. Hence, this study has some key objectives as stated below:

1. To study and understand the concept of public policymaking procedure in the context of Bhutan
2. To analyze the relationship between GNH and the public policymaking procedure
3. To discuss the key areas of public policy
4. To discuss the government and non-governmental institutions' participation in public policymaking
5. To critically examine the role of external assistance in affecting the policymaking process of Bhutan
6. To discuss the problems and challenges faces by the government in implementing the public policies

To achieve these objectives, there are certain key questions addressed in this research work and the answers to these questions are addressed in different chapters. For example, what is the main purpose in studying the public policy making process in Bhutan? How can the government of Bhutan achieve its goals within the GNH framework? What are the key areas of the public policy of Bhutan? What is the role of non-governmental institutions in the public delivery mechanism? Does external assistance impact Bhutan in achieving its policy targets at the time of receiving aid and development assistance? Why does Bhutan's policymaking process have so much difficulty in formulating the right policy and then sticking to it?

Two hypotheses were formulated during the initial stage of the study:

1. External aid and assistance in Bhutan determines the nature and pattern of the public policymaking process.
2. The public policymaking process is based on GNH philosophy, but its implementation leads to regional disparities in Bhutan

The research methodology employed in this research uses the analytical and descriptive methods, which deal with the process of public policy making in Bhutan and its role in making the country progressive in different fields including politics, economics and the social sphere. Both primary and secondary data will be used in this study. The primary data will include the official reports and documents provided by the Government of Bhutan. It will particularly include the articles and reports published by the Royal Government of Bhutan.

There are few government surveys and reports available which provide information on political developments and changes and their impact on policies. There are articles published in various journals and edited volumes which deal with Bhutan's administration system and its public policies. The study will also apply information and facts composed by different seminars, symposia and think-tank analysis worldwide. The surveys and interviews of the members of the Bhutan Government will also be included as primary data. To do this, a field visit was also undertaken to interview the policymakers and to gather the primary sources of participation in society.

The field visit was very satisfying as well as fruitful as it gave me the opportunity to collect the primary sources for my work and also witness the developments first hand. It also helped me to gain the insight into the prominent intellectual ideas from thinkers and scholars. This field trip was a good experience for my thesis and the work was brilliant in Bhutan. I got a chance to meet a prestigious and renowned political figure in Bhutan. The interviews I took were very useful for my thesis and cleared my view on my research questions and hypothesis. I took an interview of two Members of Parliament and many other renowned personalities of significance. Along with this, I got a chance to interact with the local Bhutanese scholars and researchers who are working on Buddhism and are involved in the public policymaking process. I visited the Royal University of Bhutan and the Centre of Bhutan Studies to collect the large amount of primary sources and books which were of immense value to my research work. I visited Paro, Phuntsholing and other rural areas of Bhutan and interacted with rural people and observed their condition and listened to their views on public policies made by the government and non-government organizations.

Overall, this field trip was very fruitful in terms of knowledge sharing and networking and Bhutan and strengthened my research focus and broadened the horizons of my career.

This research is divided into six chapters, beginning with the first chapter as the 'Introduction' of this study. This chapter attempts to make a conceptual study of the term public policy and a brief history to understand the public policy in the context of Bhutan. It would also provide the nature, objectives and importance of public policy. It also covers the research questions, hypotheses, primary and secondary sources, the field visit and the research methodology followed in the thesis.

Chapter Two is on 'Public Policy making within the framework of GNH'. This chapter will correlate the public policymaking procedure with the GNH and how all public policies and laws in Bhutan would come under the main four pillars of GNH. It would also discuss that how the GNH Commission and the Government of Bhutan work together for the development of Bhutan.

The third chapter is based on the influence of the non-governmental institutions on the public policymaking process. This chapter will discuss the role of non-governmental

institutions in the public delivery mechanism. This chapter will deal with the role of the monarchy, monasteries, NGOs, civil society and other policy actors who are influencing the public policymaking process.

The fourth chapter will discuss the role of Inter-government Organisations in public policy making and their contribution to the Government of Bhutan and how the IGOs and other agencies work together and give their active participation, aid and assistance to the Government of Bhutan.

The fifth chapter moves a step further and tries to understand the areas of public policy: challenges and limitations. This chapter will focus on the key sectors or areas of public policy and how these social issues, challenges, problems and limitations are faced by policy makers while implementing public policy. It would talk about how the problems from various districts rise in the path of policy implementation and give details of different ideas for making the implementation process effectual and addresses the question—does the government achieve its policy targets and progress graph for the people?

The last chapter of the thesis is the conclusion, which has summarized the whole research, highlighting the important findings and mentioning the state of the hypotheses discussed in the beginning. It briefly discusses the answers given to the major research questions in the chapters. Based on the findings, this chapter presents an attempt to come up with some suggestions and durable solutions.

Chapter: II

Public Policymaking within the Framework of the GNH

“Gross National Happiness is far more important than Gross Domestic Product.”

-His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuk, The Fourth Druk Gyalpo

In the direction of growth and for public policymaking, the Gross National Happiness (GNH) is a holistic and continuous shift, which seeks equilibrium among tangible and intangible ideologies by the confidence that individuals desire to look for happiness. For every individual's life, happiness is very important and to provide a proper environment for happiness, GNH is always trying to focus on a balanced development approach for all facets of life which is one the main objective of the GNH concept. The method of continuous profitable development is among one of the numerous methods to attain this objective.

There are four main pillars of the Gross National Happiness: balanced socio-economic growth in the area of better education and health, to protect and preserve traditional values and heritage, protection of environment, and good governance. “The four pillars are further detailed in nine areas: emotional well-being, living standard, health, culture, education, community vitality, good governance, balanced use of time and ecological integration. To describe and examine the happiness of Bhutanese people, Bhutan has further expanded 151 variables, 72 indicators and 38 sub-indexes and these variables, indicators and sub-indexes are based on these nine areas of GNH philosophy” (Donnelly 2004: 15).

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Fourth King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuk recognized that the existing growth idea—GDP—did not consider the concluding goal of every Bhutanese—Happiness—and thus he accepted the development philosophy that the “Gross National Happiness (GNH) is more important than Gross Domestic Product (GDP)” (Donnelly 2004: 20).

But the GNH philosophy itself is nothing unless its principles or pillars do not get implemented. And for that purpose, the Bhutanese government through its policies has implemented those pillars whether they were related to socio-economic factors,

environment, culture and political aspects. Public policy and GNH is like the two faces of the same coin; one is nothing without the other because the purpose and objective of public policy and GNH is the well-being and happiness of the people. The GNH concept itself is based on the socio-economic welfare of the people, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and environment and provides a transparent government in Bhutan. At the same time, the Bhutanese government realized that using well-being as a development tool will lead to better policies. Its focus was always the betterment of the people through making and implementing better policies. Apart from this, there are other similarities between the GNH and public policymaking including that both highly emphasize the balance between materialist and non-materialist development approach. In Bhutan's development approach, when we are talking about GNH, we are not looking at a trade between materialism and spiritualism or between modernity and traditionalism or between growth and lack of growth. What the GNH essentially strives for is a balance because the Bhutanese have acknowledged that they need both growth and development but the idea is growth and development, and at what cost; not at all costs. Growth and Development must be tempered to several things, like the Bhutanese can sell logs and bring in a lot of money but they cannot cut all trees and sell all their logs. They must conserve the environment because at the end of the day, there will be a spiritual element. According to them, we have to respect that and these are the sentiments that have prevailed for hundreds of years in Bhutan. There is an ecological aspect to it. The Bhutanese are custodians of the global biodiversity. So, from that ecological point of view also, there is a very practical economic reason. The forest, the river and its use for agriculture, drinking and hydropower are all interlinked. So, the Bhutanese want to strike a balance in whatever they do. They are trying to reach the state of GNH and they are aspiring for a balance in GNH. Therefore, it is not a trade between spiritualism and materialism. It is not a trade between growth and stagnation. At the end of the day, the people are at the centre of the discussion. They have high rate of growth and great environment. So, the GNH essentially calls for a balance in whatever they do and calls for walking the Buddhist middle path. It does not call for a trade-off. There is certainly a trade, but it is neither black nor white. It is a blend of two finding a middle path, like you cannot sustain healthcare policies, free health policies, free education policies without having an economic growth and taxes to pay for them. They must have that at all costs, whether by destroying the environment,

at the cost of polluting the air and river system, etc. So, the GNH then tempers them, so that they have a holistic development approach.

To follow the middle path and for the perfect balance between growth and development, the Bhutanese government takes the GNH concept very seriously in the public policymaking process because the GNH is not a public policy but it is at the core of the public policymaking process. It forms the main values and main principles of framing the development plans and policies which is visible in every Five Year Plan like it is visible in the 9th, 10th, and 11th as well as the forthcoming 12th Five Year Plan. The GNH is a centre point in all Five Year Plans which occupies. Any issue to be formulated into public policies in Bhutan can originate from the *Lhengye Zhungtshog* (Cabinet), the various sectors and the Gross National Happiness Commission. The GNHC has policy screening tools or the GNHSTs. If there are any public policies, they must meet the fitness test of that tool. So they have a framework in which all policies are assets. Like in the mining policy, the government has been working on this for 6 or 7 years but it is still not been passed due to the concern or impact on the local people, environment, culture and growth.

So, for lawmaking, the Bhutanese have a Parliament and take lawmaking very seriously. In the public policymaking process and implementation process, they will always focus on serving society, serving community and serving people and to make the Bhutanese life better, which is also the goal of lawmaking in Bhutan.

But before moving further and go into the deep study, we just need a brief knowledge about the origin of happiness and what is the exact meaning and purpose of happiness and how this happiness concept turn into the GNH approach and how later it become the important core of public policymaking process and what are the functions of the Gross National Happiness Commission. The brief introduction of happiness gives the context for the application of happiness in public policy.

The Approach to Happiness in Buddhism

The policy makers and Gross National Happiness put more emphasis on “Happiness”. The concept of happiness originated from Buddhism that gives two meanings for happiness. One is described in conditions of our relation to a thing, while the other is described in conditions of our relation with the state of mind of the sentiment itself.

It initially describes happiness as understanding, somewhat in a pleasing way, based on the thinking that it is of advantage to us, whether or not it really is. It further describes happiness as that sentiment which, when ended, we hope to meet once more. Sorrow is that sentiment which, when emerges, we hope to be parted from. While a neutral sentiment is that sentiment which, when it starts or ends, we have neither of the two wishes.

The two meanings are connected; when we understand somewhat in a fulfilling way, the method we use to understand the thing accurately “comes to our mind” (*yid-du 'ong-ba*, Skt. *manapa*) in a pleasing way. We agree to the thing and it remains happily as the thing of our concentration. This entails that we believe our understanding of the thing is of advantage to us: it makes us pleased; it implies good quality. Because of that, we wish for the advantage from this understanding to maintain it and, if it finished, we would wish for it to come back. In general, we would state that we like the thing and the understanding of it.

Though the idea of happiness was really initiated in Buddhism but the Indian epic Mahabharata also talks about happiness. This epic tells that in every phase of life we face happiness (*sukha*) and sufferings (*dukha*) and both are produced by our own external and within conditions and human being having both the things—happiness and suffering. But we should never allow these two things to make us paralyzed because happiness and suffering are part of our lifecycle. It also explains that by the understanding the suffering of mind is to abolish them. On this earth there are endless places of terror and stress but these things merely influence the crude person, not the wise one. The wise person quits the nervousness and tension, and becomes free from the pain and suffering because worry and tension are endless—they only increase the burden and pain in life. Thus the greatest gift of God is happiness. By inner happiness, understanding and knowledge, human beings get true happiness and a foolish person always feels sad because he never gets inner happiness and knowledge. Therefore, the epic of Mahabharata also emphasises the importance of happiness in life (Gregoire 2014).

The Bhutanese culture also follows the same path of happiness where the policymaker’s main concern is for the happiness and well-being of the people which is actually the ultimate objective of all policies. The above objective is also

mentioned in Desi Sherab Wangchuk's biography. He was a civilian ruler of Bhutan who quotes the intention of the founder of Bhutan in the legal code of 1729. This legal code of 1729 is considered as short constitution of medieval Bhutan (Karam 2005). In this legal code it is clearly mentioned that if the administration cannot fulfil the requirements of happiness of the individuals, then there is no use for that administration to survive.

The approach of happiness in Bhutan is as old as the existence of Buddhism in Bhutan. The history of this phase started from 1616 to 1651 when Bhutan was under one governmental authority under the direction of Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, who found a theocratic double structure of administration recognized as the *Chhyosi Nyidhen* (Dorji 1997; Gulati, 2003; Rose 1977; Sinha 2001). At the time, Mahayana Buddhism was established as the state religion in Bhutan; Bhutan was governed by two types of governments—one was governed by the secular ruler or King who dealt with the secular matters of the state, and the second one was governed by the spiritual leader who dealt with the spiritual matters (Dubey 1996).

Image 4: Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal



Source: Teacher: Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal⁵

⁵ Teacher Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, URL:
<http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=1138>.

During this era, the major foundation of a lawful system in Bhutan was the Mahayana Buddhism which is itself based on lawful system. After he died in 1652, the Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal's first Legal Lawful Code was decided and agreed upon and the best part is that this code also personified in itself the Mahayana Buddhism's lawful system. This code of 1652 was based on the teachings of Buddhism. It addressed the guiding principles for both the secular and the temporal laws. These laws later on became part of the famous "*Lhachoe Gyewa Chu*" and of "*Michoe Tsangma Chandru*" (Aris 2009) which define the 16 virtuous acts.

The famous "*Lhachoe Gyewa Chu*" that has Ten Pious Acts talks about a ban on the following"

- direct or indirect involvement in activities like murder, stealing, etc.
- bad sexual actions,
- deceitfulness,
- speaking unkindly,
- being offensive,
- worthless nonsensical talk,
- craving,
- meanness, and
- keeping wrong visions.

"*Michoe Tsangma Chandru*" defines the 16 virtuous acts as follows:

- no killing,
- no stealing,
- no holding wrong views;
- follow the wishes of parents;
- being respectful to elders,
- being respectful to learned persons and leaders;
- not thinking bad towards family or friends;

- helping neighbours;
- being honest;
- following good examples;
- not being greedy or selfish;
- not inspiring evil thoughts in others;
- repaying debts in time;
- not cheating;
- treating the rich same as you would treat others and
- not losing patience/not being short-tempered.

The code of 1652 has another key principal concept that there can be no individual/collective universal happiness if there is no application of ethical and legal principles of “right and wrong” (Aris 1994; 2009).

To get the individual universal happiness and teachings of Buddhism, the 1652 code was modified and in modification fairly prolonged the Bhutanese lawful code of 1729 (Aris 1994; 1979). For example, in the preface of the 1729 code, the following discourse appears:

“In accordance with these words, in general, the happiness of all beings that are as limitless as the sky’s extent depends on those very places where The Buddha’s teachings have spread. In particular, for us of the age of decline, it is the teachings of the *Sakaya* king or the laws established by that same teacher. In that regard, the precious doctrines known as the *Sravaka discipline*, the *Bodhisattva discipline* and the *Sugata discipline* have been upheld, guarded and diffused; externally, the state laws of proper conduct, internally the Sangha which systemizes the explanation and realization [of the teachings] and, secretly, the ocean of oath-bound divinities with real and magical powers have progressively protected and guarded them” (Aris 1994).

This announcement in the 1729 code represented a foundation for the explanation and legality to be carried on in Bhutan. In line was a new condition in the 1729 Lawful Code that affirmed: “If the government cannot create happiness for its people, there is no purpose for the Government to exist.” The 1729 code specified that the pleasure of all is connected by the knowledge of Mahayana Buddhism and The Buddha, and this was turned into an executive country rule in Bhutan to encourage this pleasure. It also

offered for the corrections to the regulations under a religious theocracy (Aris 1979, 1994). The formation of human beings' activities as being for a joint pleasure as a country policy inside the *Chhoysi Nyidhen* structure also visibly exemplify that Bhutan has a extended custom of encouraging combined pleasure, starting well prior to the contemporary Gross National Happiness being affirmed as a country policy in 1792.

Gross National Happiness

With the establishment of the happiness as per Mahayana Buddhism and first legal code of 1652, another milestone to provide happiness to the people was the contemporary organization of GNH which was started in 1972 by the Fourth King. He proclaimed that GNH rather than the GNP must be the state's most important standard for calculating development. He thought that if at the closing stage of the five-year plan age, our individuals are not happier than they were earlier, than our strategies have unsuccessful (PPD GNHC, 2014). The Fourth King realized that in the changing scenario the transformation to modernization and worldwide capitalism was predictable, but at the same time, he wanted this change with the past foundations and doctrine of Bhutan's traditional culture and polity because the developmental approach of Bhutan has been based and directed by the GNH philosophy since the 1970s.

In Bhutan the GNH and its implementation is a broader idea and more thoughtful than expressed by the present sets of policy.

In Bhutan for the social and economic transformation, the GNH is an agenda to eliminate barriers where happiness has to be focal point in the content and nature of public policies. It is necessary that the institutional activities of a society reflect this value if the endorsement of happiness is the main reason of a GNH condition and its existence. Yet, it is very challenging to even contemplate what a GNH state should be like. "The stability of GNH is not only guaranteed in the present time but it is also implemented with the changing governments. The Constitution provides the legal framework for a democratic political system": (PPD GNHC, 2014) Article 9: "The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of GNH."

Article 11.2: “The end result of all development activities should be the attainment of GNH.”

So, any government in its public policies would be directed through the constitution, therefore certifying the constancy of passage along the GNH path. The Bhutanese believe that the happiness depends upon good actions or good karma. Therefore the four poles of GNH were introduced as a country’s move towards getting happiness. This move not merely included material necessities for human desires but pursues the promotion of an extensive psychological satisfaction.

This strategy presumes that contentment is a mutual wish of all individuals. In the end, the idea of GNH is copied from the knowledge of The Buddha. Included into the GNH is the essential faith that advertises that the beliefs personified in the GDP will not give “deep ethics and deep happiness”. Liberty and contentment happen through the annihilation of illusions, desires and violence. According to the GNH, all life forms, and the surroundings, are to be appreciated and privileged.

The Mahayana Buddhist direction of GNH is moreover observed as a significant move for every individual to get ‘enlightenment’. As Thinley mentioned in 1998:

“This follows from an original meaning of development in Bhutanese context in which development meant enlightenment of the individual. I hasten to add that enlightenment is not solely an object of religious activity. Enlightenment is blossoming of happiness. It is made more probable by consciously creating a harmonious psychological, social, and economic environment.

GNH also holistically meshes outer material conditions with inner contentment. For instance, inner activities would include assisting all sentient beings in achieving awakening to Enlightenment, or otherwise aiding others. Outer activities would include promoting basic human needs through good governance, suitable health care for all, equitable economic development, and environmental protection” (Thinley 1999: 15).

As mentioned by the Royal Government of Bhutan’s Planning Commission Secretariat in 2000:

“Gross National Happiness discards the idea that there is a straight and unmistakable connection among prosperity and contentment.

Through this holistic approach to instituting a GNH state, Bhutan seeks to establish collective happiness in a caring society while mitigating the conflict between modernization and capitalism with traditional cultural and Mahayana Buddhist religious values” (RGoB 2000: 76).

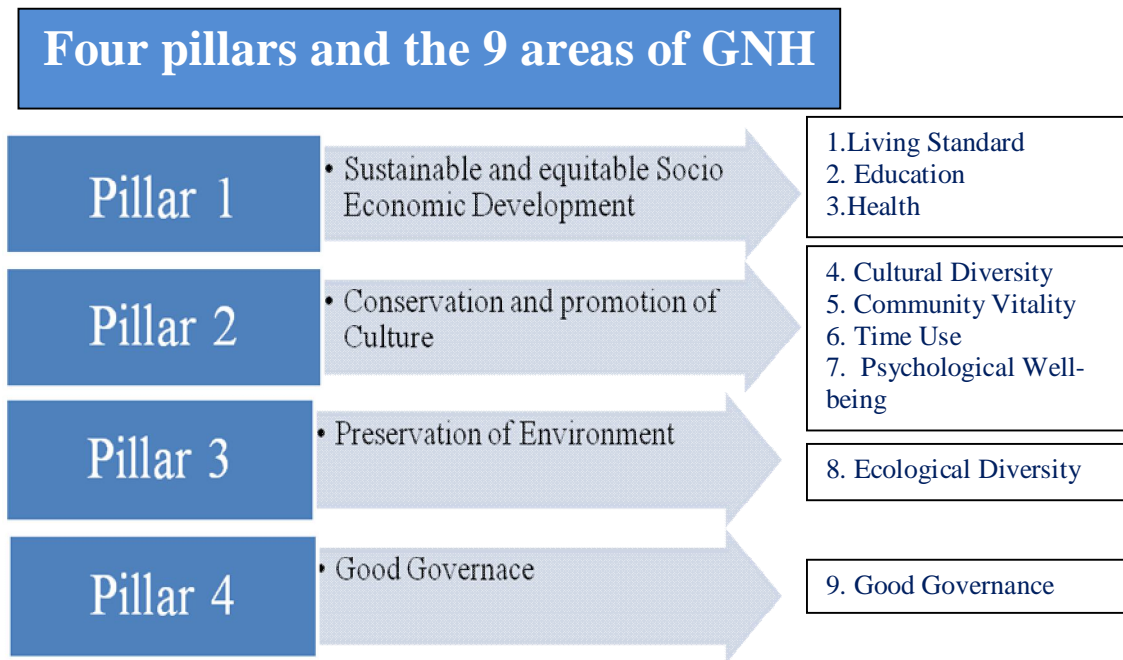
Implementing Gross National Happiness in Public Policies

Bhutan considers that the holistic growth of the people and society can be attained merely by a sustainable equilibrium among the economic, social, emotional, religious and cultural desires of the individuals. Growth plans standing on GNH principles are therefore not limited to the present people of any given society; it comprises future generations and other societies, definitely every living being. Therefore the GNH principles are reflected in the policymaking process of Bhutan. The main focus point of the policymakers is to make policies which will fulfil the requirement of the Buddhist concepts as well the fact that the country's current pursuit of development should not cause misery to the future generations, other societies, or to other sentient beings. This concept or approach is not an intellectual construct detached from practical experience, but rather the translation of a cultural and social consciousness into development priorities (Basu 1996). Therefore the main concern of the policymakers is to try to make and implement policies which are framed within the framework of the GNH concept.

So, the adoption of the GNH into policy is the major priority of the government because the ultimate goal of the Bhutanese government is provide happiness to the people. In Bhutan, happiness has been the basis for governance and guides the promulgation of policies and creation of programmes. It provides a grid with a synopsis of every policy promulgated by the Bhutanese government under the auspices of the GNH.

GNH has been Bhutan's overarching growth viewpoint that has directed the state's growth policies and plans. Directed by this policy, the state has completed a quick growth in a small period of time; attainments have come with an extremely negligible influence on its culture and surroundings. The government of Bhutan has applied these plans by a strict devotion to the four pillars of GNH which comprises equitable and sustainable socio-economic growth; conservation and encouragement of its culture; preservation of atmosphere and encouragement of good governance. They are briefly mentioned below.

Figure 1: Four pillars of GNH and 9 areas of GNH



Source: Compiled by the author based on available information

Equitable and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development

The GNH highlights the significance of a sustainable and fair growth. The primary purpose of this pillar is sustainable growth, with a prime objective of reducing poverty. A review of the poverty situation provides an overview of the situation, plans, programmes and strategies of the government to make under this first pillar of GNH. There has been decline in the income-poverty incidence as per the Poverty Analysis Report of 2012. It has come down from 31.7 to 12 per cent in the period from 2003 to 2012. This is way more than the 10th Plan target of reducing poverty to sub-15 per cent level. There has been a reduction in the inequalities in income with the Gini-coefficient declining from 0.416 to 0.36 over the same time period i.e. from 2003 to 2012 (National Statistic Bureau 2012: 20).

In addition to the broad based national socio-economic development programmes, there are various programmes such as the Rural Economy Advancement Programme (REAP) and the National Rehabilitation Programme (NRP) that are all working in the direction of decreasing poverty.

There has been considerable improvement in the direction of poverty reduction as planned due to the hard work done towards successful execution of these programmes. But still, even after making so much progress in the direction of reducing poverty and reducing the income inequalities, significant challenges still remain. It can be rightly said that poverty is more prevalent now, and mainly in the rural areas. Within more than half of the 20 Dzongkhags, major regional disparities manage to survive with the highest poverty rate being at 31.9 per cent. As per the Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey of 2010, the multi-dimensional poverty prevalence in Bhutan was deemed to be 25.8 per cent only (National Statistic Bureau 2012: 25).

With the above information, the 11th Plan will focus on bringing down the rates of income poverty and multi-dimensional poverty to 5 percent and 10 percent respectively by the year 2018. Bhutan has already surpassed most of the targets set regarding the MGDs (Millennium Development Goals) and the country is on track to achieve the set target in a defined time period. Other than all this, some areas need to be worked upon in the 11th Plan, areas like maternal mortality rates, under-five mortality rates, spread of HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, female enrollment in tertiary education and youth unemployment (RGoB 2013: 66).

There are some social issues where the Bhutanese government has been making and implementing its policies on the social issues such as those related to youth, senior citizens, single parents, orphans, differently-abled persons, domestic violence, crime, etc. the Bhutanese government realized that the lack of a central agency responsible for coordinating efforts poses a major challenge to effectively addressing these emerging issues. The current efforts being undertaken are based on the initiative of various sectors and civil society organizations, associations where many of these organizations are constrained by lack of technical and financial resources (RGoB 2011: 2013). The main objective of the Bhutanese government through its policies is to ensure access to integrated critical service covering health, education, justice and protection, counselling, welfare and rehabilitation. Along with this, the Bhutanese government will make strategies which will include the conducting of detailed studies on emerging social issues to enable appropriate intervention programmes and a strengthened partnership with Civil Society Organizations.

It is clear to the Government that it has to ensure the achievement all the objectives of the 11th Plan in the next 5 years with regard to Self-Reliance, Inclusive Green Socio-Economic Development and 16 National Key Result Areas (NKRAs). Listed below are the 16 NKRAs that are categorized under each of the four pillars of GNH:

- Continuous Economic Growth
- Reduce Poverty and Achieve MDG Plus
- Food Secure and Sustained
- Full Employment

The accomplishment of these four pillars of the NKRAs will be calculated by consequent Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as the annual GDP growth rates, current inflation, reduction in poverty, unemployment, cereal adequacy targets, etc.(RGoB 2013: 76).

Conservation and Encouragement of Culture

To preserve the rich culture and tradition in Bhutan, the government under the present 11th Plan has worked out and prepared different strategies like the plan for promotion and preservation of culture and traditions in all its forms to guide development. Under the pillar of Preservation and Promotion of Culture, there are 2 National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) defined, so as to build up

- Bhutanese Identity, Social Cohesion and Harmony; and
- Indigenous Wisdom, Arts and Crafts Promoted for Sustainable Livelihood.

The matching Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress include

- GNH Index
- Rural households engaged in cultural industries and job creation

The conservation projects have been developed to guide the conservation of heritage sites and many other projects are under implementation. To promote the architectural knowledge among the people, the government has initiated the institutionalization of archaeology with the setting up of an archaeology unit under the Ministry of Home

and Cultural Affairs. The National Library of Bhutan has been provided with the ability, facility and knowhow to archive and prepare microfilms of significant past documents and records. To make stronger the national archive system, they are getting in place a Bill on the Archives of Bhutan. The Bhutan government has also been involved in developing a digital Dzongkha dictionary and a Dzongkha keyboard layout in the smart phones that run on Android to promote the national language among their people. Also, there will be a Dzongkha support in phones that have the Maemo software (RGoB 2011: 80)

Along with this, the Bhutan government knows the importance of film and music industry especially among the youth and the coming generations because this industry is making a significant contribution towards the promotion of national language, culture and traditions and in conveying important social messages on HIV, drugs and youth-related issues. Under the 11th Plan the Bhutanese government is trying to preserve the indigenous crafts through the newly established Agency for Promotion of Indigenous Crafts. In 2011, the government also established a Craft Bazaar, with many stalls in Thimphu to showcase the wide range of authentic Bhutanese arts and crafts. These initiatives started by the government have encouraged and facilitated various rural artisans to present their art on a common platform and to market their product (Ministry of Health and Education 2008). The research and documentation of performing arts (Lozay, Zhungdra, Zhey, Tsangmo and Mask Dance) will be promoted. Along with this, the capacity development programme for research and documentation on conservation and restoration measures will be carried out through various training or workshops. To achieve these strategies, the Bhutanese government is working on many programmes to promote culture like the construction of Pemagatshel, Sarpang, Wangduephodrang Dzongs, expansion of the Tango Buddhist College, promotion and development of the craft industry, DCSI, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Therefore, the Bhutanese government is realizing that the preservation and promotion of culture through many cultural activities, programmes and industries not only promotes tradition but also has the potential to contribute to poverty alleviation by enhancing rural income (Ministry of Health 2012: 45).

Preservation of Environment

The main source of the Bhutanese environmental policy is the Buddhist approach which believes that human beings and nature not only live symbiotically but are inseparable from each other. The Bhutanese government follows the same approach in its policies that Nature is a partner in existence and a provider of sustenance, comfort and beauty. Also, it provides home to millions of life forms that possibly would have been one's parents, friends, and siblings in one's timeless existence. This approach of conservation of environment continues to be the government's priority in every Five Year Plan and policy. Currently, 72.5 per cent of the country's area is under forest cover, 26 per cent of the area has been declared as protected area and the state has decreed to maintain 60 per cent of its area under forest cover for all times to come (Galay 2007: 67).

The main focus of the Five Year Plans of Bhutan is to make a balance between environmental aspirations and the developmental approach because both the environmental conservation and development approach are becoming increasingly challenging due to a persistent human-wildlife conflict and the growing demand for natural resources. Under the 11th Plan the government has given utmost importance to the conservation of the natural environment to maintain a sustainable balance between economic development and environmental conservation.

Due to the growing speed of socio-economic development there are many challenges being faced by the government like water shortage, human-wildlife conflict, electricity shortage, air and water pollution and solid waste management that are major issues for the conservation of environment. Water security is currently the most important challenge facing this sector and has been recognized as one of the 16 National Key result Areas to be achieved over the 11th Plan period. Water has been given special focus in the 11th Plan in view of its importance for the basic survival of all living beings and for hydroelectric projects and agriculture. It has also been one of the major difficulties being faced by the various districts and communities of Bhutan. Therefore, the government has set an ambitious target of ensuring 24-hours water supply to the affected districts and communities. Along with this, the government has to ensure carbon-neutral and climate resilient development programmes which are enhancing sustainable utilization and management of natural resources and water

security in order to come out of this challenge (RGoB 2013: 89).The government has adopted key strategies which are based on the 4 pillars of GNH to achieve these objectives under the 11th Plan which contain:

- implementation of National Strategy and Action Plan for Low Carbon Development 2012
- mainstreaming of Environment across all sectoral and local government programmes and projects
- execute Integrated Water Resource Management Plan and address water security.

Along with these challenges one more challenge being faced for the success of environmental conservation is the human-wildlife conflict which is affecting 20 *Dzongkhags*. Because in some of the *Dzongkhags*, the farmers have stopped cultivating due to the loss of crops to wildlife which will be a big challenge to achieve food security. Therefore, in its policies, the Bhutanese government will be addressing this issue by constructing solar-powered fence which provides electric fence energizers. The government will also continue village-level insurance programmes for livestock and crops from the endowment funds. For the permanent solution, the Ministry will also focus on the study to understand ecology and behavioral aspects of the main conflict species. And according to that, start developing a strategy to address this issue (Gross National Happiness Commission 2008: 56).

Good Governance

The fourth pillar of GNH is Good Governance, as it provides a suitable environment that is important for the rest of the 3 pillars of the GNH. The Bhutanese government under its policies has made good progress in strengthening governance through various programmes and plans of transparency, efficiency and accountability in the political and administrative processes.

In the path of good governance, a democratic process is the first step. The successful holding of the local elections in 2011 and the second Parliamentary elections in 2013 have further strengthened the democratic process. Before the transition towards democracy, some key constitutional bodies such as the Election Commission, Royal Audit Authority and Anti Corruption Commission had been established for a smooth

and proper transition. Also the Supreme Court and Royal Civil Service Commission have been reformed as per the Constitution. Subsequent to the initiation of democracy, laws and regulations have been put in place to assist the institutions in fulfilling their constitutional directives and to ensure sovereignty in the discharge of their responsibilities (Sinpeng 2007: 34).

Further, several schemes have been initiated to strengthen public service management through civil service transformation and by boosting effectiveness in the deliverance of public services. Under the civil service programme, many civil service reforms have been executed over the years. For example; in 2006, to encourage meritocracy and increase effectiveness, transparency, professionalism and accountability in the civil services, the Position Classification System was introduced. Parallel to this, in 2007 an organizational development exercise was conducted to define the most favorable size, structure and competence building required for the civil service. Additionally, to help control and to additionally improve the civil service, the Civil Service Act of 2010 and the revised Civil Service Rules and Regulations of 2012 were introduced. In the 11th Plan, the government will order an all-inclusive evaluation of the civil service to categorize its limitations and the challenges it faces to additionally develop the effectiveness and efficacy of the civil service (Gross National Happiness Commission 2013: 74).

As one of the major significant responsibilities of the government is to give a competent and effective public service to the people, to ensure that this happens, many new policies have been implemented in the last five years, that include

- Government to Citizen Services (G2C) - Started in 2010 to develop effectiveness and transparency in public service delivery through the use of ICT
- Agencification Guidelines - Issued in 2012 to improve performance and public service delivery by an agency/organization and by separating planning and policy making
- Government Performance Management System (GPMS) - Put in place to drive the clarity of objectives of the Ministry/Dzongkhag, to increase accountability and performance and to allow efficient resource distribution/utilization.

The full implementation of the GPMS across all government agencies will be accomplished during the 11th Plan. The system will be used to evaluate the Key Performance Indicator of “average performance rating of government agency targeted at more than 90 per cent” under the National Key Result Area of Improved Public Service Delivery (Gross National Happiness Commission 2014: 10).

There are other challenges apart from the low public service delivery. Those are lack of transparency, financial answerability and corruption. With the increased public involvement in policy making, the starting of parliamentary democracy and the beginning of various democratic processes, both transparency and accountability have been improved further.

The Royal Audit Authority is established as a supreme audit institution and constitutional body to ensure the use of public resources in an economical, efficient and effective way. It is responsible for yearly audits and as an organization it is supposed to function autonomously and reports directly to the Parliament.

The Bhutanese Government has taken numerous practical steps towards reducing corruption, starting in 2005 with the establishment of the Anti Corruption Commission and then by passing the Anti Corruption Act 2011. In 2005, the Bhutanese government become a signatory to the UN Convention against Corruption and put into practice the policy of “Zero Tolerance towards Corruption.” The Bhutanese government put into effect some other rules and regulations to stop corruption including the Gift Rules 2009, the Debarment Rules 2008 and the Asset Declaration Rule 2012. The situation of Bhutan as a country in the field of good governance is much better than many other nations as shown in the table below, owing to the policies and steps that have been taken (Anti Corruption Commission 2009: 53). In the list of being aware about good governance, the position of Bhutan is uppermost in four out of six areas where it has been measured. Bhutan is ranked lower than India and Sri Lanka but ranked higher than Nepal and Pakistan (Brassard 2008) in voice and accountability and regulatory quality.

Table 1: Governance measures in South Asia 2015 (Percentile Rank)

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Bangladesh</i>	<i>Bhutan</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>Maldives</i>	<i>Nepal</i>	<i>Pakistan</i>	<i>Sri Lanka</i>
<i>Voice and Accountability</i>	33.01	43.85	60.11	37.45	32.52	27.10	35.95
<i>Political Stability</i>	10.96	89.03	16.67	60.96	16.20	0.96	46.67
<i>Government Effectiveness</i>	24.05	67.80	56.26	40.88	13.47	27.41	53.38
<i>Regulatory Quality</i>	17.31	27.89	39.91	37.51	25.01	29.33	51.93
<i>Rule of Law</i>	27.41	70.20	55.78	35.11	26.93	23.55	59.63
<i>Manage Corruption</i>	18.28	80.78	44.24	49.53	35.59	23.57	45.20

Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators, Annual Update

The shift of individual measures for Bhutan in the last ten durations is mentioned in Table. “Over the last ten years, the perception-based indicators of governance related to political stability have made significant improvements since the year 2010, from just above 60 percent to the top 95 percent of the participating countries. However, the government’s ranking on its effectiveness has declined during that period, from a high of 78 percent down to 66 percent. Regulatory quality and voice and accountability are the weakest components relative to other indicators. Interestingly, despite the decentralization trend, the latter indicator has not progressed according to expectations. In terms of control of corruption, there has been a sharp improvement in ranking with a turning point in the year 2012” (Kaufmann, D 2007: 15). At last, observations on the rule of law situation in Bhutan have become progressively better since 2003.

Table 2: Good Governance Indicators

<i>Measure</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>
<i>Voice and Accountability</i>	34.60	32.87	39.44	43.20	43.85	46.31
<i>Political Constancy</i>	71.57	71.57	72.52	70.62	87.62	89.03
<i>Government Efficiency</i>	69.86	71.10	69.20	65.41	62.51	67.79
<i>Regulatory Quality</i>	9.10	10.10	12.33	14.70	15.87	27.89
<i>Rule of Law</i>	58.773	59.6	59.63	59.633	67.79	70.20
<i>Manage Corruption</i>	75.24	73.46	78.20	78.20	88.47	80.77

Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators, Annual Update⁶

Along with these steps, the media is also becoming an important tool for the support and encouragement of good governance. In Bhutan, the media is fairly young which includes 12 newspapers, six radio stations, two television news channels and one entertainment channel. In September 2013, in the first session of the second Parliament, the Right to Information Bill was tabled. As a fundamental part of the Bhutan government's efforts is to encourage good governance, empowerment of women, gender equality and the encouragement of civil societies, it is doing so through a variety of programmes such as the National Plan of Action for Gender, 2008-2013; the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, 2013; building capacities for women leaders; the Civil Society Organization Act, 2007 and the establishment of the Civil Society Organizations Authority in 2009 (Civil Society Organisation Authority 2010: 68).

Few major laws/acts such as the Child Care and Protection Act (2011) and the Child Adoption Act of Bhutan (2012) have been established to put in line the framework for child support and protection. There are few more legislations also to tackle important child issues namely the Labour and Employment Act (2007), Marriage Act (1980),

⁶ Worldwide Governance Indicators, Annual Update, URL: <https://knoema.com/WBWGI2014/worldwide-governance-indicators-annual-update?country=1000160-bangladesh>.

Inheritance Act (1980), Citizenship Act of 1985 and Royal Bhutan Police Act of 2009. The Bhutanese government has also conducted a study towards the mapping and evaluation of Child Protection in the country (Gross National Commission 2008: 98). The evaluation clearly signified the current child protection issues, the challenges faced and has also given recommendations which will be addressed in the 11th Plan to ensure a complete and efficient prevention and response to the child protection issues.

Keeping the focus on strengthening and supporting the institutions that are combating corruption, they must be given a high priority as is required for addressing this challenge. The efforts made by the Bhutan government in promoting good governance need to be consistent and relentlessly pursued because it is vital for establishing a vibrant democracy and also because this serves as the fundamental basis for the other three pillars of the GNH.

The Trends of GNH from 1972 to 2014 and Organized Policymaking

In its early phase, the GNH was truly based on the spiritual and non-materialist approach and due to this approach there was a monarchical system where legal matters were dealt with by the King and the religious matters dealt with by the religious leaders. But due to the changing demand of development, the King realized the importance of the changing trends and in 1998 the devolution of power took place where he proposed to put an end to his direct rule of the kingdom and declared that the development and future of Bhutan could not be decided by few group of people. It would be decided by the representatives of the people and that environment will be achieved under the democratic system. That is why Bhutan adopted and became a constitutional democracy in 2008, where all decisions, policies, plans and programmes were to be decided by the political parties, democratic discourse, voting and other institutions and arrangements of democracy (Kumar 2015:101).

By the support of these institutions and organizations, the government has been developing the concept and measurement of GNH in its policies and programmes. The Bhutanese constitution describes the state and GNH and the Bhutanese government aspires to make GNH a serious arbitrator of public policies and plans. Therefore, we see that in the changing trend, the new constitutional structure and decision making process shows that the GNH is getting established and is growing in

Bhutan due to the support of all the institutions. Despite these institutions, in order to function as the head of strategic planning for the country, the GNH Commission was re-created as the socio-economic planning office of the country. Also, project screening tools according to the GNH are being experimented with. These changing developments in GNH more clearly characterize the structure and processes of decision making, typical to a GNH state (Tideman 2004: 10)

What Bhutan expects from all these changes is that GNH will outline the environment of public policies and the legal basis, much more specifically, over the period of time.

The Gross National Happiness Commission

Other than being responsible for these tasks, the GNHC is also the government's Central Planning agency to identify and suggest priorities for the distribution of resources and the setting of targets and it organizes, observes and evaluates various policies and programmes. The Commission is responsible for putting GNH to work by ensuring the inclusion of its focal points into different plans and programmes (PPD, GNHC 2013).

By mainstreaming the GNH components and using the GNH Policy and Project Screening Tools (PPST), the GNHC makes use of the GNH Index, pointers, reports and various examination outcomes to explain and bring awareness to those parts that require being dealt with as a basis to prepare public policies, strategies and plans.

The 'GNH Policy Screening tool' is in expansion under the guidance of *Dasho Karma Ura* and comprises the description, "The purpose of the GNH Policy Lens is to provide a systematic appraisal of the potential effects of proposed policies and actions on the Gross National Happiness of the population, based on expected impacts on key determinants of GNH" (Alkire 2011: 35). In Bhutan, two GNH screening tools are used. The GNH Project Tool is composed of 614 factors in nineteen areas that include the nine domains of GNH as well as agriculture, forestry, national security, youths, and other areas" (Ura et al., 2010). The 'GNH Policy Tool' is composed of 23 factors ranging from equity, security, nature and productivity to health, values and rights.

The 'GNH Policy Screening Tool' is presented in ways for acquiring contentment in the action and to utilize it at several stages when creating a decision regarding a plan,

policy or programme. GNHPST can also be utilized at every stage, starting from a tiny neighbourhood community to a local government. Along with this, it recognizes the matters which are affecting happiness and it increases consciousness regarding the influences of a decision, or assist in creating a decision.

“The ‘policy-screening tool’ gives 26 features in the areas of contentment. Plans or policies are listed through the features that are appropriate. Not every feature in the tool will essentially be appropriate. Decision-makers decide which features to utilize. Decision-makers may build up other features not incorporated in the tool” (Alkire 2011: 55).

For the decision-makers, it is significant that the features are well-informed regarding the subject issue and conditions of a policy or plan. But the similar decision-makers keep various things in mind like according to their experience, they rate and assess the policy or plan and its affects, appreciated by the neighbourhood and are unbiased to the results.

The GNH Commission in Bhutan, previously the Planning Commission, assesses every public policy apart from those through the Royal Command or approved for the period of a national emergency (Royal Government of Bhutan 2008).

“Important decisions, including whether to join the World Trade Organization, are guided by the use of these tools. The policy to join WTO membership did not pass because of the use of the screening tool was the decision to join the World Trade Organization” (GNH Bhutan 2011: 03). They changed their choice after utilizing the ‘screening tool’ (Princeton University 2009: 48-49).

“That decision involved the consideration of 23 factors that included economic security, material well-being, income equality, productivity, participation in government, pollution, biodiversity, protection of individual rights, access to judicial systems, access to skill development and learning, social support, family time, stress, participation in cultural activities, spiritual pursuits, and the importance of compassion, generosity, and gratitude (Trade and Investment Division, 2006). Twelve of the factors scored 1, indicating a known negative impact. Three scored 2, indicating an unknown impact. One scored 3, indicating little or no effect. Seven factors scored 7, indicating a positive impact. This decision came under criticism from those

impatient for speedy economic growth and short-term economic returns from FDI’ (Musikanski 2014: 10).

The GNHC and its equipments guarantees to the GNH idea to be mainstreamed into the policymaking, planning, and implementation procedure. The GNHC also aims at developing an active financial system as the base for an energetic democratic system. The Commission also focused on pleasant-sounding living-in harmony with custom and nature and the Bhutanese people spending in the country’s greatest belongings (Lamsang 2013).

Functions

The GNHC shall be

- The central administration body for organizing and leading policy formulation, and shall guarantee that every policy, notwithstanding of their foundation, are a procedure in line with the attached ‘Protocol for Policy Formulation’.
- Arrange a ‘Strategy for GNH (SGNH)’, a twenty-year viewpoint that will give a long-standing growth structure for the five-year plans and policies till the year 2028. The SGNH will be reorganized at regular intervals to get better its significance in the end.
- Manage and organize the formulation of every strategy, plan and programmes in the state and guarantee that GNH is accepted into the planning, policymaking, and functioning procedure through assessing their significance to the GNH structure.
- Endorse and accept the ‘GNH Index’ as a lead for the formulation of sectoral plans and policies, and the ‘Index’ shall be utilized as a measure to check growth presentation.
- Re-examine sectoral plans and policies and confirm the state arrangement for administration endorsement.
- Re-examine and advise non-plan asset plans counting the extra-large schemes.
- Expand devices for efficient enforcement of plans and decide all the subjects related to the enforcement of plans and policies.

- Make sure a well-organized and sensible allotment of and consumption of limited resources to convey matters regarding a regionally balanced growth and growth by constancy, fairness and social justice.
- Set up consistency of plans to endorse presentation and enlargement, and from side to side, have a usual procedure of plan to re-examine and commission the plan study/revises/review through specialist groups.
- Evaluate the administration on the development and results of progress plans and agendas from time to time.
- Endorse structure for yearly aids for *Dzongkhags* and *Gewogs* by the resource allotment method.
- Re-examine and approve the resource allotments for the ‘Five Year Plans’ of the Central organizations, *Dzongkhags*, and *Gewogs*.
- Approve the yearly and the multi-year progressing strategies and funds.
- Observe the enforcement of growth performances by instituting an effectual observing and announcing system.
- Commission-influenced evaluations and assessments of plans, strategies, and actions to measure the development in the direction of the attainment of state objectives and aims that are expressed in the ‘SGNH’ to be carried out.
- Examine every issue associated with inter-ministerial and inter-organization order and collaboration in the enforcement of plans and polices of the Royal Government to reduce repetition and excess of income.
- Re-examine positions and duties of administration institutes from time to time to make sure that administration institutes counter proactively the shifting opportunities of the Bhutan Government and the individuals.
- Re-examine policies and rules from time to time and modify those that are unrelated and contradictory being completely careful of their aims, expenses and profits.
- Make sure that usual organizational duties and progress plans for the Bhutanese Government are enforced in the mainly well-organized, effectual and useful way.

- Certify that there is equivalence and consistency in the ability and among different offices of the Bhutan Government. Make sure that a well-judged organization of incomplete resources, both monetary and human, remains the most important for a continued competence, transparency and answerability.
- Encourage and preserve pleasant-sounding working through other branches of the Administration and legitimate bodies through effectual coordination and collaboration, and take on challenges given by the *Lhengye Zhungtshog* (Donnelly 2004: 30).

In 2008, the formation of the Gross National Happiness Commission took place. “Its beginnings can be traced back to 1991. At that point, the Policy and Planning Divisions were instituted in a number of government ministries and were created to establish direct linkages between the ministries and the Planning Commission. In January 1999, the Planning Commission was recreated with 17 members appointed for three years, after which 50 per cent of the members would change and 50 percent would remain in continuity. On 28 December 1999, the Prime Minister was appointed as the Chair of the Planning Commission” (Donnelly 2004: 35). “ The purposes of the Planning Commission after 1999 included recommending socio-economic policies, issuing written directives on government development plans and programmes, creating new plans and programmes, conducting periodic assessments of plans and programmes, and ascertaining whether individual plans and programmes were consistent with the broad national policy goals ” (GNHC 2014).

“For the period of the 58th organization gathering of the Bhutan Council of Ministers in February 2000, which symbolizes every government ministries, a suggestion was accepted that the Cabinet Secretary of the Council of Ministers and the leaders of Policy and Planning Divisions of the government organizations should be selected as members of the Planning Commission” (Bates 2009: 10). The Planning Commission was eliminated in 2003, and changed into the Department of Planning inside the Ministry of Finance.

“As an effect of a declaration in 2005, approved by the 84th session of the National Assembly, the Department of Planning was once again re-established as a self-

governing government organization. Members incorporated the prime minister, who was also the chair, and the nine government ministers” (Brassard 2004: 05).

The name of the Planning Commission was changed to the Gross National Happiness Commission in January 2008, pursuant to a decision-making directive of the Prime Minister. “Central and overarching policy objectives of the Gross National Happiness Commission are to guarantee the combined contentment of all and equilibrium with worldly requirements along with religious requirements. Memberships of the Gross National Happiness Commission contains the prime minister as chair, the cabinet secretary as the vice chair, the heads of ten government ministries, the head of the Bhutan National Environment Commission, and the Gross National Happiness Commission Secretary as a member secretary” (Burns 2008:19).

At present, the Gross National Happiness Commission is where numerous significant state government plans and policies are formulated, examined, and started. It is the “apex strategic body” that describes the parliamentary directions and strategy that direct the GNH state pursuant to the Bhutanese Charter.

In other words, the main objective of the Gross National Happiness Commission is to provide an environment to the Bhutanese government and the people as to where they can build up as a GNH state and for the fulfilment of that objective, the GNHC analyses how every administrative plan and policy can give to the reinforcement of nine areas and four pillars of GNH.

The further primary purposes of the commission are to comprise the formulation and acceptance of a GNH Index to give direction and observe the well-organized implementation of every plan and policy connected to growth, contentment and welfare with the performance, preparation and programming study and assessments. Along with this the Gross National Progress Commission is also ordered to expand enforcement plans and policies.

With generating a GNH Index to evaluate and calculate the existing combined contentment of the individuals of Bhutan, the Centre for Bhutan Studies is necessary for supporting the GNHC in this way. Along with this, the GNHC is also working in the budget area through building up, applying and observing the government budget at national, regional and local levels. Throughout the government levels Gross

National Happiness Committees have been also established in every key department and organization to guarantee the standardized influence of the Gross National Happiness Commission's authorization all the way through the government levels (Chophel 2012).

The commission has to make sure the progress of the GNH position and for that it has been executing significant pointers from the four pillars and nine areas for every governmental plans, with an idea to assess whether the plan can move forwards as per the GNH.

Conclusion

In all countries, the happiness concept comes in public policy at early stages and then disappears. Bhutan is the only country which has adopted Gross National Happiness instead of Gross Domestic Product and got the same written into the constitution and the guiding framework. All the policymaking process is based on it, because according to the Bhutanese it is not just an idea or a philosophy but about the way of adopting a better lifestyle. Therefore the Bhutanese government always wants to try making a balance between development and growth without harming or destroying the main traditional and cultural roots of the country.

Chapter: III

Influence of Non-Governmental Institutions on Public Policy Making Process

In the previous chapter it was discussed that the GNH is a component or main base of the government's policies because the GNH approach based on the Bhutanese high values and traditions and without implementing these values, the government could not think about making any public policies in Bhutan. According to the Bhutanese, the GNH approach is Development with Values. The Bhutanese government in its policymaking process always tries to make a bridge between the GNH approach, the fundamental values and kindness, equality, humanity and the necessary pursuit to economic growth. And, there are many governmental and non-governmental institutions which are giving their active participation to implement these high values in public policies. Being a religious country it is important for the Bhutanese government to give equal opportunity to these non-governmental institutions in the public policymaking process. Therefore, in this chapter we will discuss the role of non-governmental institutions in the policymaking process and how these institutions influence Bhutan's policymaking process.

Bhutan is one of the youngest democratic countries in the world. Before the establishment of democracy, Bhutan was governed by the monarchs and non-governmental institutions. The non-governmental institutions which influence the public policymaking process comprise the monarchy, monasteries, civil society, NGOs, etc.

In the Bhutanese political system the traditional monarchy is described as the main characteristic and has become the key factor of the unitary dualism process. The monarch's responsibility and legitimacy mainly relies on his capacity to preserve and make a balance between tradition and modernity, religion and secularism on which the "change in continuity" depends (Mathou, 1999; Rose, 1977).

Due to the great faith of Bhutanese in the monarchy, it is easy for the monarchs to manage and administer Bhutan (Francoise 1998). Everyone follows the rule of the King which is visible in the country's *Driglam Namzha*. *Driglam Namzha* is a manner

of preservation of Bhutanese tradition and culture which includes sets of etiquette and manner of the Bhutanese cultural and traditional values as how to eat, talk, what to wear and at the time of meeting any government officials and officials and clergy, just to bow down to show their respect to them. This manner is followed by the Bhutanese people not forcefully but on their own wish or due to the faith in their King and the Bhutanese values and traditions. *Driglam Namzha* is not only followed by the Bhutanese people but this manner is also followed by the King because he is also the religious supporter and protector of the culture and traditional values. Although secular, the Bhutanese monarch uses various religious symbols. The *Druk Gyalpo* is “The Precious Master of Power and King of *Drukgyul* (Aris 2009: 101). Officially, he is addressed with the honorific term for foot, *Zhab*. In Front of the Feet—a religious word—is also established in word *Zhabdrung*. The *Druk Gyalpo* occupies the “golden throne”. The High Lamas are connected with two qualities. The crown holds the head of a raven.⁷ The code of etiquette or *Driglam Namzha* is observed not merely in the presence of the King but in all ritual events which comprise all official behaviours and it has the effect of the Buddhist principles. “When enthroned, the King is vested with his formal powers during a ceremony held in the *dzong* of Punakha where he “presents a ceremonial white scarf, symbolizing the purity of his intentions, to a scroll-painting of the protective deity of the realm, in the presence of the embalmed remains of the founding *Zhabdrung*. In return, he receives a scarf of office as if from the very hands of the country’s first unifier. The *Druk Gyalpo* helped the *dharma* and the *Sangha*. The Mahayana shape of the Bodhisattva who declines nirvana to improve the pains of the humankind is seen by Bhutanese as comparable to their King” (Aris 1994: 76).

All these considerable efforts have been done by the King to increase the understanding and knowledge among the people and spread the traditions among the youth to preserve the cultural values and to take the younger generation away from the influence of the Western world.

Having the faith and trust in their King, the democratization process happened peacefully in Bhutan. Bhutan is unique example of this process which defies the conventional theory of transition to democracy. The typical reasons such as forces of

⁷ Yeshe Gönpo (Sk. Mahakala), the protector-deity of the Drukpa tradition appeared as a raven to the *Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel*, and guided him to Bhutan.

capitalism, the rise of civil society, international pressures, or social unrest that is often accompanied by violence have not driven its transition to democracy. Instead, it was initiated by the King of Bhutan. As mentioned in an article in the Bhutan Times, 2001, it was communicated clearly and repeatedly by His Majesty to all the public of Bhutan time and again that all the power should not be given to a monarch as there is equal possibility of having both a good king and a bad king. He mentioned that he does not believe that in the long run absolute monarchy is a good system for the people wherein the whole system and power is under the control of one individual. His Majesty also suggested that in the long run, for the good of the country, a politically democratic system is more suitable (Bhutan Times 2001). So, according to His Majesty, however much care is taken in the preparation of the royal children for their role in working for the country, there is always a chance that the country may inherit a King that may not be suitable or inclined towards doing what's best for the country and the people. Therefore, the King has perceived a gradual and steady democratization of governance over the years. This is the most compelling explanation for Bhutan's democratic transition process under the rule of monarchs.

The Bhutanese monarchy identifies closely with the religious legacy, and on a rather distinctive mode. "The monarchy symbolized as a secular model and recognized various religious symbols and Bhutanese people have a great faith in their Kings. The King is highly revered by the people, yet he is very close to it and his standing is rather simple and palace ceremony is minimal, although recent trends have introduced more formality" (Michael 1997: 45). The King often tours the country to meet the local communities and organize public debates. Everybody is free to approach the King and present her/his grievance to him and request for it being redressed. Enhancing the *Kidu* (well being of people) dimension, the National Assembly can register a vote of confidence in the King through a mechanism that was introduced again in 1999 as the basis of the election of the monarchy (Mathou 1999:167). The well-being of the individuals nowadays is an essential element of the Bhutanese Constitution and it is conventionally a Majestic privilege. Also, His Majesty has the basic duty to take care of the welfare of his individuals. The past of Bhutan shows that the Kings have always believed and practiced the standard of providing facility to the individuals. The Kings have constantly measured providing for the weak sections of

the community as their blessed responsibility. The crowned head provides for and takes up the individual concern of many children, aged, ill and disabled people.

King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck stated that:

“Throughout my reign, I will never rule you as a King. I will protect you as a parent care for you as a brother and serve you as a son. I shall give you everything and keep nothing; I shall live such a life as a good human being that you may find it worthy to serve as an example for your children; I have no personal goals other than to fulfil your hopes and aspirations. I shall always serve, day and night, in the spirit of kindness, justice and equality” (From His Majesty’s Coronation address to the people of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 6 November 2008).

In 2009, natural tragedies hit the Kingdom of Bhutan. There was overwhelming financial and in-kind response that arrived to the Kidu Fund and the Kidu Foundation was created. The individuals and institutions from inside Bhutan and outside contributed kindly and it got the help from many persons from all corners of the kingdom. Under the Office for the People’s Welfare and Well-being (*Gyalpoi Zimpon*), the Kidu Fund was formed to help the needy people.

The Kidu Foundation is working in the direction of complementing the government attempts in dealing with the significant topics currently being faced by the Bhutan government. The focus is on the areas of teaching, democratic organization, mass media, rule of law, sustainable economic advancement, and conservation of the environmental and cultural tradition of Bhutan.

For various scholarships, the Kidu Foundation mechanism in cooperation with His Majesty’s Secretariat’s the Youth Welfare and Education Office (YWEO). There are areas covered by the Kidu Foundation which also work under the King.

To address new challenges and opportunities, it is necessary to have a vibrant education system focused on building different capabilities for the country. The King’s Scholarship is the essential programme of the Kidu Foundation. It is targeted to attain the objective of creating a vibrant educational structure that helps in creating capabilities in the field of the country’s social, financial, political, technical and authorized areas. In Bhutan it is the main important scholarship. Those who get the scholarship are seen as being leaders among the youth of Bhutan.

His Majesty the King is personally involved in the selection process of the candidates. In the past, for the scholars who have confirmed outstanding educational and leadership merits, the scholarship provides a chance in learning from the top institutions of higher education in the world. The scholarship is for studies in areas that will give direction for searching innovative and impressive results to the pressing difficulties as being experienced by the government.

Due to the shortage of resources the Bhutan government is not able to perform well to completely cover up every need. His Majesty's giving benefits balances the government policies and provides help in such areas.

It is practically not possible through the Office for People's Welfare and Well-being (*Gyalpoi Zimpon*) and for His Majesty to look after each and every gap in the relationship and to recovering the lifestyles of the individuals just through government plans and programmes. It becomes significant to help Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and it is the more so in case of those CSOs that are fixed and need focused skills and abilities. According to the CSO Act of Bhutan, the CSOs are particular organizations which are not a part of any government organization and do not getting any funding from government organizations and do not distribute any income or profits to its members, founders, donors, directors or trustees. The CSOs in their real meaning harmonize the government attempts to stop and improve individual poverty and difficulties and to take care of individual existence and physical conditions and encourage a balanced economic progress. Along with this, the CSOs are also participating in the government programmes and plans to improve livelihoods (Mahajan 1999: 15).

Currently, in Bhutan, there are 28 Civil Society Organizations authorized and working. Most of the 28 CSOs are public benefit organizations and a few are mutual benefit organizations. The Civil Society Organization Secretariat and external funding agencies work as partners of the Kidu Foundation. Till date, has the Kidu Foundation has provided technical and/or financial support either directly or through its partners to the CSOs in the kingdom (Civil Society Organisation Authority Act 2007:12).

Monasteries

Another non-governmental institution that plays an important role in the policymaking process are the monasteries which are governed by the monks and these monks play a typical role in the policymaking process. The main purpose and work of these monasteries are to conserve and protect their religious cultural values and tradition among the Bhutanese. And without ignoring the participation of these monasteries, the government will not make and implement any policies which are related to religious matters and traditions. Being a religious country where religion plays a significant role in Bhutanese life, each important event in the existence of the average Bhutanese is spent with religious meaning and performing a significant position in the social, political, economic and cultural development of the country. The religious events and activities are done by these monasteries which are imparting religious knowledge to the Bhutanese (Tideman 2001: 19). The monks visit families to perform rites associated with varied occasions such as birth, wedding, illness, death, construction of houses, sanctification rituals, promotion of administration officials, opening ceremony and other day-to-day celebrations (Phunstsho 2000). The Buddhist monks are mainly concerned with religious matters and even support most of the economic and social reform programmes. The role of monasteries, specifically in education, is very crucial because they play an important role in the education sector.

Until the modest commencement of contemporary education in the 1950s, the education obtainable in Bhutan was in the monastic schools, and over the years the different Lamas and local dignity have recognized their personal dividing areas of education throughout the country. “When the country was unified in the 17th century by *Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal* (1594-1652), he introduced a dual system of governance, where the temporal and religious authority were separated and vested in the *Druk Desi* and *Je Khenpo* respectively. His Holiness the *Je Khenpo* continues to be the religious head and is the Chairman of A Council of Ecclesiastic Affairs (*Dratshang Lhentshog*) and administers the monastic institutions that are supported by the Royal Government” (Phunstsho 2013: 156).).

Image 5: *Je Khenpo* and his students



Source: Clicked by the author during field visit to Bhutan

Table 3: Figure of differences between conventional and contemporary teaching methods in Bhutan

	Conventional teaching method	Contemporary teaching
Objective	Largely introvert spiritual; Training culminating in omniscience	Largely extrovert skills for human development
Contents	Religious or religious-oriented, liberal	Secular and scientific; technical
Method	Mostly passive reception; static; conservative	Method of teaching based on creativity, progressive
Viewpoint	Faith on religious education and faith, importance	Focus on facts, rational approach for acquiring knowledge and skills
Medium of Language	Medium of language Chokey/ Dzongkha	Medium English
Methodology	Buddhist monastic methods of memorization, debates, contemplation, exposition, etc.	Systematic Western educational techniques of critical scrutiny, statistics, experiments, etc.

Source: Convergence of Monastic and Modern Education in Bhutan⁸

“The education system in Bhutan comprises of general education, monastic education, non-formal education and continuing education, vocational training and in-service skill development. General education, the ‘traditional school’ education system is by far the biggest and generally seen by most as the only educational structure. Monastic education is the oldest form of education in Bhutan, and until the introduction of formal school-based education in the late 1950’s, it was the only form of education available in the country which was provided free in the monastic schools” (Phuntsho 2000: 17). Students enroll in monastic education at different stages in their life. The monasteries were the centres of learning. The medium of instruction was the Chokey classical language. The ultimate purpose of monastic education was spiritual progress. Skills learnt and taught in monastic institutions were meant to enhance the spiritual progress of the student (The Annual Drukpa Council, 2008).

⁸ Convergence of Monastic and Modern Education in Bhutan, URL: <http://sites.mii.edu/comparativeeducation/files/2013/01/Convergence-of-monastic-and-modern-education-in-Bhutan.pdf>.

Image 6: School girls



Source: Clicked by the author during field visit to Bhutan

In addition to getting students skilled in numerous ordinary arts, it is necessary to obtain skills in the important division of the teachings which comprises acknowledgement of the ideal human birth, humanity and death, the rule of karma, the sadness of samsara, producing Bodhicitta, ethical principles and values, the training of the mind and several other such forms of training. These religious institutes under the Bhutanese government receive annual budgets for their teaching infrastructure and education programmes whereas the private institutions depend on donations from the supporters of individual Lamas (RGoB 2005). In a modern phase where the Western or materialistic approach has influenced the people a lot, these monasteries try to teach them to re-connect to their culture and tradition. The main reason of preserving these values and culture by the monasteries is that 80 per cent of the Bhutanese people are still dependent on a traditional livelihood based on subsistent agriculture, and if sudden changes or modern values will be adopted, then it will harm those 80 per cent of people (RGoB 2003; 2005). “On the other hand, it has maintained continuity, and even grown in size and number over the years. Due to their holy character and superior learning, the monk’s body commanded great public respect and so great privileges that almost all political power rested with them for over three centuries from 17th to 19th century. All civil responsibilities were the concern of monastic officials” (Dorji 2005: 100). Now, the condition has been totally transformed. The monks hardly ever take part in the administrative issues of the civil institutions, apart from the teaching. Those mainly concerned with religious matters are the local committees, the representatives of the monk body, in the National Assembly and the Royal Advisory Council.

Therefore, the main motive of the monastic education is giving supervision in the direction of liberating oneself from the cyclic way of life/existence. After the monastic education, the guardians have the alternative choosing of what type of learning their children should want. They mostly decide to send them to schools for the benefits of modern schooling. It is important to mention that the opening up towards modern schooling is not completed at the cost of monastic schooling (Ministry of Education 2012: 54).

Along with the preservation of their traditional education system, the monasteries are also concerned for the preservation of cultural identity and religious values. Due to

the changing pattern of the Bhutanese lifestyle or society, it has become a major preoccupation for the monastic establishment. Apart from these monasteries, the code of etiquette which was introduced in 1989 also emphasised the preservation of culture and tradition. At the beginning of 1970s, the monastic institution had applied for the rule that while on duty the public bureaucrats should be dressed in the conventional Bhutanese uniform. The code of etiquette emphasised the similar old demand (Leo 1977: 97). As part of conservation of the cultural tradition, public policy focuses the function and position of religious conviction. In 1984, headed by the *Je Khenpo*, a Council of Ecclesiastic Affairs (*Dratshang Lhentshog*) was formed. In order to make sure that the teachings of the Dharma will carry on and prosper in the execution of the instructions of the King and the requirements of the individuals, the present religious institutes are being developed and new religious institutes are being set up (Kuensel 1999). The government is working to build the monastic body and to regulate its functioning with the shifting period. The King fairly frequently holds conversations with the *Je Khenpo* and other higher monks. His Majesty advises them that they should enthusiastically connect with the people for the benefits of communal mechanism and in recovering the existence of the individuals rather than remaining surrounded by the four bends of the *Dzongs*. The Monastic Body has commenced hard work like contributing in international conferences, seminars and programmes which are related to religion and so on.

So far, four workshops have been held within the country, on religion and health. These have been held with the financial assistance of the UNICEF and through the attachment of the monks and other rural community religious powers. The motive of organizing these workshops was to build a platform where all individuals belonging to different religion groups come together with representatives from the national health facilities and talk about the significance of their tradition and culture in Bhutan and talk about the communal matters with a focal point on physical condition and religious issues. More such workshops are expected soon in other districts. The communal matters associated to child physical condition like diarrhoea and immunization diseases, cleanliness and hygiene for rural groups were once considered. The religious groups are the most significant groups in Bhutan that control the individual's approaches and behaviour connected to physical condition and welfare. The workshops aim at discovering how the religious organizations can

give nonstop and indirect help to the present national health facilities in Bhutan (McDonald 2003: 16).

In public life the monks are confident of performing in a better position. In order to utilize their effect in the Bhutanese society to encourage health or ecological awareness, several attempts have been made to make their understanding of progressive matters better. In the presence of many believers, spiritual ceremonies of collective blessings and wishes (*Wang-lung-thri*) are approved all over the country by the *Je Khenpo*, to advise the monks to turn into the role models for the society (Michale 1994: 28).

Image 7: National Tradition Medicine Hospital



Source: Clicked by the author during field visit to Bhutan

“In order to stop the decline of religious values among the young generation and to address the current shortage of monks, instructions have been given to increase their number” (Kuensel 1999). To announce the significance of spiritual principles and rites for the founding fathers of Bhutan, frequently rituals with a top level of symbolism are measured as correct events. As exposed through the current improvement of contributions, by adapting several of its conventional systems, the *Dratshang* carries its efforts for the modernisation procedure.

Apart from education, cultural identity, and religious values, monasteries also play a vital role in the health sector too because the traditional medicine system is popular in Bhutan and all practices of traditional medicine are done by monks and old people. Monks are giving meditation practices to people which help in depression, and give a positive effect to curing addiction disorders. “If monastic institutions and monks help, Bhutan can propagate this practice so that every Bhutanese will have not only an opportunity to practice meditation and achieve lasting peace and happiness in their own lives – but also, potentially, an opportunity to achieve the greatest goal of all, freedom from rebirth. Not only that, they can be instrumental in spreading the word of the Buddha and finding a balance between material desires and inner peace in this increasingly globalized and materialistic world” (Ministry of Health 2000; 2008).

Civil Society

In the list of non-governmental institutions, the civil society holds its own importance and plays an important role in the policymaking process of Bhutan. The role and importance of civil societies differs from country to country. In the case of the developing countries, the civil society actively has been participating in the democratization procedure. But it has different roles from observing to capacity building and from advocacy to disciplinary. Therefore, the scope and definition of civil society can vary from country to country. Bhutan has its own definition of civil society. As per the Civil Society Organization Act of Bhutan, the Civil Society Organizations in Bhutan consist of non-profitable organizations, associations and communities that are working for the welfare and development of people and are not a part of the government and do not distribute any income or profits to their members, founders, donors or trustees. The composition of the civil society in Bhutan has

excluded trade unions, cooperatives and religious organizations from the domain of the civil society.

The CSOs do not include trade unions, political parties, cooperatives and religious organizations which are devoted primarily to religious worship. “It is interesting to know that unlike some other countries of the world, Bhutan excludes trade unions, cooperatives and religious organizations from the domain of civil society. However, Bhutan lacked the growth of civil society organizations (CSO) until the enactment of the Civil Society Organizations Act of Bhutan, 2007 and subsequent establishment of the Civil Society Organizations Authority in March 2009” (Civil Society Organization Authority Act of Bhutan 2007; 2010).

Before the establishment of civil society in Bhutan there were Bhutanese communities which usually consisted of a village or a group of households. The culture and history of civil society in Bhutan has emerged quite lately but there has always been the sacred institution of *Kidu* from the time of the first monarch itself which was much similar to the civil society. Such institutions have always benefited and will continue to benefit vulnerable citizens of the country. The first CSO in Bhutan was established in 1987 by the name of Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN), to support environmental conservation in the country. It was registered under the Companies Act of Bhutan until the formation of the Civil Society Organisation Authority (CSOA) in 2009. With the establishment of the CSOA as an umbrella authority in the country, healthy civil society organisations started to emerge. Today, the country has about 33 registered CSOs mostly under royal patronage and more are expected to come up over time (Civil Society Organization Authority Act of Bhutan 2007; 2010). Its initial functions range from environmental protection to education, capacity building, agricultural development, rural empowerment, media development and research.

But, gradually, as Bhutan adopted a Parliamentary Government, it realized the need for civil society as part of a changing trend for the betterment of the Bhutanese in various fields. The government also knew that there is a gap between the government and citizens where civil society organizations become the bridge. The Bhutanese government is not able to deliver and provide all the services to the citizens in the correct manner whereas civil society organizations do those services and deliveries more effectively (Civil Society Organisation Authority Act of Bhutan 2007: 80). The

measures taken by the Bhutanese government became the milestone for the betterment for the citizens because gradually the civil society organizations filled the gap that existed between the government and the people and have been able to empower people on various aspects (Civil Society Organisation Authority Act of Bhutan 2010: 78).

Now in Bhutan, where both the government and civil society are said to be evolving, both can support and promote one another. It is apparent that the relationship between the government and civil society is quite mutual and one needs the help of another. Without an active civil society, the journey of development of Bhutan is incomplete and the government will not be able to implement the better public policies for the citizens. Therefore for a vibrant democracy to flourish, the civil society and government require each other's cooperation.

In recent times, some CSOs have increasingly provided for developmental assistance in different parts of Bhutan and have become important actors for the delivery of social services such as health and education as a complement to government action where the government's presence is quite weak (Helliwell et al., 2013: 45 2011). Along with these services, in the structure of various group associations and institutions, the civil society shapes an essential element of conventional Bhutanese society which participates in a significant position in the public policymaking procedure. It gives the individuals a chance to get involved in the decision-making procedure for different programmes and plans that are connected to and have a result on in their daily lives. Knowledgeable individuals have shaped several innovative organizations. For the most part of the current or present time, the organizations are relief-based. A few of them perform as a connection among the administration and the individuals (Jayal 2001; Mahajan 1999). For example, there are some contemporary associations like the National Women's Association of Bhutan which are actively working for gender equality and providing skills to women to earn income and be independent. Working for the welfare and development of their people are the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Associations of Bhutanese Tour Operators and the Contractors Association of Bhutan Associations. They negotiate issues of interest with the business communities in Bhutan, which will provide long term benefits to the Bhutanese business (Rudolph 2000:81).

Apart from these activities, the civil society has also engaged in the economic and environmental conservation and cultural preservation programmes of the country. Many communities that are engaging in these activities have on their own built farms and feeder infrastructure. This has given them access to markets and other essential facilities such as education and health which was quite difficult in a remote and mountainous country like Bhutan. Tackling another major problem in Bhutan, namely the utilization of resources, these communities also rely on the traditional way of working for the allocation and management of communal pastures and utilization of water to make sure that a well-organized and balanced use of accessible resources is made. Therefore these activities are of paramount importance regarding the government's environmental policy. The civil society also plays a major role in Bhutan's rich cultural heritage by providing help in the maintenance of monasteries and their day-to-day activities (Jayal 2001; Mahajan 1999).

The major contribution to be noted is that democracy and good governance cannot be in existence without the support of civil society in Bhutan. Now that Bhutan has welcomed a parliamentary democratic system, the Civil Society Organizations will have significant functions. These Civil Society Organisations should produce a knowledgeable society full of educated people that holds the administration and private agencies as responsible and also effectively shows participation in the development, collaborative projects and public policies. Therefore, civil society organizations in Bhutan are more or less directly or indirectly linked to most of these core functions and roles of democracy. "Going by this we can find almost all the civil society organizations in Bhutan have specific objective and job for themselves. Citizens' participation in democracy would mean public initiative in government policy-making and make elected officials and civil servants accountable" (John 2009: 03). A civil society composed of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), helps to create an atmosphere of consensus and dialogue, thus consolidating democracy. Also, it tries to bridge the gap between the government and the citizens for a better bargain. Citizen empowerment would mean that the citizens are more aware of their roles and responsibilities and are more involved in public policymaking (Kinley 2013). This would in effect make the government more accountable to the very same citizens who elected it.

Despite their role in the public policymaking process, civil society organisations also work as think tanks, advocate groups and local associations which can contribute in terms of providing knowledge of localities and population in the consideration for policy. Also, equally important is their functions such as gathering information, conducting research, formulating strategies and debating with many others to come up with opportunities and challenges (Lars 2010; Nan 2011). Every specific focus of CSOs will in effect help to strengthen democracy in Bhutan by various means such as poverty alleviation, citizen empowerment, education, employment, youth development, environmental conservation, culture preservation, entrepreneurship development, research and development etc.

To strength democracy in Bhutan, a free and vigorous press is equally important for the civil society. Without independent and bias-free media, the civil society organisations may not achieve their objective. “Civil society organisations in developed countries exercise their informative and representative functions to a large extent through mass media such as television, the internet, and press. Bhutan as an evolving democracy, needs to learn from them in order to harness the full benefit of CSOs” (Civil Society Organization Authority Act of Bhutan 2007; 2010).

In the social context, Bhutan is facing many problems and these associations play a positive role in this regard like shaping an associational life based on shared values, trust and reciprocity that can foster among the Bhutanese people a sense of common good and bind them together to address the common socio-economic problems. The social capital also holds an important role in Bhutanese society. “Social capital in the form of community leadership and trust and cooperation among the people plays an important role in Bhutanese society. It has not only enabled successful implementation of projects and programmes initiated by the communities themselves; it has also enabled the cost effective implementation of several government-funded projects and programmes in many parts of the country”.⁹

Therefore, the Bhutanese government has tried to share responsibility with the civil society organizations and to establish a vibrant civil society in Bhutan. They both are working to take initiatives to care for and support their fellow citizens as well as all living beings for the welfare and development programmes. The Bhutanese

⁹ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

government has also made a policy of preserving the rich culture and tradition which creates an environment for the survival of diversity among both the traditional community organizations and contemporary organizations in Bhutan. “The rules and the forms of such associations are preserved. The diversity and richness of such local institutions are often fed into national policy. The government’s policy of instituting water user associations both for drinking and irrigation schemes in different parts of the country has been drawn from the example of traditional water users’ associations”(Lars 2010: 02). Today, there are more than four hundred users’ associations for irrigation schemes in different parts of the country (Kinley 2013).

Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

Apart from the civil society, NGOs are also actively working for the welfare of Bhutan. There are various NGOs working in Bhutan in different socio-economic sectors like health, education, women’s’ empowerment, environmental protection, protection of child welfare and their rights etc.

Following is the brief discussion of the NGOs which are actively working in Bhutan:

Tarayana Foundation

It is a non-benefit association that works in the direction of enriching and improving the lives of helpless individuals and groups in Bhutan. Along with the Royal Government of Bhutan, the Tarayana Foundation is preoccupied with the rural prosperity of the Bhutanese which is mentioned in the legal seminal document, “Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness”. At the initial stage, the main objective of the President and founder of the Tarayana Foundation was to establish a foundation which gives assistance to the vulnerable communities and individuals of Bhutan. Bhutan is a mountainous country where it is not possible to provide all facilities to all; there are some remote communities which are completely lacking in basic facilities. Therefore it became apparent for the Foundation to mitigate those basic problems which are being faced by the most vulnerable groups of Bhutan.¹⁰

¹⁰ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

Therefore, to deal with problems of vulnerable groups and poor communities, the Tarayana Foundation has worked on particular activities which will generate income for their survival and then they will not dependent on others and become self-reliant. These activities promote arts and craft work which will facilitate the sale of products for their income. The Tarayana Foundation realised that this motivational change come from these communities itself and for that it focused on and organized capacity-building programmes and socio-economic and development skills activities. The Foundation also works for the children of the vulnerable groups and poor families by providing them with education and encouraging the poor families to take more and more part in the skill activity programmes at the local level. It also put more emphasis on the establishment of community enterprises and microfinance to these vulnerable and poor communities and instils the values of compassionate volunteerism in the Bhutanese Youth and helps the patients access medical treatment and support.¹¹

Programmes and Projects conducted by the Tarayana Foundation

1) Advancement and Endorsement of Rural Artisan Crafts and Micro-Enterprises

This Foundation has constructed community employment huts so that it could work among the vulnerable communities. This is to provide ordinary services for a group of people to work mutually with their techniques and to also be trained in innovative talents and carry out training. These employment huts are also utilized as a meeting location and place for limited gathering. The group of people holds and uses the employment huts according to the requirements of the entire group of people. The Foundation also gives the solar lightening to the weak group of people that are employed under these huts. This way they can work for only some hours every night, at any time they want to. The additional profit the group of people earns this way improves their living standards.¹²

Along with these worksheds there are some more skill activities that are being taught to these communities since the last eight years which includes various traditional activities like making traditional paper, clay pots, soaps and candles, nettle and cotton

¹¹ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

¹² Ibid.

weaving, refining cane and bamboo crafts and seed production for exchange between villages. These activities not only provide sources of income but make the people self-dependent. Some of the micro-enterprises were also set up based on capacity building. The Foundation also works on health programmes within the premises of these worksheds like most of the advocacy work in promoting personal health and hygiene, nutrition and sanitation, protection of the watershed and local ecosystems, HIV-AIDS awareness and the need for better management and utilization of local resources. Many other stakeholders also use the worksheds to conduct their meetings and training.¹³

2) Housing Improvement and Solar Electrification Programme: In South-West Bhutan, the *Lhop* community is the most vulnerable community among all communities despite the efforts made by the Bhutanese government. From the very olden times the survival of the Lhops has depended on raising goats and shifting cultivation. But in recent years, both these activities of their livelihood have been restricted by the Bhutanese government with the enforcement of environmental policies. Due to these policies, the *Lhop* community lacks even basic shelter, as their dwellings are nothing more than thatched huts put up on bamboo stilts. The present shelters in use have higher associated health hazards brought on by exposure to the elements. Sanitation and hygiene are also of equal concern that needs to be addressed. “To deal with this problem the Foundation started a project which was supported by Save the Children Fund- USA (Bhutan) who constructed three demonstration houses; one each in the village of Lotokuchu Jigme, Lotokuchu Singye and Lotokuchu Wangchuk. The motive behind the construction of these houses in the village was not only to provide them the shelter but to provide skill learning opportunities for the local population to make it self-dependent. Men and women of these three villages have been trained in masonry and carpentry so that in future they do not have to look outside for skills in building their houses. As of mid-2011, 130 houses have been completed in the *Lhop* villages, including three *Buzip* (Day Care) Centres”.¹⁴

¹³ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Under this project, in Rukha, housing construction has been completed. Along with this construction work, the first two houses were constructed as hands-on training projects for the carpenters and masons using the traditional house-building skills with the Construction Training Centre providing technical support and the UNDP and Helvetas providing financial support. Due to a popular demand for similar opportunities for their communities, the Tarayana Foundation completed a similar rural development programme in the neighbouring villages of Lawa, Lamgang, Samthang, Migtena, Kashichego and Thaphu.

“A total of 47 houses have been completed in Athang Geog. Five of the apprentice carpenters were upgraded to Master carpenters and engaged in housing improvement in these villages. Similar housing improvement components of rural development are being undertaken in Nagor, Dak, Chaibi, Pam, and Silambi in Mongar; Langdurbi, Digala, Kalamti and Lamthang villages in Zhemgang and the Monpa villages of Jangbi and Wangling in Trongsa. Acknowledging the fact that basic shelter seems to evade some of the poor people in rural communities, Tarayana is committed to making it possible to put a roof over their heads”.¹⁵

In 2009, solar house illumination sets were distributed to the rural communities.

3) Income Improvement Activity

This foundation inspires and instructs under this activity the rural youth that in order to improve their income, they should participate in income-producing programmes. The teaching actions under this activity contain a variety of rural skills like earthenware, soap and candle manufacturing, cane and bamboo workings, annoy, paper making and yarn and silk weaving and wood turning. The Foundation also helps the institution of workshops and employment huts in their own group of people for production, support in excellence consistency and advertising of finished goods. In all the marked groups of people, several self-help groups have been created. These groups continue the micro-enterprises and labour activities to improve their income-earning capability.¹⁶

¹⁵ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

4) Organic Farming and Carbon-Footprint Decline Programmes through the Encouragement of Green Technologies

In 2007, this Foundation started training programmes for organic farming in THE area of Lotokutchu. One of the Rai groups of people in Bhutan through the support of green skill training programmes learned how to produce vegetables with the use of traditional methods like biomass. Therefore, through these methods they grow pesticide-free and (ammonia) fertilizer-free vegetables and harvest them for the community's own use. Through the years, their organic vegetable farms have grown way more produce than required by the community for their day-today requirements. With their lessons and learning from upgrading their earning, the remaining 35 villages in 5 districts were also skilled at the same time in organic farming.¹⁷

Along with organic farming the Tarayana Foundation is focusing on the economic activities which provide a source of income to vulnerable communities for their local needs. Therefore, the Foundation has started the manufacture of building equipments, enhanced and additional adaptable variety of material, using the airborne transport technique, making it possible for miscellaneous material manufactures. These are some of the recognized local green programmes that will not simply give profits to the rural groups but it will also assist in the government's sustainable socio-economic development policy targets. With the production of construction material on-site in the area, there is the advantage that it will eliminate the cost of procurement and storage which has put a double burden on the rural communities and is thus ensuring a significant reduction in the carbon footprint.¹⁸

5) Advancing Access to Medicinal Management

Within a year of its formation the Tarayana Foundation effectively worked together with the Ministry of Health and the Duangkeow Foundation in Thailand in May 2004 to offer improved healthcare services particularly to 69 people of hare-lip and cleft palates. Since then, at the Paro hospital, this Foundation has been performing annually a Restorative Surgical Camp with help from the Ministry of Health and in corporation with the volunteers from Surgicorp International, volunteer organizations of plastic

¹⁷ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

surgeons, doctors, nurses, anaesthesiologists, and other volunteers. Burn-wounded as well as cases of bear-maul victims wanting restorative surgeries have been treated.¹⁹

Along with these health facilities other kinds of care like giving travel and food allowance to deprived people has also been sponsoring by the Foundation so that minimum healthcare facilities reach every needy patient at local as well as national referral hospitals.²⁰

6) Microfinance

The Tarayana Foundation worked for a half a year amongst the rural communities and realized that for the survival of these remote and poor communities, the access to credit was significant particularly when their abilities were at an improved stage. These marked communities members have some high-quality entrepreneurial skills that can carry about both employment and chances for earning for various people in the village. Therefore, the Tarayana Foundation has provided small funds through many microcredit programmes, so that many members of the target communities are able to purchase tools for their start-up micro-business which will provide them with an income and employment opportunity. These microcredit programmes which were started on a pilot phase in 2009 include the Bhutanese's

own traditional activities like growing and selling vegetables, domestic-level poultry, weaving , growing fish ponds and backyard dairy, etc. It also helps farms, pack ponies, food processing units, wood-carving enterprises and wood turning.²¹

7) Tarayana School Clubs Programme

Besides the above mentioned micro-finance activities, the Tarayana Foundation has also been working on education programmes for these rural communities. In 2004, Tarayana School Clubs were constructed in 16 high schools and a small number of advanced institutions. The recent number of school clubs programmes are placed at 93 with a helper student membership of 3,593. In other words, it has spread all over the country with a scope of making notable difference to things. The major objective of these clubs is to assist the groups staying in villages near schools and institutes and

¹⁹ Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

to expand the spirit of volunteerism between the club members. The aim of all the activities is to guide the club members to gain a knowledge of dependant people within society and to look for methods and means to be helpful to the group of people at large. “Tarayana provides Nu. 10,000 to each club as a starting fund to support the activities of these clubs. The choice of activities depends on the club members based on their needs. This is also to encourage innovation. Through these clubs, compassion, serving those in need and social work skill are promoted”.²² To build awareness on numerous matters that are significant for the limited communities, the children have taken up encouragement programmes.

8) Scholarship Activities under the Tarayana Foundation:

This Foundation has scholarship programmes to give financial support to different rural communities’ scholars. The fundamental schooling is free of charge in Bhutan at the early stage for children. Those people who are not in a situation to send children to schools are supported through His Majesty’s Welfare Project. More than 1200 scholars that were helped by this Foundation have been merged with His Majesty’s Project. As per the Official website of the Tarayana Foundation, it is now focusing on providing financial assistance for improving toilets and bathing facilities. Provision is also being made for midday meals and fellowships are being given to deserving students from various communities, at the tertiary (professional) level.²³

Bhutan Trust Fund (BTF)

It is an NGO working for the socio-economic development of Bhutan that was established in 1992. The main purpose behind the establishment of the BTF is to support the conservation programme of the Bhutanese government in the entire green sector which promotes a sustainable utilization of resources. The main target of the Bhutanese government in its policies is to conserve environment and spread awareness among the people. The BTF coordinating with the Bhutan government and through its formal and non-formal education programmes promotes awareness about the Bhutanese policies to conserve and further consolidate the ethics of the same. Also, the BTF with the help of research, socio-economic surveys and biodiversity

²² Royal Society for Protection of Nature, URL: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/>.

²³ Ibid.

inventories has developed an information management system to safeguard the development and conservation planning. So far, it has spent about a million US dollars as grants in building institutional capacity for the better management of environment for in-situ and ex-situ conservation requirements, particularly to promote local participation in conservation efforts.²⁴

Helvetas Bhutan

Helvetas is working on livelihood and environment-related education of the Bhutanese which will affect the lifestyle and economic structure of Bhutan.

As the farmers constitute more than 75 per cent of the Bhutanese adult population, it is of paramount importance to resort to a renewal of natural resources, which is the core function of Helvetas. Four research centres have been established with a different mandate at the central level and regional levels to coordinate agriculture production diversity, increase overall productivity and to increase, in a sustainable manner, the household income. At present, seven projects are running under this programme.²⁵

National Women's Association of Bhutan (NWAB):

Since 1981, the NWAB is working for women empowerment and development through livelihood education so that women realize their rights and status in society and give their active participation for nation-building and bring enter the mainstream of development. To complete this work, various activities have been taken up by NWAB which includes the promotion of Science and Technology Education and environmental education as well as child and mother care, non-formal education and to spread awareness on hygiene and health. NWAB in order to reduce pollution supplies smokeless and less fuel-consuming stoves in rural areas for promoting environmental education among the Bhutanese.²⁶

The main reason behind NWAB's activities is to make women self-dependent and gain income to fulfil their basic needs. These activities include a variety of programmes to generate income by rural women and spreading awareness to make them self-dependent, credit schemes which provide them an opportunity to establish

²⁴ Bhutan Trust Fund, URL: www.bhutantrustfund.bt.

²⁵ Helvetas, URL: <http://www.helvetas.org>.

²⁶ National Women for Association, URL: <http://www.nwabbhutan.org.bt>.

and expand their own business, vocational training in weaving, tailoring and knitting and conservation extension activities. Most of these projects are actually aimed with a focus to help women empowerment. There are about 20 regional level chapters all over the country. The National Handloom Project is one such a major project. It is a course programme where weaving techniques like designing are taught to rural women and the yarn is supplied on credit, and the final product is bought back to the handloom sector. This programme not only provides them the women with jobs but also makes them self-dependent.²⁷ The Weaving Training Center is other project initially established at Pema Gatschel, which provides an opportunity especially to rural women and school dropouts to use and promote their traditional weaving techniques for earning. Under this project, the non-formal education programme is an integral part. Another very successful microcredit project is the Rural Credit and Saving Scheme, which provides loans for free to the rural women to start their income without depending on others. Around more than 1500 women are benefitting from this scheme. The Handicrafts Development Corporation is also one of the major projects started in Thimphu for the development of handicrafts and services. It also acts as a single market for all the textiles and handicrafts produced all over the country through the activities of the NWAB.

The NWAB sponsors about 100 children's education as well. Alongside this, it supports the Orphan's Welfare Scheme being undertaken by the Trashigang office to look after the abandoned and disadvantaged children as well.²⁸

Save the Children-USA, Bhutan Programme

It is a "child centered approach to development" NGO. In the Zhemgang district, in order to enhance local planning capabilities through science education and infrastructure development, energy resources, communication infrastructure, low-cost housing, etc., there is a focus on integrated village natural resource management, including forest and wildlife. 'Save the Children' project so far has helped more than a 500-member staff to construct infrastructure including a health post, a suspension

²⁷ National Women for Association, URL: <http://www.nwabbhutan.org.bt>.

²⁸ Ibid.

bridge, irrigation canals, a 15-kilometre mule track, drinking water systems, and a community center that now houses the health post and primary school.²⁹

SNV-Bhutan

In 1988 the SNV-Bhutan was established and its main working areas are focusing on the conservation of natural resource management activities, building strong managerial capacities for better local governance and bringing about economic development in the rural areas. The SNV is mainly involved in a variety of sustainable development programmes, besides promoting environmental education all over, so as to help the society live in harmony with the natural environment.

In Zhemgang, the SNV supports the Integrated Sustainable Development Project (ISDP) and the Black Mountain National Park (BMNP). “Through other activities SNV also supports the education and livelihood of the people. According to SNV, livelihood education includes technical assistance in the field of governance, economic development, and natural resource management and conservation. It would often bring out policy papers on irrigation, planning and management practices in Zhemgang, community management practices in rural water supply, irrigation and watershed management. At present, SNV Bhutan contributes to the marketing research in economics, people’s participation practices for decentralization and community-based natural resource management policies”.³⁰

Royal Society for the Protection of Nature:

“It was established on 1987 (Due to the non existence of NGO act in Bhutan (RSPN) is registered under the company’s act of Bhutan). RSPN has been the development partner of the RGoB. It has four program areas as follows:”³¹

- Environmental education
- Conservation and development programme
- Fundraising and communication
- Administration and finance

²⁹ Save the Children, URL: www.savethechildren.org.

³⁰ SNV-Bhutan, URL: www.snv.org.

³¹ Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, URL: www.rscn.org.

To spread environmental awareness among the people, the RSPN is also working on activities likely to promote environmental conservation with a citizen-centric approach. These activities not only promote people's participation but also give knowledge to the people about conservation of environment throughout the country. The main objectives of this programme is to launch 50 percent self-sustainable nature clubs in the schools of Bhutan and till date RSPN has established 78 nature clubs in the country. Other programmes of this kind include training, workshops and research.³²

Alongside all these programmes, the RSPN also conducts special short-term programme courses for guides and also conducts seminars on issues of importance, including the environment, renewable energy and solar stoves, etc.

The Bhutan Foundation

“The Bhutan Foundation serves the people of Bhutan in living and sharing the principle of Gross National Happiness. We cherish the values of the Bhutanese intention: measuring happiness as the highest attribute of all decision-making. We contribute to strategies of conservation of the environment, equitable and sustainable development, good governance, and preservation of culture in Bhutan. The Bhutan Foundation serves as the only American not-for-profit organization that is wholly focused on the benefit of the country and people of Bhutan, bridging understanding between our two countries and beyond.”³³

Some major projects under TBF include “Conservation of the Environment; Capacity Building for Civil Society Organizations; Renovation and Rehabilitation of Wangchuechhoeling Palace in Bumthang; Developing Bhutan's Emergency Medical Services; Enhancement of Education Opportunity for Children and Youth with Special Needs and Supporting Activities of the Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy.”³⁴

³² Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, URL: www.rscn.org.

³³ Bhutan Foundation, URL: <http://bhutanfound.org>.

³⁴ Ibid.

Conservation of the Environment

In this programme, the TBF is undertaking numerous projects and the main objectives under this programme are to see the UWICE as a centre for excellence in the conservation of biology with an extraordinary research on various species, including the wildlife of Bhutan and to take care of biodiversity, and to study changes taking place all around in the eco-system to map the climate change consequences in Bhutan's environment.³⁵

Developing Bhutan's Emergency Medical Services

Before the major changes took place in Bhutan there was a lack of medical facilities in Bhutan, especially in an emergency situation where the patient was injured and there was no ambulance to take that patient to the nearest hospital. The hospital staff were also not well-trained to deal with these emergency situations. And along with this, Bhutan is a mountainous terrain and rugged country where transport of a patient to nearby healthcare centre takes hours to days, which is critical. As per the WHO, this trauma accounts for 11 per cent of the Global Burden of Diseases, particularly in the low and middle income countries. Therefore, to provide meaningful and necessary healthcare facilities and services in the emergency situations is a critical necessity for Bhutan.³⁶

The Foundation partners with Ministry of Health in order to develop a programme to improve the emergency medical services. The programme provides an EMS ambulance and necessary training to the trauma specialists and also general doctors for their efficiency enhancement in the area.³⁷

The ambition behind starting of this project is to improve pre-hospital care facilities by conducting workshops for various group of people like the police, taxi drivers and fire personnel in responding to the calamities. It also upgrades the existing ambulances and creates a new trauma registry and other monitoring systems to assess the impact of these interventions.

³⁵ Bhutan Foundation, URL: <http://bhutanfound.org>.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

Enhancement of Education Opportunity for Children and Youth with Special Needs

Two more critical areas of concern for the Bhutanese Government are Health and Education. Education for all has been identified as a priority by the 10th Five-Year development plan of Bhutan. Although they are not discriminated against in the society, the children with special needs have very limited opportunities.³⁸

The Bhutanese government under its policies has been making various programmes and provides proper assistance to promote education especially among the special needs students. Therefore, the Bhutanese government along with the Bhutan Foundation and the Bhutan Youth Development Fund has launched a five-year programme that addresses the necessity of enhancing educational and training opportunities for children with special needs.³⁹

The main objectives of launching this programme are to develop methods where it is easy to identify the children with special needs and requirements, particularly with learning disabilities, and that they get the necessary attention and help to overcome the shortcomings when they start schooling. Creating greater awareness about the special needs of these learners and to create accessible classrooms for all is necessary, so as to provide better skills and learning to the children of all abilities.

Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy and its Supporting Activities

Bhutan became the youngest democracy in the world on the 24th of March in 2008. This new change could be never achieved without the active participation and interest of the Bhutanese. The successful journey of democracy in Bhutan depends upon the people's ability, trust and patience which they have showed for the country.⁴⁰

In order to make sure that the transition is smooth and to create an aware public, aware of all the political system's functioning and the role of different institutions in the process, the TBF created the Bhutan Foundation that has helped establish the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD) in Thimphu. The BCMD will provide the citizens with proper space and freedom where issues related to democracy

³⁸ Bhutan Foundation, URL: <http://bhutanfound.org>.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy, URL: bcmd.bt.

and government policies can be discussed without any pressure and the correct information be disseminated to the people. Along with this, other important activities will also be started by the Centre like research, workshops and other pilot activities such as various clubs including the media club in the schools to educate all sections of people into new democratic culture.⁴¹

The main motive behind organizing all these activities of the BCMD is to spread awareness about the government's policies and decisions among all sections of society and make them self-dependent to undertake their responsibility and speak on the government's actions without any fear. Also the motive is to provide a forum for discussion and research to exchange ideas on the civic sense and media. The idea also covers the digitization of media and literature on these issues.⁴²

Bhutan Youth Development Foundation

The Bhutan Youth Development Fund is committed to making every youth a leader.

Change this paragraph's alignment according to the Manual "An estimated 59 percent of Bhutanese are younger than age 24. As Bhutan's leading youth organization, we are working to ensure that all youth have equal access to education, meaningful employment and opportunities to develop their potential. Bhutan YDF programs build leadership skills, encourage teamwork and promote the value of service among youth. Through advocacy work and strategic partnerships, we work to encourage youth participation, raise awareness of youth issues and promote youth-oriented policy. We invest in Bhutan's future, one youth at a time".⁴³

Under Bhutan YDF there are various programmes that are being conducted. These include Youth Participation and Child Protection; Drug Education and Rehabilitation; Empowerment for Employment; Fundraising; Scholarship; Sponsor a Monk and Investment, etc.

⁴¹ Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy, URL: bcmd.bt.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

Youth Participation and Child Protection

The democracy process adopted by Bhutan in 2008 took many major changes along with it like onset of television services and the internet and the great impact of rural and urban migration etc., that greatly contributed to the rapid changes in the understanding of culture in Bhutan as an ancient or traditional way of life. And all these major changes had a big impact, especially on the Bhutanese youth. The youth are at a particular stage, where they experience new things that their parents never experienced before. Therefore, at this major change in Bhutan's journey, it is important for the Bhutan YDF to deal with these changes according to the comfort of their youth in a correct direction. The major contribution and work has been done by the Bhutan YDF to make the youth responsible to take the right decision. Hence, the YDF's programmes make sure that its activities are incorporated, particularly on creating the leadership skill, with emphasis on the GNH of Bhutan.⁴⁴

Along with these efforts and work, the Bhutan YDF is also organizing Youth Participation programmes which develop leadership qualities and help youngsters gain self-esteem through various means of training, capacity building and sports and recreational and community developments to express themselves through arts, music, sports, or performing arts.⁴⁵

Child Protection

YDF started one new programme where it provides protection and rehabilitation to those children who are living in difficult circumstances and one of the core programmes identified by the YDF is Child Protection which is mentioned in the Protection Act in 2011, along with the enactment of Child Care. There are mainly four primary areas of concern: intervention, prevention, integration and research. YDF has been supporting children in difficult situations with the help of offering support through scholarships, jobs and shelter and where required, to de-addict them from alcohol and drug usage.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

The goal of the Child Protection programme is to prevent and quickly respond to violence against children and their abuse or exploitation and along with this it also gives prevention services which include transit shelter, fostering, rehabilitation and reintegration of the children in the society suffering from these conditions.⁴⁷

Drug Education and Rehabilitation

In Bhutan many transformations are happening at a rapid speed like many young Bhutanese are moving from rural areas to urban areas and there are many cases of family breakdowns that are taking place, leading to erosion of family support or an essential support system. In urban areas, young people fend for themselves leading to alienation. Opening of television, internet, and time to time the impact of pop culture also shows the way to self-doubts or self-destructive action. Unlike the past, where the youth hardly ever left the homes, these days, they are more mobile, hence the easy attraction to addictions.⁴⁸

YDF is the other NGA working tirelessly to solve problems and to address problems of the vulnerable youth of the country afflicted with various addictions. The YDF provides support and hope to the young generation against drugs and alcohol through various services such as drop-in centres for counselling and rehabilitation treatment for both men and women in Thimphu.

Empowerment for Employment

Bhutan has been facing youth unemployment and to deal with this problem, the YDF continuously promotes skill development programmes among the youth of Bhutan through establishment of training programmes like the “*Nazhoen Pelri* Skills Training Centre⁴⁹ and *My Gakidh* Village⁵⁰, and short-term skills training in vocational trades.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The NSPTC was established in 2005 to create opportunities for vulnerable girls.

⁵⁰ My Gakidh Village is a youth leadership and employment project initiated to empower rural youth with livelihood skills with the aim to curb rural-urban migration.

⁵¹ Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

Scholarship

The Bhutanese government offers universal public education to all the Bhutanese children till Class X, but as a result of the poor socio-economic situation of the children, their guardians often remove them from school which is a big cause for these children not finishing fundamental education. In Bhutan, most of the families depend on farming for their day-to-day survival and they put more focus in having their children sow the field and look after the farming work than to go to school. The same thing also applies with the young Bhutanese women and girls, who are spending their time in farming and are less interested to finish their fundamental education than the young men.

Along with the Bhutan government's scholarship programmes, the YDF has sponsored over 80 children to complete their basic education, and 190 young people have been given higher education scholarships.⁵²

Types of Scholarship

- **Fundamental Education Scholarship:** Education is offered free of cost in Bhutan because it is paid for by the Bhutanese government. In the way of education, the Fundamental Education Scholarships is a good step from the government side to give equal access to education to all Bhutanese children. But, a number of costs must be borne by parents. Several deprived families remove their children from schools due to the lack of money for these costs.
- **Advanced Education Scholarships:** Every year, 15+ underprivileged students from very deprived surroundings are helped by the Bhutan Youth Development Fund. Again for their final selection, these students go through the strict measures by the Ministry of Education. The selected students who get this Scholarship are helped for two years while they finish their studies. Through this scholarship programme, over 190 students have received help till now, where a majority of them are already employed.⁵³

⁵² Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

⁵³ Ibid.

- Jaypee Scholarships: For the making their raising economy stronger by human resource development, in corporation with Bhutan, the Jaypee Group of India, kindly provides 20 scholarships at certificate stage for undergraduates. Till date, under this scholarship, more than 140 students who were engaged in undergraduate programmes and Jaypee industrial training centres got this scholarship.
- United World College (UWC): UWC is an international educational NGO that brings students together from all over the world. It has strength to encourage individuals, cultures and countries for harmony and a sustainable future. At the initial stage on their merits, these students are short-listed from within their own countries and in spite of their talent, to pay or not for further studies. After that these students move towards at one of the 12 UWCs which plan to encourage an international perceptive and harmony. In Canada, USA, UK, Hong Kong and India, the UWC is also getting scholarships from the Bhutan Youth Development Fund.⁵⁴

Youth Development Fund (YDF)/Royal Thimphu College Need-Based Scholarships: The Bhutan YDF and the Royal Thimphu College initiate a Need-Based Scholarship for the needy students who are not in a situation to get higher education due the poor family conditions. Therefore, this scholarship programme provides an opportunity to those poor students whose family status is poor or economically disadvantaged.⁵⁵

Sponsor a Monk⁵⁶

In Bhutan, the monastic structure plays an important role and approximately 10 per cent of the Bhutanese population is part of this structure where the clergy acts in a significant position in the everyday lives of the individuals and is an organization that is well respected by the individuals and an important part of their being.

The clergy is fully aided through the Bhutan government for the welfare of the many children who become monks because the main reason to become monks is the poor financial condition of these children. They mostly come from weak backgrounds,

⁵⁴ Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

sometimes have only one parent or are without parents or either stay with their grandparents or other family members.

To handle the requirements and problems of very young monks at the ancient Dechen Phodrang Monastic School, the ‘Sponsor a Monk’ plan was started. The Bhutanese government support for the growing figure of learner monks awaiting official enrolment was necessary in the form of providing budgetary help to the Dechen Phodrang Institute to make sure that there was modest food for the growing children. The circumstances will be better dramatically if each individual donor comes forward and contributes in this plan.⁵⁷

“Under this project, a sponsor provides \$12 USD (Nu. 500) a month to a monk. As of December 2008, YDF has disbursed nearly \$25,000 USD to the school for food and clothing. In 2011, YDF expanded this initiative to six other monasteries in the country”.⁵⁸

Investment

Simply Bhutan (a featured investment project) is a unique project that observes the conservation of Bhutanese culture and tradition while generating employment opportunities for job seekers. This one-of-a-kind Bhutanese project portrays an ancient Bhutanese home as it would have appeared in days past. “The structure is built reusing old timber, reclaimed window and door frames, and other items from traditional houses that have been demolished. Through activities and historical re-enactment, visitors to Simply Bhutan can experience the day-to-day activities of living in a traditional Bhutanese household while empowering young entrepreneurs through the showcasing of Bhutanese traditions and cultural diversity”.⁵⁹

National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC):

The main reason behind the establishment of NCWC in 2004 was to fulfill the responsibilities of the Bhutan government in the direction of the CEDAW (Convention on the all Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Through an Executive

⁵⁷ Bhutan Youth Development Fund, URL: www.bhutanyouth.org.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Order from Bhutan's Cabinet, the National Commission for Women and Children was recognized as a division of the Ministry of Health which also outlined its authorization. "In 2008, given the rising number of issues and the Commission's increasing responsibilities, the Commission was upgraded to a fully autonomous agency under the Royal Government".⁶⁰

The National Commission for Women and Children's core objectives are based on the concept of gender equality and child-sensitive perspective activities which include the review, reform, initiation and support policies, plans and projects of these two concepts.

The major functions of the National Commission for Women and Children are based on the gender equality and child-sensitive issues and to review and formulate policies which are related to these issues. The NCWC create consciousness and sensitization for all stake-holders and partners which are working on the same issues and to assemble resources for the NCWC.⁶¹

Conclusion

The policymaking process in Bhutan is very unique because Bhutan is a religious country and there is much influence of non-governmental institutions on Bhutan's policymaking procedure. These small activities and programmes by these NGOs not only give a major contribution to improve the socio-economic condition of the country but also give their support and participation to the government to implement better policies for their citizens and make them aware regarding the government's decision and policies. Therefore, the Bhutanese government always coordinates with these institutions while formulating any policy and laws. And these institutions always keep certain points that every policy in Bhutan fulfil the parameters of the Gross National Happiness philosophy and never go beyond its rich cultural and traditional values.

⁶⁰ National Women Association for Women and Children, URL: <http://nwabbhutan.org.bt/>.

⁶¹ National Women Association for Women and Children, URL: <http://nwabbhutan.org.bt/>.

Chapter: IV

Role of Inter-Government Organizations in Policy Making

The definition of Inter-Government Organization (IGOs) stands for a unit which is founded by an accord between two or more countries for the work on matters of usual interest on good trust. Without an accord, an IGO is not recognized as a legal organization. For example, the G8 is a legal group consisting of eight countries that have a yearly economic and political meeting. According to the Harvard Law School, the IGOs are a more helpful organization than a basic organization of nations because they are subject to international law by enforceable accords among themselves or with other states.

The major concepts behind IGOs are to create a mechanism for the world's individuals where they can work together for peace and security and deal with common issues which are related to socio-economic and political matters in a more efficient way. In this present time where developing globalization and interdependence of different countries are playing an important role in international scenario, the IGOs have moved towards engaging a very relevant place in international political associations and global governance (Taylor 1998).

IGOs are generally well-ordered by their membership and by their concept. For example, the UN organization is known as global organization because all nations in the UN have a legal membership. At present there are 193 member states in the UN. There are few IGOs which are regional and have bound their membership to states inside particular regions. Other IGOs are mentioned as selective organizations because they support their membership on norms other than real characteristics (Willets 1998; Taylor 1998). IGOs are different from NGOs because a Non-Government Organization (NGO) is an organization founded by two or more persons rather than different countries. NGOs are therefore generally independent of governments and are usually non-profit organizations, getting at least a portion of their financial assistance from particular references. IGOs have the financial and political assistance of its members.

The developing nations which are poor and do not have sufficient funding for their development process, get aid and proper observations from IGOs. The journey of a development process contains obtaining housing, healthcare, education, economics and political empowerment by contribution of the specialized assistance provided in a foreign nation by granting money or giving loans.

However, Bhutan's approach for receiving this aid from the IGOs is different from most of the other aid-dependent nations. The government has its own development preferences and a very powerful sense of observation that Bhutan should be assisted where it is most required and which contributors can provide their best. In the direction of getting aid from donors, the Bhutanese government is very experiential. It first checks whether the particular aid is properly installed in its well-defined framework instead of permitting donors to operate and involve in its development plans and aid performances (Willets 1998: 89).

The government of Bhutan particularly handles donors as well the country's special demands. Therefore, it checks the number of donors available in the country. However, IGOs offering help through agencies – primarily the UN specialized agencies – already existing in the country is appreciated. In the socio-economic areas, Bhutan always stimulates tight cooperation between donors. This above description of IGOs has resulted in partnerships with comparatively minor donors with the exception of India, which is still Bhutan's huge development partner as over the past 40 years.

Along with these IGOs, other important partners in the socio-economic sectors include World Bank and other UN agencies (UNICEF and UNFPA), Asian Development Bank, Government of India, Denmark, JICA, European Commission. All other agencies provide programme-tied funds and Denmark provides budget support.

Before starting the role and efforts made by IGOs in the public policymaking process, it is essential to go through the IGOs placed in Bhutan and working together with the government of Bhutan and contributing to the socio-economic sectors.

The World Bank

The World Bank's mission is "to fight poverty and improve the living standards of people in the developing world" (World Bank 2006: 03). The World Bank is comprised of the 'International Development Association (IDA)' and the 'International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)' which gives assistance to the developing nations in the form of loans, credit, grants, specialized support and gives policy guidance for their development programmes and projects.

In 1981, Bhutan has joined the World Bank as a member, but the Bank had already started its activities in Bhutan in the early 1980s. The World Bank through its IDA has an adjustment lending associate that gives low interests or loans without any interest. In 2003, Bhutan connected the "International Finance Corporation (IFC)" and also presented a request for membership in the "Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)" (World Bank 2006: 10).

The World Bank Group through its investment portfolio in Bhutan emphasizes various sectors such as rural development, rural access, urban development programmes, wildlife conservation and preservation and private area development. A net commitment of \$82 million investment of IDA focuses on the five existent distinct investment programmes in Bhutan. Furthermore, some other projects like one "Global Environment Facility grant-financed project, one Global Facility for Disaster Recovery and Reduction-financed project, and three Institutional Development Fund-financed activities also working for Bhutan's development" (World Bank 2013: 87).

The government of Bhutan has contemplated a development prosperity story, with reducing poverty and advancements in human development indicators with the commitment of the Bank which is focused at helping the government objective of Gross National Happiness (World Bank 2011a: 101).

The joint "World Bank/IFC-Bhutan Country Partnership Strategy (CPS)" programme of 2011-2014 under the IFC of World Bank is engaged in the three key strategy framework of Bhutan: Theories of Gross National Happiness (GNH); Bhutan 2020 Vision; and Tenth Five-Year Plan (2008-1013) (World Bank 2012; 2013).

The Results Framework of Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) was arranged “into two sectors of participation: (a) Economic Diversification, Job Creation and Financial Inclusion and (b) Spatial Planning and Public Services. Along with this, CPS also identifies two cross-cutting subjects: (i) Capacity building for good governance; and (ii) Environmental sustainability. Bhutan’s development approach which is based on the GNH philosophy, that is focusing on economic and material growth in indistinguishable measure with the well-being of individuals, communities, and society was clearly visible in the CPS (2011-2014) of the World Bank (European Commission 2014: 55).

The results of the two sectors of participation was emphasized to give better opportunities for private-area expansion and to make sure that the good quality of infrastructure and services reach all rural and urban population according to their needs. The CPS also recognized the major responsibility of capacity for implementing development schemes efficiently and effectively. Therefore, it focused on supporting the government-constructed human and institutional resource capacity (European Commission 2014: 68). The Country Partnership Strategy also emphasises the environment-related issues such as the function of environment safeguards at the time of natural calamities and awareness and knowledge about the changes happening in the climate.

Within 12 months of finalization of the next five-year national development plan, the current Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) was planned in July 2014. Several matters of the present CPS depend on the structure of the development policy and programmes and then the prospective for a better utilization of the result-based funding will be finalised. The next CPS most likely will open a large opportunity of financial support due to the combined position of the IDA-IBRD for the Bhutanese developmental process. This status helps Bhutan to maintain a developing middle-income country (MIC) position (World Bank, 2015: 101).

Apart from this, over the last six years, three other development policy actions giving their budgetary assistance to the Bhutanese government have been practiced. Another largely new programme of Development Policy Credit-2 (DPC-2) for a total cost of \$36 million was accepted by the Bank’s Board of Executive Directors in November 2012. This programme emphasized different issues such as encouraging government

competence and effectiveness through sound fiscal and public financial supervision and procurement, and well-built public organization and put more focus on private area progress by getting a better policy environment which provides creative employment chances easily (World Bank 2014: 88).

The Bank also assumed substantial analytical work in Bhutan. In the existing Country Partnership Strategy programme a number of key Analytical and Advisory Activities (AAA) are already running. In this regard a number of information and diagnostic studies have been done under the current CPS by the World Bank and it has also provided information to Bhutan through a grouping of Non-Lending Technical Assistance (NLTA) and Economic and Sector Work (ESW) and also supported the tackling of conservation issues with the Bhutanese government in these key sectors of meetings. Through an Investment Climate Assessment and follow-up technical support that was ended in 2012, it was provided to strengthen the generally new budget assistance action to recover the policy structure governing the private sector in Bhutan. “NLTA for capacity building in the labour and human resource progress area has similarly supported policy for private area progress. A number of cross-sectoral analytical portions, counting those for poverty observing, human development (i.e. education, health) public spending, advanced education, and financial inclusion have provided in-depth study to support shape policy and governance in these deliberately critical areas for national development”(World Bank 2013: 45). NLTA in other key sectors such as ICT, e-government, corporate governance and infrastructure public-private partnerships has offered direction to policymakers.

The total amount of \$8.8 million investment portfolio has been donated by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in Bhutan. The advisory portfolio of IFC contains business suggestion and right of entry in the finance sector of Bhutan. It covered the three broad sectors of Bhutan such as integration at global and regional level, containing overall growth and the issue of climate change. The investment in climate reforms activities that help in financial sectors of Bhutan includes the small and medium projects of finance trade, investing in tourism and agribusiness sector of Bhutan which are the few sectors where the International Finance Corporation is working to make proper strategies to find investment and advisory support. With the advisory support and investment, the IFC also tried to focus in discovering ICT,

hydropower, and public-private partnership programmes which make for a stronger infrastructure (World Bank 2006; 2014).

Asian Development Bank

From the last three decades the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been constantly providing assistance and a mutually creative and unwavering support to Bhutan. When Bhutan joined the membership of ADB in 1982, the target of reducing poverty from Bhutan was far away and therefore, every step had to be made to fight the obstructions. Since then, Bhutan has been getting help from the ADB's concessionary loans with low interest and also getting expensive technical support which assists the country to attain continued economic progress, with social inclusiveness. Nowadays, the ADB has turned out to be a major mutual development collaborator of Bhutan.

ADB's programmes have always been significant and well organized without destroying the core of Gross National Happiness which the main base of the development process. The ADB has given constant help for physical and social infrastructure development, financial and private area development, institutional capacity construction, human resource development, good governance, and for environmental security (Asian Development Bank 2014:88).

At present, Bhutan is faced with the challenge of nourishing a high and comprehensive economic development. Eventually, Bhutan desires to reach economic self-reliance and green socio-economic growth by 2020. In this regard the ADB plays a vital position, mainly in attaining the objectives of Bhutan's Eleventh Five Year Plan, 2013–2018 (Asian Development 2014: 47).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The UNDP engages in issues which are related to self-governance, poverty reduction, disaster avoidance and improvement, energy and environment and HIV/AIDS. Through their programmes and activities, the UNDP provides its support to developing nations (UNDP 2012:100).

To make sure that there is a transparent, responsible and inclusive growth, the UNDP assists anti-corruption attempts and well-organized public facility deliveries, made on

the foundations of sound financial management. Apart from this, to encourage and promote an individual's basic rights to information, the UNDP is also coordinating with the media, press and civil society which are actively working at the grassroots level in Bhutan.

UNDP has also coordinated other development collaborators and agencies which are connected to the United Nations. So that, at the local and national levels, the UNDP through capability development and e-governance, also helps in the process of decentralisation of the local governance of Bhutan.

To improve the national capacities, the UNDP has been giving cross-sectoral technical help so that as Bhutan gets a platform where it could raise the issues which are effecting the environment and make policies, plans and programmes to fight against these issues as well as also meet its promises to the international environmental agreements.

For the welfare of rural communities and access to affordable energy technologies for making biodiversity preservation at the same time, the UNDP collaborates with private as well as government sectors in this regard. Along with this, the UNDP is collaborating with governments, NGOs and various other international organizations to encourage strategies and functioning of community-based calamity risk management plans. In addition, the UNDP also activates resources for constructing stronger community flexibility to climate change affects by spreading livelihoods and improving the climate change record. This is geared in the direction of protecting communities from natural disasters (UNDP 2012: 67).

Since the start of its participation in Bhutan, the UNDP has engaged in key roles in:

1979: National airline development.

1986: Development of Kuensel as a weekly national newspaper.

1989: Telecommunications Master Plan development.

Mid 80s-Early 90s: Launch of the largest global UNV programme in Bhutan.

1996: Establishment of the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation.

2006: Establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission & formulation of the National Disaster Risk Management Framework.

2008-2013: Glacial Lake Outburst Floods project on climate change in Punakha and Wangdue.

2009: Emergency assistance after Cyclone Aila floods and earthquake in Eastern Bhutan.

2011: Emergency assistance after the 2011 earthquake.

2013: Development of the National Internal Control Framework.

2014: Launch of the largest climate change adaptation programme in Bhutan.⁶²

WWF Bhutan: It was established on 1977 and the major focus areas are environment education and wildlife protection. The WWF Bhutan project has decided on immediate conservation requirements which are effecting the environment. These requirements cover many programmes and activities such as working on the network of protected areas as well as conserving and protecting natural resources. It is encouraging the people to preserve their environment and wildlife for the future generations. Therefore, it is focusing on the particular institutes which are encouraging the preservation, education and public awareness regarding this (WWF, 2010). It has been helping Environmental Education in partnership with the Royal Society for Protection of Nature and Department of Education (Ministry of Agriculture 2004).

“WWF Bhutan contains local individuals in order to put together nature preservation and community progress in areas in and around Royal Manas National Park through programs such as Non-Formal Education, Alternate income producing activities, Micro-credit and investments, Social Forestry and Environmental/developmental alertness. It has skilled 777 non-formal education graduates, has held many training meetings on weaving, tailoring, cane and bamboo construction, mushroom farming, kitchen farming, availed loans for 175 households, planted 46,200 seeding of cane/bamboo and prepared and conducted learning tours and nature learning programs” (WWF 2010: 77).

⁶² UNDP (2012), URL: http://www.unicef.org/about/exeboard/files/BTN_One_Programme_2014-2018_Master_03-12-2012_-CV.pdf.

Government of India (GOI)

Economic Cooperation

Mutually beneficial economic connections have been a significant factor in the India and Bhutan bilateral relations. In the bilateral relations, trade and development collaboration with India play a major role in Bhutan because India has been the major business partner of Bhutan. The phase of planned development attempts of India started in the early 1960s in Bhutan. “A free trade administration exists between India and Bhutan. The India-Bhutan Trade and Commerce Agreement was first signed in 1972 which was last changed in 2006 for a period of 10 years” (Ministry of External Affairs 2012: 14). The Accord gives duty-free transportation to Bhutanese products for trade with the developing nations. In 2013, bilateral trade reached Rs.7287 cr; imports from India being Rs. 4389 cr. while Bhutan’s exports to India stood at Rs. 2898 cr. (including electricity). The total bilateral trade grew by about 4.7 per cent in 2013.

Table 4: Bilateral Trade between India and Bhutan

Particulars	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Exports to Bhtuan (Imports from India) (Rs.Cr)	1985	2931	3521	4181	4390
Exports to Bhutan from India as % to total Bhtuanese imports	77.8%	75.2%	72.4%	79.4%	82.5%
Imports from Bhutan (Exports to India) (Rs. Cr)	2242	2601	2641	2781	2899
Imports from Bhutan to India as % to total Bhutanese export	93.6%	88.6%	83.9%	93.8%	92%

Source: India-Bhutan Relations⁶³

“The main things of exports from Bhutan to India are agric-products, such as orange, cardamom and potatoes; electricity, semi-finished products of iron and non-alloy steel, ferroalloys, carbides, bar and rods, gypsum, cement, copper wire, Dolomite and vice versa, high-speed diesel, ferrous products, motor spirit plus aviation spirit

⁶³ India- Bhutan Relations, URL: <http://www.indianembassythimphu.bt/pages.php?id=83>.

(petrol), rice, ferrous waste and scraps, wood charcoal, hydraulic turbines, coal, briquette and similar solid fuel of coal, coke and semi-coke of coal, bar and rods of iron and non-alloy steels, corrugated iron and non-alloy steel sheet, soybean oil, milk powder etc.” (World Bank 2006: 101).

In 1961 Bhutan launched its First Five Year Plan (FYP). Since then, through the FYPs of Bhutan India has been expanding its financial support. In the 10th FYP which was finished in June 2013, India gave overall aid to the 10th FYP which was little over Rs. 5,000 crore, not including grants for hydropower projects. The key goals of the 11th Five Year Plan are self-reliance and inclusive green socio-economic growth and India has offered a total financial plan outlay of Nu.21300 crore to Bhutan for achieving its key goals (RGoB 2011: 74). Along with this the Government of India was devoted to helping Bhutan’s 11th Five Year Plan to the tune of Rupees 4500 crore (Ministry of Economic Affairs 2015: 03).

For a long time India has been engaged in the hydropower programmes and activities of Bhutan because power is a significant area of the Bhutanese financial system which is contributing to the 14 per cent GDP of Bhutan. It is the most central export item contributing about 35 per cent of Bhutan’s total exports. The Druk Green Power Corporation is the uppermost tax payer of the country which manages all electricity generation plants of the country (World Bank 2014: 85).

Hydropower is one of the major pillars of bilateral cooperation as well as an accurate example of mutually beneficial relations between India and Bhutan. “Three Hydro-Electric Projects (HEPs) totalling 1416 MW, (336 MW Chukha HEP, the 60 MW Kurichu HEP, and the 1020 MW Tala HEP), are already exporting electricity to India. In 2008, the two governments decided to develop a minimum of 10,000 MW additional hydropower generation capacities by 2020 and acknowledged ten more projects. Out of these, three projects totalling 2940 MW (1200 MW Punatsangchu-I, 1020 MW Punatsangchu-II and 720 MW Mangdechu HEPs) are under construction and are listed to be started in the last quarter of 2017-2018. Out of the remaining 7 HEPs, 4 totalling 2120 MW (600 MW Kholongchhu, 180 MW Bunakha, 570 MW Wangchu and 770 MW Chamkarchu) will be built under Joint Venture model . A Framework IG agreement has been signed between both the Governments on 22 April 2014 for these JV HEPs. DGPC and SJVNL, JV partners for Kholongchhu HEP

signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for carrying out pre-construction actions” (Ministry of Economic Affairs 2015: 03-04).

Along with this, the President of India during his state visit to Bhutan in November 2014 laid the foundation stone for the Jigme Wangchuk Power Training Institute (World Bank 2014: 44).

In the area of education and culture, there is also a close bilateral cooperation between these two countries.

Image 8: Undergraduate and Post-graduation Course Programme



Source: Kuensel ⁶⁴

Every year the Indian government provides scholarship grants to the Bhutanese students who are pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate courses for higher learning in Indian institutes. In 2010 the Nehru-Wangchuk Scholarship was started. A total of 89 students were chosen for the undergraduate scholarships and 20 Bhutan ICCR Scholarship for the academic session of 2014-15. And all the students are in the process of getting placed in a variety of educational institutions which are situated in India (RGoB 2003). Apart from this, the Ambassador’s Scholarship is another scheme giving their assistance to the Bhutanese scholars who are doing their studies in India. The Ambassadors Scholarship Scheme has helped more than 3000 Bhutanese scholars

⁶⁴ Kuensel, URL: <http://www.kuenselonline.com/picture-story-122>.

from the past ten years. Every year in India, ten slots are being offering at Sainik Schools for Bhutanese scholars of the 6th standard level (Ministry of Education 2010; 2012). In the Sainik School all expenditure of their studies is borne by the India Government till they will finish the 12th standard. “Under the TCS Colombo Plan, three Lecturers from India are on delegation in two colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan and under this TCS Plan, the Bhutan government also appeal for an additional 27 Lecturers from India which is still under process” (Ministry of Economic Affairs 2015: 04-05).

Alongside this, India-Bhutan Foundation was established in 2003 when the present King of Bhutan visited India. The purpose of this Foundation is to increase and encourage people-to-people participation in specific areas like technical study, education activities, cultural and environmental protection and preservation programmes. For the fulfilment of this purpose, the financial assistance of Rs. 5 crore have been added by both the governments. Along with this the major portion of Rs. 10 crore has been reserved in a fixed deposit amount in Bhutan. At the end, whatever interest comes from the fixed deposit, is utilized for financing suggestions received from both the countries’ citizens and Non-Governmental Organizations. And these kinds of financial help and activities can promote fulfilling the goals of the India-Bhutan Foundation (UNDP 2002: 30).

‘Mountain Echoes’, a cultural and artistic festival, is held every year in Bhutan to promote and encourage different Indian, Bhutanese and international artists, filmmakers, musicians, writers, etc. to come together at the same platform. “The 6th version of the Mountain Echoes Literary Festival, co-sponsored by the India-Bhutan Foundation was held in Thimphu from 19-22 August 2015” (Ministry of Economic Affairs 2015: 04).

The Nehru-Wangchuck Cultural Centre is also a vibrant cultural exchange initiative started in 2010 between India and Bhutan. This Cultural Centre situated in Thimphu is abuzz with cultural activities around the year and promotes Indian culture in Bhutan (Kuensel 2009; 2014).

In Bhutan, there is an Indian community where around 60,000 Indian nationals are staying and are mostly engaged in hydroelectric power and construction industry

work. In addition, every year, in border towns, around 8000 and 10,000 daily labours enter and depart Bhutan (Kuensel 2015).

Moreover, the Indian government has been providing its financial assistance through the Bhutan's FYP. This financial assistance was started from 1961 (which was the first FYP of Bhutan). From which, the starting two FYPs were completely financed by the Government of India. Apart from this financial assistance the Indian government is also giving its contribution to Bhutan's development programmes and activities which are totally outside the frame of the FYPs (RGoB 2011; 2012). Plan-wise allotments made by the Royal Government, presenting India's contribution therein, are as follows:

Table 5: Indian Financial Assistance to Bhutan

(in Rs. Crore.)

Year	Total Allocations	India's Contribution	% of India's Contribution
1961-1961	10.71	10.73	100%
1966-1971	20.23	20.23	100%
1971-1976	47.53	42.67	91%
1976-1981	110.63	85.31	78%
1981-1987	444.04	134.01	30.3%
1987-1992	950.01	400.01	42.2%
1992-1997	2351.00	751.00	31.8%
1997-2002	4100.00	1051.00	27%
2002-2008	8901.00	2610.15	29.34%
2008-2013	14800.00	3401.00*	24%
2013-2018	21400.00	4600.00	22%

*Excludes India assistance towards mega projects

Source: URL: Economic Cooperation with Bhutan⁶⁵

“During the visit of the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay to India from August 30 to September 4, 2013, Government of India's Aid Package for

⁶⁵ Economic Cooperation with Bhutan, URL: <http://www.indianembassythimphu.bt/pages.php?id=33>).

Bhutan's Eleventh Five Year Plan (July 2013 to June 2018), was agreed. At Bhutan's request, India decided to contribute Rs 4500 Crore" (Ministry of Education 2012: 10). For the present Five Year Plan of Bhutan, out of the total devoted external aid of Nu/Rs 6600 cr. (UNDP 2000; Kuensel 2015), India's contribution of Rs. 4500 cr., represents 68 per cent of the total external help and 49 per cent of the capital expenditure of RGOB's Nu 9200 cr.

Moreover, to improve the Bhutanese economy and help the RGOB come out the problems arising out of the acute INR shortage, the Indian government decided to give Rs. 500 crore as an Economic Stimulus Package (Planning Commission 2007).

"Indian government is also helping in the socio-economic development areas like roads and bridges; education (schools); education (tertiary); health and construction of regional hospitals; engineering services; industries; energy; security; agriculture; livestock; judiciary; civil aviation; roads and urban transport; sports; culture; ICT & e-governance; scholarships and trainings, HRD etc." (Ministry of Economic Affairs 2012: 02-03). Therefore, the Government of India decided to give Project Tied Assistance (PTA) for the financial support of Rs. 4500 crore to Bhutan (Department of Revenue and Customs 2002). To look after these projects and monitor their implementation and progress, several institutional mechanisms have been planned. The Indian-Bhutan Development Cooperation Talks or Annual Plan Talks is the overarching mechanism for discussing India's bilateral assistance to the Bhutanese government. This mechanism includes Project Tied Assistance, Small Development Project (SDP), Programme Grant, Excise Duty Refund, ESP, etc.

Separately, there is also a Project Monitoring Committee (PMC) to monitor the implementation of and fast track the progress of PTA projects. In addition, during the 3rd Indian-Bhutan Development Cooperation Talks in September, 2014 both countries decided to build a Sub-Committee to the Project Monitoring Committee (PMC) to closely monitor the implementation of Project-Tied Assistance projects (RGoB 2012; Kuensel 2015). The sub-committee which is to meet every two months held its first meeting on 18th November 2014.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Economic Cooperation with India (2014), URL: <http://www.indianembassythimphu.bt/pages.php?id=33>.

Similarly, there is a Small Development Project Committee (SDPC) for deciding the Small Development Projects, which are undertaken in batches and meet every 6 to 8 months. Under the 11th Plan, two batches of projects numbering 303 have been agreed upon for implementation (RGoB 2012). To monitor the progress of these projects, the last SDPC meeting decided to set up a sub-committee that will meet every two months. The first meeting is scheduled to be held in January 2015.

On a concluding note, there are several small and big projects, programmes and activities that have been provided from time to time by the Indian government to assist Bhutan in its overall development.

Danish Assistance

For more than 35 years since 1978, through bilateral agencies and various bilateral development cooperation activities from 1985 onwards, Denmark has been providing development assistance to Bhutan. Bhutan was selected as a programme country in 1992 by the Development Corporation and its focus has been on the areas of Urban Development, Health, Environment and Natural Resource Management. Along with this, Denmark has also been supporting democratic decentralization and good governance in the country. In 2011, as per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, Denmark has given assistance, in today's prices, of almost 1.4 billion DKK to Bhutan from 1989 till 2009. The population of the country is approx 700,000; accordingly, the assistance provided by Denmark comes around 2,000 DKK per person which is the highest per capita assistance provided by Denmark to any of its 15 partner countries. For many years now, Denmark has been second largest bilateral assistance provider after India (Ministry of External Affairs 2012: 97).

Bhutan prepared its first country strategy for the period of 1998-2002. In the second country strategy of 2003-07, as a priority sector, education was added to the strategy. Based on both "Developmental Priorities of Bhutan and Denmark's development policies", in May 2008, the third country strategy for 2008-2013 was endorsed. The third country strategy is fully aligned to Bhutan's Tenth Five Year Plan. The 10th Five Year plan is also the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Bhutanese Government (RGoB 2012; IMF 2004). In the strategy it was decided that Bhutan will continue to be a Danish programme country for development assistance. But, looking at the

positive results of the economic trend, it was decided in 2008 that after 2013 the Danish assistance will regularly be phased out for Bhutan.

Since 1990-91, India has been the largest grant donor to Bhutan at 60 per cent of every increasing expenditure (without including the support provided to the power sector), and for 2009-10 it was 72 per cent. As per 2011, data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, Denmark on the other hand has been the second largest donor at 10 per cent accumulated support and 8.2 per cent of total grant support for 2009-10. For achieving great results within the key sectors, the Danish support has provided a substantial contribution (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010).

In 2014-15, the last contribution from the transition support programme was reduced to 3-4 per cent of the total grant support. With reduced support, it is a strategic challenge to focus on those areas where a final phasing-out support ensures sustainability of the results achieved and where a promotion of sustainable partnerships that outlast the support period can be done. So now, the programme's components as per the strategic selection are as follows:

1. The areas where the Danish support was given have mostly achieved the objectives. At national level, good results have been achieved in public management and also under the environmental policies and administration in the areas of health, education and good governance. No additional major help is required from the phasing-out programme towards these objectives as the above-mentioned results have been measured as sustained by the government and there are significant supporting development partner commitments. Other than LGSP & civil society components, the Good Governance Support Program and the Social Sector Support Program have been measured to have attained their objectives by the end of 2013 as per the Gross National Happiness Commission, 2013. Towards the end of 2013, it was expected that sufficient capacity development had happened on both national and local levels and they can continue working on further capacity development for the Joint Support Programme of the environment capacity development, and for that, at the program approval stage, only the exit strategy was envisaged (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012; Gross National Happiness Commission 2013).

2. The need for support, continued or last, is be present in a few areas. The civil society development is in an emerging stage and it is just the beginning of the improvement of the decentralization-based devolution of various existing mandates and making available all the resources to the local governments. The Civil Society Organization Authority Act of Bhutan, 2007, says that within the environment, there is satisfactory progress in activities and results, but generally the measurement of results and particularly those within the environment needs improvement.⁶⁷ That will particularly benefit the Bhutanese government's institutional capacity in the long run. Falling in line with the support programme's overall objective for duration beyond the transition period, it would also benefit the way of measuring the results that are achieved. Additionally the Danish would gain from the learning experiences from the successful completion of developmental assistance and the exit process once the assistance period is over.

3. The programme's second overall objective is also achieved partly, i.e. to encourage institutional partnerships further than the support period (including the private sector associations). In the part ahead, we have summarised the details of the background and logic behind the selection of various components for the support of the transition (Ministry of External Affairs 2012:44).

Good Local Governance

There has been a constructive shift towards further decentralization in Bhutan. In 2008, since its transition to constitutional democracy, both the Constitution and the Local Governments Act of Bhutan 2007 have focused on giving more authority and power to act, to the local level elected representatives and various decentralized bodies.⁶⁸

The working on an amended local Government Act (2009) to merge the rural and urban legal systems delayed the local government elections.

The elections were accordingly rescheduled to be held by June 2011. By Mar 2011, the mid-term reviews of the developments on the Tenth Five year Plan implementation for every local government's development were also completed.

⁶⁷ Civil Society Organization (2007), URL:<http://www.csoa.org.bt/>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

The speed of change in Bhutan is affected due to some human resource limitations. In the *dzongkhags* and *gewogs*, it is one of the main challenges to effective capacity building. Some growth has happened in terms of transferring experts to these levels. They still need some skill development training and the recently elected members also require training in local governance, planning and implementation to facilitate them to carry out their responsibilities (Chhoden 2009: 55). Denmark is working on the challenges faced by Bhutan and is also trying to provide effective support in the process of good governance in the country.

Denmark has helped Bhutan since July 2008, in areas of decentralization, setting up and streamlining of the democratic institutions and the civil society with a focus all the way through the Good Governance Support Programme (GGSP). By 2013, i.e. the end of the programme (Denmark 2012:77), it will furnish help to the democratic institutions namely to the National Land Commission and to The Royal Court of Justice. After the election in 2011, the reform of decentralisation is gaining speed and the first local government has been elected. Also, the local governments still continue to get capital grants annually. The reform procedure needs and wants constant support further than just for the conclusion of the existing joint Local Governance Support Programme (LGSP). Now, most of the financial support (more than 80 per cent) is provided by the government towards the capital grants given annually. There is work going on to formulate a policy on continuing the joint local governance capacity development so that there can be work done in the direction of the capacity development of the chosen voted members and also for that of the staff. For the capacity growth activities and the capital grant mechanism, up to the year 2013, the time till end of the programme, adequate financial support was to be made available. Till the time that the government is able to fully continue the devolution, for the duration of 2013-15, it is significant that further support is always forthcoming for the programme. The infrastructure works requiring high capital investments like that of roads, electricity, water supply, *gewog* offices etc., have been planned and clearly outlined to be completed by the end of the 10th Five Year Plan. It seems that this would lead to reduction in the need for annual capital grants but the demand for annual recent support will rise as per the 2011 DIPD Mission Report: Bhutan. The present expenditures are completely funded by the Government and it should be able to do so in the future too with increasing revenues (Danish 2011; Bhutan 2012)

Danish assistance to the development of the civil society has been to a certain extent helpful in promoting the appropriate legalisation made possible for the various upcoming civil society organizations to be formed. As per the Civil Society Organization Authority Act of Bhutan, 2007, significant development has been made with the setting-up and establishment of the Civil Society Organizations Authority and the Civil Society Organizations Funds Facility. However, the development is still in a fragile state. A final support through the established instruments is necessary to reach out to the non-formal voluntary community groups that are non-registered and are in the rural areas and support is also required to assist and make additional civil society organizations self-sustainable by becoming lawful and by being liable to their own revenue generation and also being liable to arrange for the access to external sources.⁶⁹

The Joint Evaluation done by the Danish-Bhutanese Country Programme 2010 has recommended constant support to achieve further sustainable development for the capacity of local government and the CSOs (Civil Society Organization). To merge and improve the sustainability of the outcomes attained throughout the earlier programmes, Denmark will keep on supporting this TSP component (Danish 2011: 17).

Development Objective

As per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, 2011, the development objective of good governance is ‘realization of good governance principles in Bhutan.’ That consists of two sub-objectives and each of those objectives forms the base for the sub-components of the programme:

Immediate Goal One

Is for the local levels to enhance democratic governance and to effectively deliver services as a method to contribute to achieve the MDGs and to reduce poverty (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Danida 2011). The support under the Gewog Annual Capital Grant is targeted to improve the ability of the staff and selected members of the local administration and is working on their capacity development.

⁶⁹ Civil Society Organization (2007), URL:<http://www.csoa.org.bt/>.

Immediate Goal two

To encourage social welfare, Denmark will continue supporting the Non-State Actors (i.e. CSOs) to make the civil society stronger and to improve the conditions of life and its quality for the people of Bhutan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010; 2011).

Since the formation of development cooperation with Bhutan, Danida has decided to give a very high priority to the measurement of results. Results measurement is as per the policy and about aligning with the national monitoring and reporting system. The 'Health Sector Programme Support initiated and the Education Sector Programme Support' adopted various Budgeting Planning and Monitoring tools (Ministry of Health 2012). The Bhutan Government's introduction of "PlaMS"—the Planning and Monitoring System and adoption of the Results-Based Management— is in line with the Danish support. In fact they both are well aligned on the same. Under the Environment and Urban SPS, reconsideration of the 'National Monitoring and Evaluation System (NMES)' and support for further development of the PlaMS were extended. Also as per the Ministry of Information and Communication, 2015, the Government of Bhutan introduced budgeting and expenditure management system that is web-based. This falls in line with its focus on measuring results from development interventions. The three systems of Planning & Monitoring, Budgeting and Expenditure are being integrated and the project is right now at an advanced stage. This would in due course of time will result in the making of a more efficient and fast reporting and results measurement (Ministry of Information and Communication 2015: 86).

For the sustainability of the above achievements, the programme will provide support for its continued development. Also, under the Transition Support Programme it will provide support for the complete integration of the different individual monitoring systems. Also for developing environmental statistical and evaluation capacities, the programme will provide support for the integration of the GNH Index.

Objective: Development

For development, the objective is that for enhancing the performance assessment of development interventions, a single window is established for data entry, analysis and presentation of the same (Denmark 2012).

Immediate Goals

Are to improve the capacity to evaluate the Danish-Bhutanese Country Programme results and to evaluate the Tenth Plan, to institutionalize presentation monitoring and evaluation and to improve the integrated planning, budgeting, monitoring and accounting system, expand and operationalise environmental data and accounting capacity and give training on result based management to more than 5,000 public sector officials.

Institutional Partnerships

The 2008-2013 Denmark-Bhutan country strategy stresses that it is vital for Bhutan and Denmark over the next 5 to 10 years to prioritize new relations, which can make sure of constant cooperation after the phasing out of the development support. As per Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, 2010, in the post-2013 programme support stage and throughout the remaining part of the strategy stage, some more focus will be on some specific new areas where there are proper and practicable partnerships. The focus will also be on continuing encouragement of the institutional assistance between Denmark and Bhutan in those areas where there has been previous recognition of cooperation. The purpose of establishing and enhancing the cooperation between the self-governing institutions or associations of Denmark and Bhutan is to promote relations and cooperation that can be continued without the help of the government-to-government cooperation particularly between the civil society and the private sector (Denmark 2012: 25).

As per the Planning Commission, 1999, during the prior years of development cooperation, institutional connections and exchange visits were approved in areas like health, environment, local governance, judiciary, parliamentary, etc. (Planning Commission 1999). This has been completed in several cases on a formal basis as well. The focus has been on those key areas where proper assistance can actually help in establishing some long sustainable partnerships significant for maintaining the Danish-Bhutanese mutual cooperation. This cooperation should not be integrated in any of the on-going support programmes up to 2013.

Development Goal

As mentioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, 2011, the development objective is as follows: to contribute to the programme's objective for development which is to continue and to consolidate the institutional linkages within the selected focal areas; to work towards sustainable partnership improvement between various private, public and civil institutions of both countries (Bhutan and Denmark) and to work towards sustaining the results achieved through the completed Danish-Bhutanese programmes (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011).

Immediate Goal

The urgent objective is the “evolution to a new form of long-term co-operation through institutional sustainable partnerships, such a co-operation should not be dependent on government support.” Such partnerships should be based on mutual interest and benefits with the possibility of learning from exchange of knowledge and experiences (Denmark 2012; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). The Danes are providing their support to the Bhutanese government for other areas or issues like gender, environment and democratization and respect for human rights, apart from good governance, result measurement, and partnership.

Gender

The government of Bhutan is devoted to gender parity and women's empowerment and also is working on finding solutions to removing poverty and eradicating food shortage. “Bhutan government supports all different conventions and global compacts as the MDGs, SDGs, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In the 10th Five Year Plan (2008-2013), Women in Development is described as an intersecting topic” (Gross National Happiness Commission 2013: 23). By growing female representation in local governments, the TSP is to improve and continue providing support to the area of gender mainstreaming by building the capacity targeted to women-elected representatives, prioritize help to CSOs which deals with the gender issues, gather gender disaggregated information and investigation of the information wherever achievable, make sure of a gender-balanced participation, mainstream gender in the local governance capability progress approach (RGoB 2012), incorporate gender as

crosscutting concerns in PlaMs, and in short make sure that gender is mainstreamed in the study projects and cooperation mechanisms.

Environment

The Bhutanese Constitution brings in an Article on Environment. Bhutan is a participant of various multilateral environmental accords, thereby executing them towards the international responsibilities regarding the management of environment and natural resources (Danish Metrological Institute 2009). A treaty was concluded for 'Food and Agriculture about Plant Genetic Resources'. Various directing policies and the National Environment Strategy- "The Middle Path" is also ready as required. As per Andersen et al. (2006), the government is committed to keep Bhutan's position as a net sink for greenhouse gases including slow structure capacity for green accounting by keeping on absorbing more carbon than released. This also coincides with the fifteenth Conference of Parties (COP15) held in December 2009, which was of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In April 2010, it has been incorporated in the 'Economic Development Policy (the apex policy document)'. It says that the industries should develop as well as engage in cleaner construction. Along with the environmental component construction, the preparation of District Environment Committees, posting of District Environment Officers in every 20 districts of Bhutan, the sectoral institutional squads are being further strengthened. Their capacity to look after, protect and advance the atmosphere is constantly being followed upon. The environmental monitoring arrangements are using indicators that are result-based and are weak. Also in the private sector, the non-governmental stakeholders are gradually playing their part in this.

Democratization and Respect for Human Rights

To all Bhutanese citizens, the Constitution ensures fundamental rights. Arranged in the Constitution is free education to all school-going age children up to the tenth standard and access to free basic health facilities. Recently, to assure the rights of people in detention and to make sure that there is freedom of media, few new laws and regulations have been adopted (Constitution Drafting Committee 2007). Pursuing the idea of basic human rights, it is a compulsion by the state to make sure that in its territory the individuals have a peaceful and facilitating environment to live a pleased

and satisfied life. This is described under the notion of Gross National Happiness (GNH). In Bhutan, both the idea of human rights and human rights-based approach to development is not talked about much. However, it should be distinguished that Bhutan has progressed enormously in terms of social justice and development rights. For example, with a sizable capital spending in the education sector and the health sector, Bhutan is one of the selected few countries in the world that meet its part of the 20:20 compact (20 per cent of public investment in health and education). Apparently, it seems that there is a very strong obligation in the Constitution in the direction to the State to fulfil its commitments to its citizens (Chhoden 2009).

In December 2009, the first Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights was offered to the UN Human Rights Council. As per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, 2011, quite a few issues were raised and accordingly some steps were taken to encourage gender parity, the issue of media freedom, reunion of women and children in the refugee camps with their relatives and families in Bhutan, etc. The Government ensured to consider the same and put the suggestions up in the Parliament for deliberation.

All the issues of democratization and human rights will be addressed by the TSP which would help to work towards reforming the local government and the civil society. The process of results measurement and the cooperation component will be a major requirement in this.

The TSP majorly consists of supporting the basic three components: Danish-Bhutanese Partnership, Results Measurement and Good Governance i.e. both the Local Governance and the Non-State Actors. The table given below provides a general idea of 2008-2013 programmes and of the transition period:

Table 6: Transition Support Programme

<i>Support Areas</i>	<i>Transition period 2011/12-2014/15</i>							
	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>
<i>2008-2013 Programmes</i>								
<i>Social Sectors; Health, Education, and VET</i>								
<i>Environment</i>								
<i>Good Governance*</i>								
<i>Transition Support Programme**</i>								
<i>Good Governance</i>								
<i>Results Measurement</i>								
<i>Partnerships</i>								
<i>Other Important Areas</i>								
<i>Local Grant Authority***</i>								
<i>Private Sector****</i>								

**The Good Governance Programme 2008-2013 consists of three components: Local Governance Support Programme, Support to Governance Institutions and Support to Non-State Actors.*

***The Transition support will be from 2011/12 to 2014/15. The last disbursement will be in end-2014.*

****Administered by LOD, the Local Grant Authority is a grant facility to support the smaller projects in Bhutan. The projects have to mainly support the capacity building of Bhutanese institutions and different sorts of pilot projects. The final grants will be committed latest by 2012, for activities to be implemented up to 2013.*

*****The initiative financed through Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen (Mixed Credit programmes, Business to Business, Innovative Partnerships for Development) and not financed through the country programme. There is no guarantee for the continued existence of these initiatives beyond 2013.*

JICA

In 1964, Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Bhutan started when an agriculture specialist from a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was sent to Bhutan. Japan gave its assistance to help focus on agriculture and the essential infrastructural progress. Japan's policy has been to offer ODA in line with Bhutan's specifically unique development values and needs. Japan and Bhutan recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of their diplomatic relations. Looking back on Japan's ODA to Bhutan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan has given a go ahead to the commissioning of this assessment work.

Objective of Japan's ODA to Bhutan

There are three objectives of Japan's ODA to Bhutan: "support Bhutan's efforts towards the political reform, advancement of development suited to Bhutan's unique situation and deepening of friendly relations between Japan and Bhutan" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2009: 15). The study re-examined the ways in which the individual actions had supported towards the fulfilment of these objectives, and to the level to which they were successful.

The Japanese citizens that are living in Bhutan are mostly JICA-associated volunteers and the JICA employees. The supporter agencies and the government officials have a particularly top level of understanding of the volunteers. The agro-specialist in Bhutan for 28 years since 1964, Mr. Keiji Nishioka, is a single foreign national yet honoured with the voluntary rank of "Dasho" (equivalent level of undersecretary) by His Majesty. He is generally famous in Bhutan as "Dasho Nishioka" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2007: 16). Some of Japan's ODA plans such as 2KR have been given special recognition in Bhutan and have been marked on special postage stamps. The press and other media frequently report Japan's ODA to Bhutan. For example, Kuensel (published twice a week since 2005), Bhutan's only newspaper until April 2006, published in a period of 2 years approximately 30 articles about Japan's assistance. This means printing an article at a speed of more than one a month. In the encouragement of friendly relations among Japan and Bhutan, Japan's ODA has performed a huge role (Freedom House 2005) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2009: 24). Although it is complicated but looking at the sizable contribution of

Japan's ODA, constant assistance from Bhutan for Japan's place in the international arena, the interchangeable tours of both the countries' top-ranking officers, the activities of the Japan-Bhutan Friendship Association and other such associations, it can be surmised that a favourable relationship among Japan and Bhutan has further strengthened.

In track with the latest developments in Bhutan are Japan's plans and training on Local Governance and Decentralization. The communication among the central office and local offices has become well-organized owing to the support provided by Japan for the development of a domestic telecommunications set-up. This has also contributed to the strengthening of local governance according to interviews with the local Bhutanese officials at various levels. As per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2009, there has been mentionable improvement of development that is according to Bhutan's distinctive location. Bhutan is making good headway towards moving away from being a "Least among Less-Developed Countries" (LLDC) towards working on "poverty reduction" even though one-third of the Bhutanese population is still living under the poverty line. Basically, the Bhutanese status has changed from being a "Low" to an "Average" human development nation. According to the UNDP's Human Development Report of 2005, the human development index of Bhutan had jumped up from 0.338 in 1994 to 0.536 in 2003. The support of Japan, Bhutan's major contributor apart from for India, must have made an involvement to this development (UNDP 2005: 45-49).

Rural and Agriculture Development

Agriculture area is one of the key businesses in Bhutan; it accounts for 27 per cent of GDP and involves 79 per cent of the functioning population of the country. It has been identified by the Government of Bhutan as a main concern development area (Ministry of Agriculture 2004; 2010). Japan has given a lot of support in this area. Japan has been one of the main supporters for the overall development of agriculture including the improvement of rural roads, the dispatch of professionals and agriculture mechanization. From the "Five-Year 2005" renamed as "Grant Assistance for Underprivileged Farmers", hereafter mentioned as "2KR", the core programme in Japan's agriculture area support is to help in Increasing Food Production. This core programme is broadly recognized both in the government and by the people of

Bhutan. As per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009 and JICA, 2014, 19 times Japan has expanded 2KR to Bhutan in a period of 20 years since 1984. According to the statistics provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Bhutan, the main grain crops with an annual produce, namely rice, wheat and maize, increased almost three-fold from in 1990 from 56.56 billion tonnes to in 2004 to 150.50 billion tonnes (See Table). The target of achieving food (grains) self-sufficiency is one of the main national challenges of Bhutan. The foodgrains self-sufficiency ratio improved from 66 per cent in 1997 to 86.2 per cent in 2004 (Ministry of Agriculture, 2010). “From these evidences, it can be agreed that Japan’s support has made a great involvement to agricultural development in Bhutan” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2009: 20). The farmers that were using power tillers either by purchase or by rental under the 2KR plan, in various interviews with them, it was strongly established that the agricultural occupation has been made well-organized. As a result of the enhancement in agricultural occupation, there is a raise in their incomes leading to the enhancement of the standard of living of the farmers. Also as per the Ministry of Agriculture, 2010, the equivalent finances have been put in reserve from side to side and for the development of roads for agriculture and of irrigational infrastructure there has been an efficient use of the 2KR. In conclusion, it can be evidently said that Japan’s technological support has contributed sizably towards the gaining and spreading of the knowledge about the cultivation of fruits and vegetables as they are high value-adding crops (Ministry of Agriculture 2010: 17).

Table 7: Change in the Production of Major Grain Crops

Production (million tonnes)	1990	1992	1996	1999	2000	2002	2003	2004
Rice	31,321	28,561	42,501	45,213	68,574	63,753	45,807	54,326
Maize	23,000	26,051	47,598	47,598	77,299	66,178	49,683	90,567
Wheat, Barley	3,246	3,481	8,501	10,437	6,110	6,342	5,749	5,613
Total	56,567	58,095	98,598	103,247	151,990	136,280	101,237	150,504

Source: Documents provided by the Ministry of Agriculture

The major beneficiaries of the support have only been those farmers that fall in higher than average income levels and those who could have enough money to buy the equipment as 2KR. Also, the number of farmers who wanted to buy power tillers was more than the number of power tillers extended through 2KR so a number of farm households had to wait quite a few years to buy a power tiller. With the utilization of the equipment, the farm households that have bought the equipment are improving their incomes and standard of living year on year (JICA 2014; RGoB 2012e). In relation to this, involvement is there from the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure a fair distribution of the benefits of 2KR among deserving farmers. For example, it is encouraging the buying of equipment by groups of farm households and it has also formed an instruction for the allocation of agricultural machinery. Bhutan is situated in a precipitous mountain area and the use of power tillers and other equipment is not easy as there are a major number of rural areas where farming can happen only on narrow and steep slopes. There is no decent access to roads in some places. Some areas are even deprived of access to the marketplace for agricultural commodities. The poverty rate is high in these areas (Ministry of Agriculture 2004; 2010). Japan's work on supporting agricultural promotion and its work on improving the access to remote areas has been targeted at areas such as Thimphu and Paro that are isolated from the urban areas. It is thought that to the isolated areas where access to the national roads is difficult, there has been incomplete direct support. As per JICA, 2014 and RGoB, 2012, conscious of various poverty spots that are present in every area which are hard to access, there is a rising significance of support. This is including the support already provided by Japan for projects like the Improvement of Machinery and Equipment and like the Construction of Agricultural Roads in Rural Areas (RGoB 2012).

Transportation Development

In Bhutan, roads are the single means of transportation since there is no railway or domestic air routes. The major limitation of the development of the nation is the underdevelopment of the roads. Japan has expanded the machines in the roads and bridges area ensuring the development and repairs of roads and replacing bridges as required. As also mentioned by JICA, 2006, 2007, 2014, this has contributed immensely to improving the road safety and towards recovering the facility of road

traffic. The same has been appreciated by Bhutan's Department of Roads. This could not be quantitatively completed since there is no statistical information presented. In addition to Japan, it is also supported by India, the World Bank and ADB. Although Japan's support is incomplete on a financial contribution basis, it has a greater presence than that of the other contributors in this area because of the value addition happening due to Japan's posting of professionals and volunteers. Very strong and high quality bridges have been built with Japan's support even though not anything can be said regarding their direct links to results (UNDP 2012). It is believed that Japan's involvement in this area has been extremely useful.

As per the CDM FS Report, 2012, presently Japan has not just determined details about the economic feasibility but also on the electrification in rural areas which is of high significance in relation to poverty reduction in the eyes of India, the World Bank, ADB, and all the other organizations providing support for large-scale hydropower generation projects. "In the electric power area, Japan's support contains (a) The Rural Electrification Master Plan Study, (b) The Feasibility Study on the Development of Punatsangchhu Hydropower Project and (c) 13 small hydraulic power generators expanded through funding support" (CDM FS Report 2012: 20).

The goal of "100 percent rural electrification" has been established by the Government of Bhutan. As per RGoB, 2012, the 'Department of Energy in Bhutan's Ministry of Trade and Industry rates the Rural Electrification Master Plan of Japan' mostly on how much it meets the requirements of Bhutan and also helps in the drawing up of a plan to complete the above-mentioned goal (RGoB 2012: 18).

Through funding support from 1991 to 1998, Japan provided support to the information and communications area in a concentrated way. Considering the financial numbers, after the agriculture area, the second major percentage of Japan's ODA to Bhutan was to the information and communications area (Ministry of Information and Communication 2015: 33). Integrating the telephone system that was earlier divided into three separate regional systems into a single nationwide system is Japan's major involvement in this area as it led to enlarging the telephone penetration rate, completely touching the lives of the people who live in the regions that are geographically remote and quite distant (Ministry of Labour and Human Resources 2010: 12). The increase in the count of main phone lines has happened

from a figure of just 1,900 lines in 1990 to 33,200 lines in 2005. A series of training equipments was developed through the technological collaboration project executed from 2003 to 2005 and even after the end of the project, Bhutan Telecom is still using these equipments. This is helpful to carry on the development of the IT and human resources (JICA 2014; Ministry of Information and Communication 2015).

Social Development

Through its ODA to Bhutan, in the area of social development, Japan has invested only a small amount financially. It is hard to calculate the level to which results have been attained, as the initial funding aid support for the education area and the Project for Construction of Educational Facilities has started just recently. The World Bank, India and several other contributors are providing main support to this area. The support provided by Japan is focused on posting of volunteers and on the grassroots funding aid projects. Although Japan's support is of small financial involvement but the education indicators have shown quite a noticeable improvement. For example, as seen from JICA, 2006, 2007, the rate of attendance in primary school improved from 55 per cent in 1990 to 84 percent in 2004. But it cannot be attributed much to Japan's support for the changes in these indicators. So, it would be appropriate to say that Japan's support in this area has been limited.

According to Bhutan's Ministry of Education, 2012, the equipment and materials that expanded through Japan's "grassroots funding aid" and "cultural funding aid" projects are being used successfully; it can be said without doubt that in the targeted schools they have made a contribution in expanding the educational situation. It is to be mentioned here that to confirm this due to time constraints, the assessment team was not able to visit the schools (Ministry of Education 2012: 16-20).

The secondary schools under construction are being constructed with Japanese aid even though the construction expenses for these schools are higher than those constructed by other supporters. It is supposed that the quality of the construction would be improved and this could ultimately keep down maintenance and administration expenses. The Ministry of Education also appreciated the same (JICA 2014; Ministry of Education 2010). Since 2000, for more than the last 10 years, Japan has extended general funding aid in the area of health for necessary medical equipments related to maternal and child health and for necessary supplies for vaccinations. The necessary supplies also included the vaccines through multilateral

and bilateral collaboration with the UNICEF. As per the reports of Ministry of Health, 2006 and 2012, through visits to site and from various interviews conducted with the officials of the Ministry of Health and related services, information has been obtained that indicates that the equipment and supplies received under the general funding aid project have mainly been utilized efficiently. There has been great improvement in the mortality rate for both under 5 years and infant mortality rate in the duration between 1994 and 2005 (refer Table). The infant mortality rate has reduced more than 43 per cent, improving tremendously from 70.7 per 1,000 births to 40.1 per 1,000 births. The under 05 years mortality rate has reduced by more than 35 per cent, improving from 96.9 per 1,000 births to 61.5 per 1,000 births. It can be rightly said in this case that the multilateral and bilateral partnership has helped Bhutan to considerably improve on these indicators. It is also clear that various tools and supplies that have been provided by Japan have helped a lot in the progress of these indicators. However, there have been various functioning problems in the latter programme (Ministry of Health 2008; 2012). Like for example, a clear division of roles between the Bhutan country office of UNICEF and that of the office of JICA has been uncertain. Also, Japan's involvement has not been adequately broadcast by the UNICEF Bhutan country office (National Report for United Nation 2012). In the beginning of 2006, it was decided to have regular meetings between the officials to work on all these points. India, Denmark, and others are the main supporters in the area of health. As mentioned in JICA, 2014, it is concluded that, apart from the above, Japan's support is not adequate enough for the health area that is focused on grassroots funding aid projects and on the providing volunteers.

Table 8: Change in Major Maternal and Child Health Indicators

	1984	1990	1994	2000	2005
Under 5 mortality rates (per 1,000 births)	162.1	123.01	96.8	85	61.6
Infant mortality rates (per 1,000 births)	104.0	91.0	70.8	60.6	40.2
Maternal mortality rates (per 1,000 births)	771	561	381	254	NA
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)		8*	10.8	23.7	49.1

*: 1987

Sources: (Ministry of Health) National Health Survey 1990, 1994, 2000; Annual Health Bulletin 2006; 6th Five Year Plan.

Good Governance

In 2004, the catalogue of priority domains added Good Governance to the list. There is one project by the name of “The Local Governance and Decentralization Project”; it has been worked on under the same domain. Also additionally as per Chhoden (2009), Japan has acquired a huge number of trainees and has also acquired a good number of prefectural governors (heads of *dzongkhags*). It is not easy to calculate the degree of Japan’s involvement, because its contribution has been quantitatively incomplete in relation to the strengthening of the government’s capability for the advancement of decentralization and to the collective involvement of the supporters for the same.

As per the Chhoden (2009) and RGoB (2012), the Bhutanese Government under the 10th Five Year Plan has decided to go for funding by setting up a funds distribution system to distribute funds to the localities in every block. It is understood from JICA, 2007 and 2014 that Japan’s support is in line with the needs of Bhutan regarding the planning and execution of development policies and working on the local capacity-building towards the same (Chhoden 2009; RGoB 2012). To conclude, it can be said that Japan’s contribution has been both timely and significant together with its support for comparable activities by the UNDP.

European Commission Assistance

As Bhutan experiences a challenging procedure of decentralization, democratization, and political change, Good Governance becomes progressively more significant.

As per the European Commission, 2010 report, as Bhutan shifts in the direction of the promulgation of its new Constitution and Parliamentary democracy, it is presumed that Bhutan’s institutions of democratic governance will have to be really reinforced.

To maintain the developments occurring in Bhutan, the EC will focus the extent of its development commitments in the following three focal areas (European Commission 2010, 2014):

Renewable Natural Resources Programme

The EC identifies that activities under a planned RNR area plan should be in line with the policies and priorities of the Bhutanese government, contained in the 9th Five

Year Plan 2002-2008 and in the policies and priorities at present under consideration for the 10th Plan (RGoB 2012), and therefore there is a requirement of integrated strategy for the development of the RNR area.

To recognize and identify whether the circumstances and institutional set-up in Bhutan are favourable to a sector-wide approach, and therefore whether it is possible to execute a sector policy; for the duration of the Identification stage, the EC help to the RNR area would amount to an examination.

The potential policy goals for the RNR area for the 10th FYP are: (1) To improve sustainable rural living; (2) To preserve and encourage a sustainable use of water resources and forests; (3) To endorse a sustainable use of arable agriculture and pasture land resources; and (4) To improve food safety.

Therefore, the EC assistance would be within a comprehensive area policy support agenda, ensuring intra-sectoral consistency among the different RNR sub-areas, such as Medicinal Plants.

Reflecting Bhutan's approach to development in the background of preserving its biodiversity and management of natural resources as it expands its financial system, there would also be a plan to assist the inter-sectoral consistency among the RNR area and other areas that have an effect on resource management, such as tourism, infrastructure, transportation, etc.

Good Governance

The EC allotment would be around 20 per cent of the total CSP allotment. Through budget help projects in the present ongoing Development Cooperation, the EC is helping good governance at both the *Dzongkhag* and *Gewog* levels. By concentrating on conversation and cooperation with the Bhutanese government, this can be further improved along cross-cutting ideas such as the delivery of facilities, convenience of facilities, and transparency of government at every levels, unavailability, and rule of law. Including innovative techniques to enhance delivery of services to deal with poverty, gender problems, institutional improvements, and public area management, the EC will concentrate on top procedures in good governance, decentralized

decision-making and best procedures in development. This support could appear in the form of budgetary help (European Commission 2014: 36-40).

Trade Facilitation:

The EC distribution would be around 20 percent of the entire CSP distribution. In order to advance both the infrastructure and the quality of the manufacture targeting export markets, this help would aspire to reinforce the export ability of Bhutan, and in particular the Trade Development Office jointly with the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other support organizations or private area associations to facilitate Bhutan's private area exporters. It could give support to area associations and export endorsement bodies and it will assist producers to meet export needs (European Commission 2014: 42).

The assistance given through the existing EC-funded Trade Development Project will give the essential support to build on. This will assist Bhutan in the growth of its international trade policy framework in line with the WTO accession procedure and overall developmental goals. To make sure that the Bhutanese national legislation can be brought into WTO fulfilment, an involvement is expected.

Conclusion

It is understandable that in Bhutan the affect of IGOs for the state of the socio-economic areas is increasing currently. This effect does not mention the increase in the figure of public interest and community groups in socio-economic performances but also in the diversity and scale of such activities. It was observed that there were lots of IGOs functioning particularly in the social area of Bhutan and in recent years the figure of these organizations has become greater than before. These IGOs contribute to the socio-economic and political development process through several forms of support like investing in development plans, projects, activities, etc., which are determining the development procedure. These forms of support not only provide financial help to Bhutan but also provide ideal circumstances to construct effectual public policies for the interests of their people. In addition, the increase in the diversity of performances and plans mentions not only the growing professionalism with which the major organizations are fulfilling their responsibilities and duties but

the well-built recognition and dependability given to them by national governments and regional and international organizations.

A number of IGOs have also had their involvement at grassroots or at the centre of population levels powerfully and have occupied a very important place in socio-economic projects and plan of Bhutan. They have worked hard to contribute to sustainable development, largely among children, women and vulnerable groups, and with other IGOs all through the area. Their activities describe that they effectively exercise all media of communication, traditional as well as the new communication technologies, to publicize

information to the grassroots and to make up a powerful social area in Bhutan and to provide improved opportunities and atmosphere for the making of public policies in Bhutan.

Chapter: V

Areas of Public Policy: Challenges and Limitations

Social issues, challenges, problems and limitations are encountered by policymakers while implementing public policy and it remains an area of concern to be sorted out. This chapter will focus on the key areas of related issues of public policy and it would talk about various challenges faced by the policymakers while executing the policies, and also make some suggestions for making the implementation process effective in areas like good governance, poverty, youth unemployment, gender disparity, women's situation and health and education.

It is a fact that Bhutan is small nation. Developmental changes have been on a fast pace since the early 1960s in the areas of educational opportunities, health indicators, infrastructure and the economy. But the process of development wasn't hassle-free and smooth at all; it had its own challenges in a variety of areas for a variety of reasons, including illiteracy, youth unemployment, gender inequality and discrimination, decentralization process, regional disparities, the endemic threat of natural disasters and vulnerability to climate besides the absence of decentralized and good governance.

Lack of Good Governance and Decentralization Process

Bhutan is fast moving to achieve its developmental objectives and goals; all these have made the state come to an 'average progress' stage, according to "Human Development Index (HDI), in 2006, and is now ranked 140th in the world (UNHDI 2012). Although Bhutan has witnessed positive economic growth, yet the country is still dependent on aid to achieve its development targets. Inflation remains high due to its landlocked geography and the country imports food products and fuel" (UNDP 2006: 14).

"UNDP defines governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels" (UNDP 1997: 11). According to the UNDP, the definition of good governance comprises some tools, procedures and measurements and through these measurements any individual and group without any pressure could express their views, implement their lawful civil rights, understand

their responsibility and discuss and debate on the dissimilarity in any particular matter. These measurements describe three grounds of authority: political authority, financial authority and organizational authority. Therefore, the UNDP in its every plan has mentioned the above measurements of good governance especially for developing nations. But the World Bank has its definition of the method for measuring good governance which is based on 'Worldwide Governance Indicators' (WGI). "The six indicators used in the latest governance assessment are: (1) voice and accountability, (2) political stability, (3) government effectiveness, (4) regulatory quality (5) rule of law, and (6) control of corruption (Jabeen 2007). These six dimensions cover the political, economic and institutional aspects of governance. These indicators are normative and have a high association with democracy and economic development" (Kaufmann and Kraay 2007: 01.).

But in the context of Bhutan, the definition of good governance is different, which is actually based on its GNH philosophy. The good governance is the fourth pillar of GNH philosophy which fulfils the requirements of democracy in the Bhutanese context. The fourth pillar of GNH is not only to make good laws and institutional arrangements and processes that bring political stability, peace and progress in Bhutan but also complete the above measurements and six dimensions of good governance.

The journey of achieving these targets and measurements of good governance is quite difficult, especially when Bhutan is just entering the democratic process. In this transition phase, the state cannot show a satisfactory result. Still, there are many obstacles in this regard like the morality of equality before the law and definite differences that continue. At the same time, there is lack of accountability and transparency in the government organizations and there is lack of understandable trail for a citizen to request executive results. Therefore, it is important and consequently significant for the Bhutanese government to set up a structure of good governance. Once the Bhutanese government starts working on these issues in the right manner then it will significantly to focus on the small self-governing structures which are playing an important role in the decentralization process (Dessallien 2005: 77).

Figure 2: Components of Good Governance in Gross National Happiness



Source: GNH Commission Thimphu

The Bhutanese government has developed correct procedures for instituting acts, making policies, set of laws and executive instructions which will help in the progress of democracy and along with this Bhutan is also improving the composition of laws which will re-examine the state of development through the newly developed National Assembly. At the same time, this is an optimistic signal that decision-makers observe the required systematic exercise used for the reason of standardization and regulate the lawful position of assured executive instructions, system and policies that is occasionally left undecided. In addition, the growing figure of laws has not been escorted by an immediate attempt to create law-making content as recognized by the usual Bhutanese. As an outcome, an amount of uncertainty frequently survives as to what the act really speaks of and for people in isolated regions, or if not vulnerable, they are obviously facing shortcomings. Practical attempts to make public legislation,

policies, set of laws and instructions would help in tackling this (Devas 2005; Dessallien 2005).

The draft Constitution is in favour of the construction of a Supreme Court, some categories of constitutional commissions and the rule of law. Bhutan's 72 skilled lawyers, owners of Bachelor of Law degrees, are now controlling to keep up with the growth of the recent legal structure. An important human resources ability growth effort will therefore be necessary to convene the requirements of the recent structure.

Control of Corruption

Corruption is an infection that is common to every nation and Bhutan is no exception, as it also suffers from this infection which is an obstacle to good governance. However, it is different from state to state based upon the structure of administration, stage of financial growth, strategy of the government and tradition of the people. In Bhutan it is easily visible in various stages, whether it would be government organizations or the private sector. The roots of this infection were tested by Transparency International and Bhutan got the 46th position among the 180 countries in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (Bhutan Times 2006: 05).

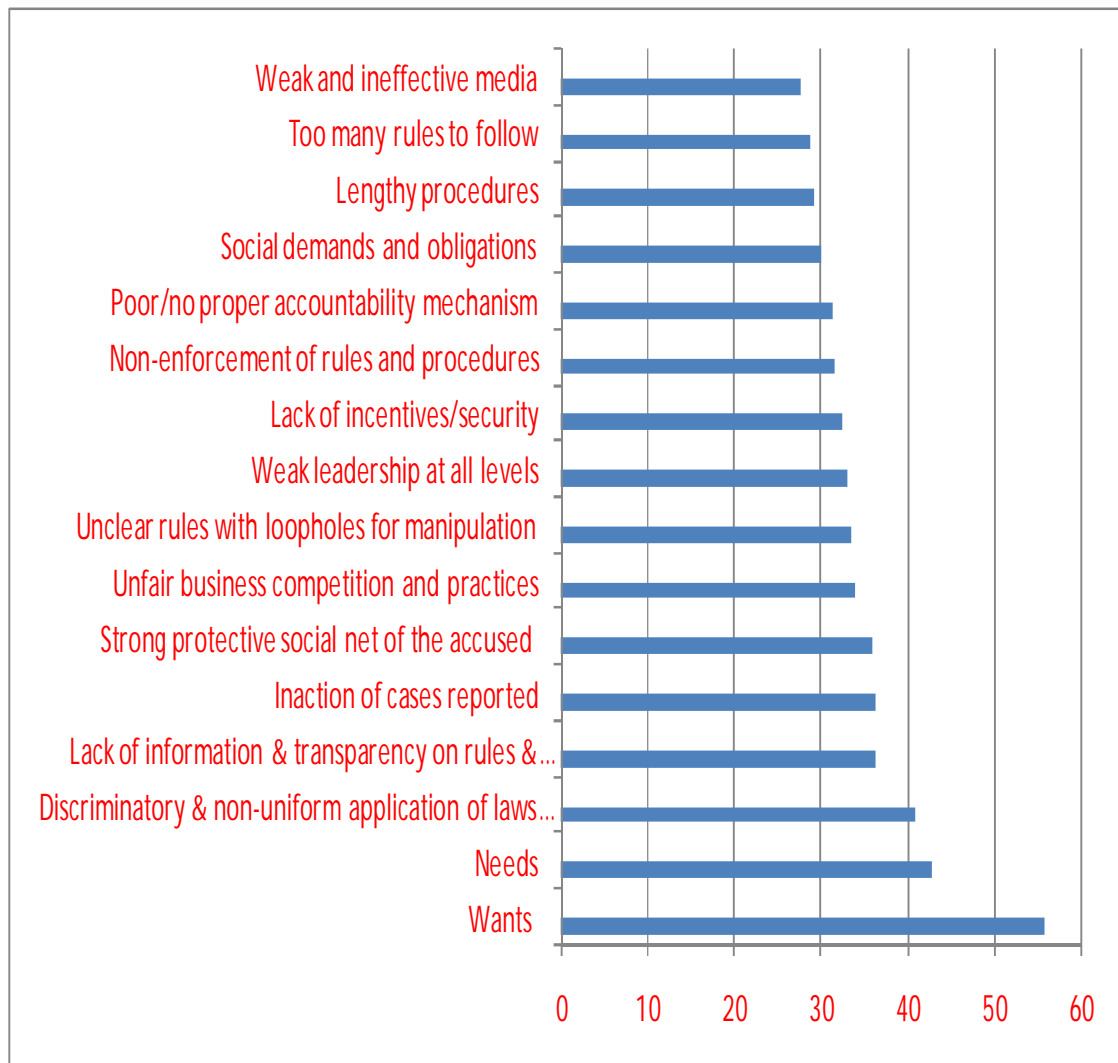
Therefore, the Bhutanese government's main concern in its policies is to control this problem through the construction of effective plans, programmes and commissions. The Fourth King understood that to change the administration in the democratic environment, it is extremely important to remove corruption. Hence during his time period, he passed the verdict of setting up the Anti-Corruption Commission on 31st December, 2006. Therefore, on 4th January 2007, to make the Bhutanese society corruption-free, the ACC Bureau was organized. From the starting, the ACC has been held responsible in finding the cases of corruption in society and carrying perpetrators to task, as well as transferring obstructed and educational plans to make a corruption-free Bhutan. To do this task, the ACC has largely dedicated itself to developing baseline information on corruption like inspecting studies, clarifying public delivery classifications and benefit statements, education and advocacy on corruption, learning the shapes, reasons and consequences of corruption.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Anti Corruption Commission, URL: www.anti-corruption.org.bt/.

Reasons of Corruption

To collect the data of corruption in society, “the ACC conducted a Corruption Perception Survey (CPS) in 2006 and has found that the respondents viewed human wants (55.9 percent), needs (42.8 percent), and discriminatory and non-uniform application of laws and rules (40.9 percent) as the main roots of corruption in Bhutan which is exposed in below figure” (Daniel 2000: 400).

Figure 3: Corruption Perception Survey



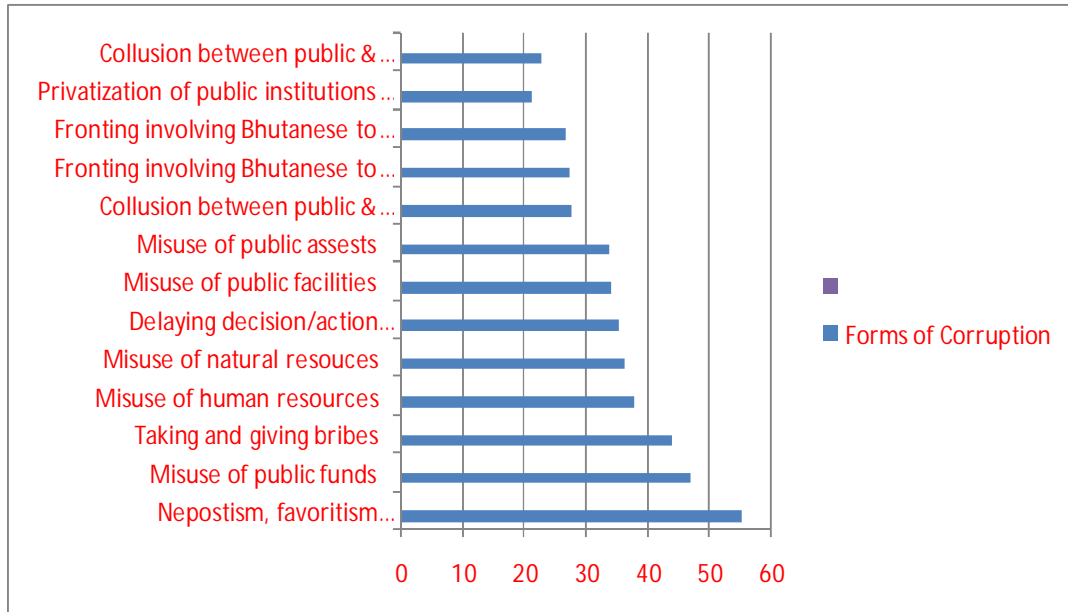
Source: Anti Corruption Commission 2006

Different forms of Corruption in the Bhutanese Society:

According to the Corruption Perception Survey (CPS) which was conducted by the Anti Corruption Commission in 2006, it was found that discrimination and

favouritism are the main cause of corruption in Bhutan which are conducted through the misuse of public property and funds and taking bribes to for any official work (Tshering, 2006).

Figure 4: Different forms of Corruption in Corruption Perception Survey



Source: Anti Corruption Commission 2006.

To fight corruption the Bhutanese government adopted a new strategy of zero tolerance so as to make Bhutan a corruption-free state as well as to construct a strong base for a newly built democratic nation. Since the beginning of the ACC, corruption matters have decreased in Bhutan as compared to the previous times. The ACC managed to slow down the speed of corruption not only in the government organizations but also in the private and business sectors. Along with ACC, the judiciary body of Bhutan is also giving its support to make Bhutan a corruption-free country by solving the pending prosecution cases within a time limit. There are some cases of corruption in which there is lack of evidence beyond reasonable doubt and the judiciary will engage itself as an active mediator in these types of corruption cases (ACC, 2009). Due to the plus point of being a small country it is easy for the government to spread knowledge and information among people about the corruption issues and be always aware of the functioning of government organizations as well as

the private and business sectors which are experiencing incidences of corruption (Kolstad 2006).

Capacity Issue:

The process of decentralization requires a foremost change in the role of the good governance and this process of decentralization also creates more opportunities for local independence and openness to further specific elector areas due to the main element for distributing public policies at every level. The main and lead component of good governance depends on the growth of the organizational ability at all levels of the governments. The growth of organizational skill cannot provide an alternative government if definite steps are not taken to build local a realistic and specialized ability (World Bank 2012). In a small country like Bhutan, the decentralization process plays an active role in the government efforts to engage in the development programmes, makes it easy for the communities to identify priorities and after that according to the need and demand of the communities, to allocate and utilize resources efficiently and effectively. After the devolution of power that took place in 1998 when the King ended his direct rule, the future of Bhutan is to be decided by the elected representatives of the people and not by a single verdict of the King. This devolution increased the roles of the elected representatives in Block Development Committees (BDCs) as well as District Development Committees (DDCs). These elected representatives act as implementers and advisors of selective delegated functions to full decision-makers on issues of their blocks and districts which are affecting the development process (Department of local Governance 2006; Devas 2005).

Therefore, the tasks and workload of organizational workers at these stages have been modified and are they are responsible for instructing the growth programmes in their blocks and districts. The tasks of organizational workers are to counsel the selected representatives in BDCs and DDCs and also provide help in the development programmes. “Thus, the direction and guidance of both selected representatives and organizational workers at the block and district levels are important for certifying that decentralization gets grip and flourishes. However one major factor that has beset decentralization system in Bhutan has been the capacity problem, especially at the local level and even the central government suffers some height of capacity

constraints” (GNHC 2008; 2013). There are some other constraints in the area of good governance like lack of technical knowledge at the block levels (John 2005).

Thus, the government realized that at the block level there is an obvious requirement for further capacity to deal with these constraints and for that in all the blocks, the government of Bhutan has currently appointed a block administrative bureaucrat to personally go and observe the problems which would be partly dealt by the administrative capacity requirement and further concerns at the blocks. This would improve answerability and raise capacity in regular administration.

Issues of Sustainability

Under the Block Development Committee Act, 2002, which provide grants to the blocks in the form of maintaining and using local charges, taxes and further user tariff (GNHC 1987; 2008). According to UNDP 2002, the amount of levy base is very little in Bhutan and the tax gathering at the local level by the BDC is extremely irrelevant in the collection of Nu. 40,000 to Nu. 45,000 , which is not a sufficient amount for the local level development programmes and the plans that are being executed (UNDP 2002). The Bhutanese government has taken many initiatives in this regard like starting the participatory mechanism in the decentralization policy to make the lower levels of government self-dependent and take responsibility and decisions of their own to implement a sizable amount of development work which is suitable for the progress of their blocks. But the situation of sustainability is still being questioned while the government continuously engages in the development initiatives at the block level and given the limited tax base. “The most applicable example would be that of decentralization of the maintenance of the farm roads. Therefore, the blocks rely mostly upon the state support in the form of provision of subsidies and other sectoral grants that are required to resolve the issue of sustainability at the block and district levels” (Choden 2009: 82).

Institutional Challenges in Regard to the Structural Setting of District Development Committees (DDCs)

Apart from the above challenges, the institutional problem is another obstacle in the journey to good governance. Before 2005, the deputy chief district administrative officer was the major leader of the DDC and all authority was in his hands, but in

2005 the government wanted to promote the decentralization policy and for that the government hired the graduate officers as DDC secretaries to distribute the workload among them. As a result, the foremost structural challenge that could hold back the procedure of decentralized decision-making of the DDCs during the taking part of the high administrative official has been defeated. But with the adoption of DDC Act of 2002, the government took a major step in the institutional structure of the local government. After this Act, the Chairman who was earlier appointed by the chief district administrative officer is now elected from among the voting members of the DDC but the position of the Chief District Officer remains as a guest observer (GNHC 2002; 2008; 2013). And this step taken by the Bhutan government proved a great initiative for the decentralization process. Now this step also makes a chairman's role more responsible and effective. The chairman has enough knowledge about the local area and would be more close and in a relaxed situation to pay attention their view in an accurate way. This approach would ease communication among further members of the DDC and the local public (Choden 2009: 83).

Insufficient Resources

The process of decentralization in Bhutan has not only increased local participation in the development programmes and planning but also improved how authorities easily find out the needs and demands of the people. But somewhere this process of decentralization has caused an imbalance in the demand for and supply of the development services. At the local and central level this problem further led to a shortage of resources. However the practice of decentralization has not been implemented properly at the local level due to the dependence for grants on the government. Also, a lack of a sufficient resource base makes the development programmes and activities slow down (Choden 2009: 84). Therefore, there must be a balance between the local requirements and the terms of budgetary assistance offered by the Bhutanese government.

Synchronization Complication among Various Actors and Stakeholders

A lack of coordination and support among the governmental and non-governmental institutions and civil society is another difficult task which is being faced by the Bhutan government. The implementation of effective plans, policies, activities and

development programmes of decentralization depends on coordination among different organizations, while also avoiding an overload (Choden 2009: 85-86).

Problems in Planning and Execution

Planning and execution are a major problem regarding public policies in Bhutan. In the Five Year Plan the Bhutanese government has been focusing on the long-time prioritized activities of blocks which have been polished in the Yearly Block Plans. However the planning and execution procedure extremely depends on the finance obtainable to the central government (GNHC 2013). Therefore, the block level government is facing financial problems. According to a UNDP report of 2005, it was mentioned:

- Under the Five Year Plan, the fund and assistance allocated to the blocks for their development activities and programmes always exceed their limit and thereby result in the non-realization of some activities (Choden 2009: 86-87).
- This report also mentioned that at the district level the implementation capacities at the particular blocks as well as the availability of the capacity to help the implementation process are not taken into account in the Block plans.
- Apart from above points this report also focused that at the district level the specialized assistance staff could not give proper support like specialized estimation and they do not know whether a particular block project and activity will receive funds. Therefore, this results in impractically low-cost budgets or activities which are not workable.

Therefore, based on the above report, the government of Bhutan is encountering various challenges while planning and implementing its public policy process. So in the decentralization process the government has called for increased capacities to the blocks to let go of new tasks and avoid new risks. Now, the central government has put more emphases on the capacity issue and has to deal carefully to address the local government's problems. But there are some issues which are still being questioned like the sustainability of the blocks due to the inadequate levy base collected by the local administration. The existence of the chief executive bureaucrat of the district as the viewer in the DDC could, in various delicate ways, have an unfavourable pressure

on the DDC results. Even though considerable authority is being passed to the local groups of people, the local government is covering resource obstructions to successfully devolve the authority and powers. But, we should also be aware of the resource situation of the government. There are difficulties being faced by the decentralization practice as well the uncoordinated move towards tackling the decentralization structure. This calls for the reformation of the move towards improved synchronization methods. The hindrances in the execution of developmental programmes happen as a result of the need for appropriate synchronization between the local authorities, central divisions and ministries (Choden 2009: 87-88).

Poverty

There are various causes for poverty in Bhutan but the major cause is connected to the nature of the land which makes the Bhutanese life miserable because most of the villages are isolated and the land is extremely rugged and the basic necessary things like health services, education, market and other social needs are not reachable to the people (ADB, 2014). In Bhutan there are several unprivileged districts where individuals have no proper road infrastructure and are forced to reach the nearest road head by walking which takes almost few hours to a few days sometimes. Again the same problem is also being faced by the students who are staying in villages; every day they have to cover two or three hours' journey to reach their school.

In Bhutan the lack of proper land arrangement setting and other assets are comparatively unbalanced and the gap between the rich and poor population in few areas is visible. The current poverty data shows that 12 per cent Bhutanese population are below the national poverty line in the urban areas and in the rural areas, 70 per cent population is facing this problem. The data collected by the Poverty Analysis Report (PAR 2012) which was conducted in 2012, mentions that the poverty index is higher in the rural area (16.7 per cent) as compared to urban area (1.8 per cent). According to the above data, it is shown that there are many causes of poverty in Bhutan like poor road infrastructure, lack of good agricultural productivity, impact of migration of rural-urban population and lack of proper arrangement of markets and commerce (IMF 2010; UNDP 2012). Therefore, in a mountainous country like Bhutan, there is always the situation of shortage of necessary goods, good quality soil for farming and other resources for the survival of the Bhutanese. Along with this

there are always possibilities of imbalance between producing food and producing the amount of money required for existence. There is a shortage of irrigation facilities for farming and a large amount of population in Bhutan fulfils their requirements and make earnings through farming. The support of other countries and donors in this area is also limited, and farm knowledge among the Bhutanese is also at a low level (IMF 2010a; 2; RGoB 2013; RGoB 2007).

The population in Bhutan is rising fast but the speed of resources and other facilities are not on the same speed. Still there are some poor families in Bhutan which do not have their own land to farm and earn a living. In Bhutan, the speed of literacy and guidance is also slow which increases the lack of creative ideas, skills and information technology. The people have scarcely a few possibilities for off-farm facility and for otherwise making profits. Farmers have small or no way towards credit and other monetary facilities. Therefore, these factors make the development slow in Bhutan (BTI 2014: 37).

Along with other causes, natural climatic conditions also linked to poverty in Bhutan such as deluges and tremors, leading to a high demand and price of supplies and basic services and increasing illnesses such as malaria and tuberculosis.

ADB's country report, conducted in 2013, figures out many obstacles which increase the poverty and inequality in Bhutan such as the shortage of opportunities to provide productive and decent employment conditions to the Bhutanese; shortage of education facilities especially in secondary, tertiary and vocational education system and especially in rural areas, where there is a lack of proper technology and connectivity (ADB 2014; BTI 2014). And among these three obstacles the shortage of education is the biggest cause of spreading poverty in Bhutan. In the MDG, Bhutan has provided primary education for all in 2015 within a time limit but the result has not been satisfactory in the secondary and tertiary stages. The standard of education also makes this problem bigger. Therefore, the knowledge level of labour force is low in Bhutan, especially among the poor and rural workers. Many programmes and activities related to the vocational training have conducted by the Bhutanese government but the result has not been good (Planning Commission 2007). This is in part due to a narrow-mindedness against manual labour, particularly among the younger population.

The larger part of the development approach of Bhutan is dependent upon the agriculture and hydropower areas. But due to the shortage of technology and facilities in the area of hydropower, the condition is not so well. The hydropower area is a good initiative for providing job opportunities in Bhutan but it has produced inadequate service openings. As a result, in towns and regions, job opportunities have decreased and service expansion has been low especially among the educated youth. Due to this effect, the overall unemployment rate in 2012 was 2.1 percent as compared to youth unemployment which was 7.3 percent in the same year. The above data and situation show a disparity among the accessible expertise of job-seekers and the expertise required by possible employers in the labour market, while several of the educated youthful can afford to be without a job. The condition of unemployment in the rural areas has been comparatively not so high, but the situation is remained comparatively high in the case of underemployment and non-formal employment (ADB 2014).

Bhutan's rough land also a reason of poverty for which giving sufficient infrastructure and key public services all through in Bhutan is a problem. Therefore, for poverty reduction and for the country's socio-economic development, a good standard of infrastructure is significant. Thus, the Bhutanese government has focused on the infrastructure such as the proper construction of roads for better connectivity, which still remains a big issue several parts in Bhutan. "The 2012 Bhutan Living Standards Survey Report mentioned that in the rural areas people take a 30 minute time to reach the nearest proper built road, compared with 2 minutes for urbanites. This limited accessibility hampers the access of many in Bhutan to the country's economic opportunities and thus continues to be a major hurdle to inclusive growth" (Asian Development Bank 2012: 17).

Therefore, the Bhutan government, in order to maintain its growth and development to reduce poverty levels has to work on different policies and plans in the Five Year Plan document. "Bhutan's underlying philosophy of Gross National Happiness guides development, emphasizing the need for a balance between material well-being and the spiritual, emotional and cultural well-being of the individual and society. The government defines the country's long-term vision of development in a document entitled *Bhutan 2020 — Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness*" (Government of Bhutan 2013: 07).

Bhutan interprets its long-term idea into tangible policies, plans and agenda in its five-year plans. The present 10th FYP deals with a high speed of population development and requires encouraging rural growth. It provides a high concern to expanding communications and recovering the excellence of communal facilities (Gross National Commission 2007; 2013). The purpose of the existing 10th FYP is not only to decrease the poverty level by a fair and rapid economic development and maintain a balanced regional development, and in a sustainable way. Due to the dependency of a huge portion of population on farming, the plan centres on getting a better output by promoting the acceptance of contemporary farming and animal husbandry methods, increasing irrigation schemes, growing access to credit and construction and recovering farm and feeder infrastructure and market communications. Apart from these plans and policies the government also works on the problem of unemployment because unemployment is the main cause of poverty and to deal with this problem the government is making policies (Planning Commission 1999).

Youth Unemployment

The future of any country depends on the youth; they are the makers of tomorrow. The more attention the government bestows on them, the rich and prosperous the nation would be. For a healthier economy, fairer society and stronger democracy, the youth must be the top priority. Today's youth are probably the most educated generation of all time, even so, the youth unemployment rate is regarded as one of the toughest problems in many countries. As in Carlyle's words, "A man willing to work, and unable to find work, is perhaps the saddest sight that fortune's inequality exhibits under the sun." It not only haunts young people who are struggling to find a job, it is also imposes a heavy price on the economies and societies at large (ILO 2012c).

Bhutan is undergoing a state of change, from monarchy to constitutional democracy, culture and tradition to social modernization. Bhutan is applauded globally for its spiritual living and the strict following of the Gross National Happiness approach which is the core of every government policy or the base of every development in Bhutan. But the journey to implement this is not an easy task when the country recently faced the transition from monarchy to democracy. It is not only requires the balance between monarchy and parliamentary system but also maintains an equilibrium between modernity and development without destroying the main core of

GNH. And during this period, Bhutan has been facing many problems. Amongst many others problems, youth unemployment is a serious issue. Despite the continuous attempts of the Bhutanese government and other NGOs, the problem of unemployment is still rising (Wangchuk 2011). According to the UNDP report of 2010, Bhutan is facing 7.3 per cent unemployment among the youth which was one of the biggest figures in the region. The figure is reaching an alarming level due to the huge number of young people who are graduating from colleges or completing their schooling and entering the labour market. They are not well skilled due to the limited employment-relevant education and training. The UNDP Report (2012) showed that without the proper skills and equipped, the unemployment rates would be high, which reflects that in the area of productive employment the new entrants to the labour market will not able to enroll.

Figure 5: Bhutan Unemployment Rate



Source: www.tradingeconomics.com Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan⁷¹

But this unemployment figure in Bhutan is mostly concerned with the educated youth as a result of the incapability of the poor economy to accommodate the annual raise in the job-seekers by generating enough new career chances. “It is also due to lack of consistency between the outcomes of the educational system and the needs and demands of the job market in terms of various specializations and skills. In fact, the economic growth over the last decade did not contribute to a growth in youth employment, though there was a vast growth in demand for manual labour”

⁷¹ Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, URL: www.tradingeconomics.com.

(UNCTAD 2012; RGoB 2007b; RGoB 2006a). Bhutanese young people are getting educated and do not want to be farmers or labourers in the construction industry.

While in that respect, there are several reasons behind the youth joblessness. The reasons stem from matters connected to the arrangement of work and work market to teaching. The existence of high unemployment rate among the youth relatively depends on the shortage of, lack of skill development in the labour market, lack of practical knowledge to conduct public employment agencies which instruct the youth and the condition of the private sector (RGoB 2008b). Along with these reasons, the rapid growth of population which includes more than 60 per cent youth also contributes in this regard (RGoB 2007a; RGoB 2006b).

Now-a-days social change and the young people's failure to start their careers will not only lead to waste of human resources but also possibly trigger serious social problems in Bhutan. For instance, the lack of decent job exposes young people to high levels of economic uncertainty. Despite this, troubles increase such as crime, drug abuse, destruction of property, prostitution, etc. which bring disharmony in the society (RGoB 2012d). A young person who is unemployed for a longer duration could develop a major bitterness and gradually start destroying one's self-confidence and high values that may hamper a positive participation towards society. The young people start carrying doubts on their potentials and slowly reduce contacts with society. The distressed youth go into drugs, alcohol and all varieties of substance abuse or immoral actions which cause problems and then end up in jail (Chua 2008). Not to mention a considerable amount of money has to be spending in supporting the unemployed.

Therefore, some actions and appropriate approach have to be started to improve this problem and generate more proper employment conditions for the youth. The Bhutanese government has started many activities and programmes to provide a better result to the youth. So it is high time to address and solve these socio-economic issues which are being especially faced by the Bhutanese youth in order to support them (Chua 2008).

The Bhutanese government has started working in the area of youth unemployment in its policies. The National Youth Policy mentions several areas of concern which

include youth employment as a major area. And through many strategies and initiatives, the government has started intervention through an education and training system which includes various programmes such as integrated vocational education programmes, strengthening and expanding work experience programmes and developing internship programmes. It not only tries to advancing the standard and significance of educational knowledge but also make it one of the main purposes of the policy. These programmes are an important mechanism to polish and strengthen the skills, output and profit-earning ability of the youth.

Young individuals require broad, common employable skills. These skills make the transition from school to work as smooth as possible. According to studies, the employment issues are largely influenced by the standard of education and training imparted, and their important demands and opportunities of labour markets (RGoB 2010e). So, the Technical, Vocational Education and Training Policy, 2011 contributes a lot in this regard. The aim of this policy is to ensure access to the comprehensive and quality Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) services provided to all Bhutanese and with an aim to transform the students into workers. Practices like apprenticeships, alternative vocational training schemes and the gradual introduction of young people to a working environment from the schooling days would prove to be vital to their employability in the future.

The government through the National Human Resource Development Policy, 2010 can formulate and amend the policy framework to improve youth employment and encourage entrepreneurship and self-employment. This policy generally covers a variety of sections like tertiary education, TVET, and human ability advancement which would be undertaken by the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource (Ministry of Labour and Human Resources 2010). Among other aims, the policy tries to manage and expand professional education keeping in mind the requirements of the labour market. “It highlights the need of spreading awareness among students about the importance of vocational education through various means like advocacy, counseling and career guidance in high schools. The policy also emphasizes the need to strengthen human resource capacity in the Technical Training Institutes, alongside taking steps to foster a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach in order to provide quality vocational training” (Ministry of Labour Human Resources 2013: 22).

Along with the government, the private sector needs to develop in order to provide new job opportunities, especially for the women and youth. During its 8th FYP, the main engine to drive growth was the private sector by creating jobs and aiding development. Developing the due regulatory environment for a framework and creating an enabling environment for “micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)” are two major government functions. This makes the government job easy and encourages the private sector to take to commercial activities. For the same, Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSME) policy and Cottage, Small and Medium Industry (CSMI) has been developed. These have been created as the base for a subsequent outlook of ‘Cottage and MSME Development Strategy (2012-2020) and Action Plan (2012-14)’. The ‘CSMI policy’ aims to drive growth besides generating employment and covers six areas that need intervention (GNHC 2012).

So, it is often said that the youth are the ‘wealth’ of the nation. It is true in every sense of the word. And the Bhutan government maintains this wealth by its various policies and programmes. The core of this wealth is about character and it is the character that the elders, parents, teachers and so on should try to inculcate among youth. This is the reason why the Bhutanese government through its counseling activities is emphasizing character building in schools where the foundations of good citizenship are laid (RGoB 2011a). A youth with a healthy character will adopt the right mind set; positive in outlook and global in ambition. For optimism stems not from denying change, but from recognizing the possibilities it presents.

Gender Disparity and Women’s Situation

In the gender equality area, Bhutan shows satisfactory results but still there are many gender disparities issues that present in Bhutan. According to the Asian Development Bank report published in 2012, Bhutan has achieved its targets in the area of gender equal opportunity which equally contribute to the development process in the current time but the women’s condition in several areas raise questions such as in tertiary education, public-private sector, positions in administration and management, etc. (RGoB 2012c; 2012d)

The larger part of Bhutanese society is not including women as great supporters and payees of all-round development process of Bhutan. The larger portion of Bhutan’s

population consists of women but still has been ignored, discriminated, exploited in every socio-economic and political field. They have been disadvantaged as they could not join the industry and business sectors, profitable job opportunities, training for ability development and face a lack of proper health and education facilities, etc. Most of the sectors like education, agricultural productivity and gainful earning, economic resources, political process and an active role in decision-making organizations are still far away from the women (Mittra and Kumar 2004: 53). In decision-making positions and civil service sectors, women are still poorly represented; the contribution and position of women in Bhutan is extremely small in portion.

Several incidents of sexual exploitation, domestic violence, etc., still take place in some areas of Bhutan and the main reason behind these incidents are related to the social structure of the Bhutanese society, the social behaviour towards women and the traditional practices which are still existing in society. But hardly any exact data reaches the outside world. According to the Bhutanese traditional practices, women are similar to objects; to be treated as consumer items. All these incidents make women's confidence, dignity and self-assurance low in handling issues which happening in their day-to-day life. The result of all these incidents is that the majority of women are still not aware of their basic rights and role in society. "Behind the government rhetoric of good governance, widespread incidents of female abuses and their sexual exploitation are hidden" (Mittra and Kumar 2004: 36).

Among other Asian countries, some groups of Bhutanese society still follow the feudal and autocratic system and according to that system or custom, the practice of inequality, gender-disparity and ill-treatment of women are common. The presence of patriarchal system still exists which shows the power of men in every field of life (Gender Pilot Study: Bhutan Report 2001).

Table 9: Women's representation in Parliament remains low after the 2013 election

	Men	Women	Total	%Women
2008 Parliament				
National Council				
Candidates	46	76	52	11.6%
Elected (20)	16	5	21	20.1%
Nominated (5)	2	3	5	60.0%
National Assembly				
Candidates	84	10	94	10.6%
Elected (47)	43	4	47	8.5%
2013 Parliament				
National Council				
Candidates	62	5	67	7.5%
Elected (20)	20	0	20	0.0%
Nominated (5)	2	3	5	60.0%
National Assembly				
Candidates (2 nd round)	83	11	94	11.7%
Elected (47)	43	4	47	8.5%

Source: Data for 208 provided by the Inter-Parliamentary Union database on national parliaments: www.ipu.org/praline-e/parlinesearch.asp; data for 2013 from the National Commission for Women Commission for Women and Children.

Table 10. Domestic violence occurs in both rural and urban areas, and across levels of education and wealth

		Percentage of ever married women age 15-49 years who have ever experienced domestic violence from husband or partner, by type of violence, 2010			
		Emotional violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Emotional, physical, or sexual violence
Area	Urban	14.9	13.0	5.8	20.1
	Rural	19.1	14.5	7.7	25.7
Education	None	18.9	15.1	7.6	25.5
	Primary	18.8	16.5	7.5	26.0
	Secondary+	13.1	8.1	5.1	16.7
Wealth index quintiles	Poorest	22.2	17.1	9.2	29.3
	Second	20.2	15.4	9.1	26.8
	Middle	17.8	13.4	6.4	24.1
	Fourth	17.3	14.8	6.7	24.0
	Richest	12.2	9.8	4.4	16.5
Married or in union	Currently	16.7	12.8	6.7	22.7
	Formerly	31.1	28.9	12.3	39.8
Total		17.9	14.1	7.1	24.1

Source: UNICEF Bhutan. Forthcoming, Child Protection, Thematic Analysis Series, Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey 2010, Thimphu.

Despite the feudal system, the figures in the education area are also not as satisfactory due to a 55 per cent participation of women in the literacy rate as compared to 72 per cent males. “The BLSR Report (2012) showed that the condition of females in primary school completion rate is higher than for men and expected at 89 per cent. As well as, it is also mentioned that the secondary school completion rate is lower, at 71 per cent and is much higher in the urban than in the rural areas” (Asian Development Bank 2014).

Along with this, in the decision making process their condition is also lower than the actual position they deserve and still this area requires government assistance plus the women’s awareness about their basic rights. In 2008-2012, less than 14 per cent of the MPs were female, and on a local level merely one of the 205 village leaders is a woman which not only indicates the low interest of women in the political system but also reflects the slow speed of government initiatives regarding promoting and protecting the basic rights of women, though it has approved the ‘International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women’.⁷² There are still no names of women in higher posts such as Ministers, Judges, Chief District Officers, and Ambassadors or further places where female participation is zero (Yangden 2009: 19).

The condition to get profitable job opportunities is also bad in Bhutan. 95 percent women are not educated and are engaged in traditional agricultural farming and have low earnings. Despite this, the Bhutanese government has made zero efforts to come out of this condition. The same condition appears in the civil service and business sector which comprise less than 0.5 percent women engagement in both the services, who are active in minor rank occupations. Around 0.2 percent of women are engaged in other occupations and 3.5 percent of women have no recognizable jobs. It is worse in the rural areas where women are ignored a lot and there is domestic violence, sexual harassment, abuse of girls, etc. (Mondol 2004: 76).

The government and media do not present the actual condition of Bhutanese women. The outside media and press are not allowed in Bhutan under many restrictions, rules and regulations. There is only one periodical bulletin in Bhutan which is published by the Bhutanese government. There is a restriction on the external media to enter

⁷² National Women’s Association of Bhutan, URL: <http://www.nwabbhutan.org.bt/>.

Bhutan. During its international meetings and visits, the Bhutanese government shows a polished picture of the socio-economic pointers. And the motive behind that is the utilization of the international community help without showing the real portrait of women.

Another issue in gender disparity is the new 'Marriage Act of Bhutan' which was accepted in 1980 and became formally practical in 1988 by the Bhutanese government. This Act was a clear and well-built content of biased behaviour against the women and children of the *Lhotshampa* community. According to this Act, all foreign wives were treated as non-citizens even though most of them were already holding Bhutanese citizenships under earlier citizenship regulations and laws. The Bhutanese government has violated every international regulation and refined protocol and left many children (born out of marriages among *Lhotshampa* males and Nepali-speaking females from Nepal or India) of their right to citizenship. This Act was particularly applied on the *Lhotshampas* which was a clear case of prejudice (Deloitte 2012). "But at the same time the person who belongs to *Lhotshampa* community and married non-Bhutanese wife was not only disallowed to vote in (became ineligible for election to) the National Assembly (Parliament) elections but also they were confuted promotion in civil services, confuted training and fellowships and medical treatment abroad and they were also denied business and agricultural grants and loans given by the Bhutan government" (Mittra and Kumar 2004).

"Apart from this, the report – The Bhutan Gender Equality Diagnostic of Selected Sectors - is the collaborative effort of ADB, Bhutan's National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), and the United Nations in Bhutan. It is the first comprehensive analysis of gender equality and women's status in eight selected sectors. It is intended to provide a common platform to understand, plan, and initiate interventions in the eight sectors including agriculture and rural livelihood; education; energy; environment; private sector development; transport: roads and services; urban development; and work and unemployment" (ADB 2014).

The gender inequality index in the report shows that Bhutan is doing better than Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India but lags behind the People's Republic of China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar (ILO 2003; 2007: 2008; ADB 2014; World Bank 2012).

Table 11. Bhutan compares well with some but not all countries in the region on gender equality indicators

	Gender inequality index 2012	Maternal mortality ratio 2010	Adolescent fertility rate (age 15-19) 2012	Adult literacy (age 15+) 2005-2010 M/F	Gross national income per capita, \$ 2012	Human development index regional rank 2012
PRC	.214	36	9.2	97/92	7,944	3
Thailand	.361	49	37.1	96/93	7,723	4
Sri Lanka	.403	36	22.2	93/91	5,177	2
Myanmar	.437	200	12.0	95/90	1,187	8
Bhutan	.464	180	44.9	65/39	5,246	5
Nepal	.485	170	86.2	73/48	1,137	9
Bangladesh	.518	240	68.2	61/52	1,785	6
Pakistan	.567	260	28.1	69/40	2,566	6
India	.610	200	74.7	75/51	3,285	4
<p>PRC- People’s Republic of China, M-male, F-female, \$- US dollars in constant 2005 value.</p> <p>Gender inequality index: composite measure reflecting inequality in achievements between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market. The lowest value is the least unequal.</p> <p>Maternal mortality ratio: number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.</p> <p>Adolescent fertility rate: number of births to women aged 15-19 per 1,000 women aged 15-19.</p> <p>Human development index: regional ranking rather than index value presented for case of comparison.</p>						

Source: For all indicators except literacy: United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report, 2013, New York. For literacy: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization Education for All Monitoring Report 2013, Statistical Table, Paris,

According to this report there is no obvious prejudice in Bhutan, but still in family and society women are held by gender stereotypes and embedded visions relating to their functions. The matrilineal structure of land transfers encourages gender equality which is a long-held statement. This statement requires additional examination (ILO 2003; 2007; 2008; ADB 2014; World Bank 2012). The nation's famed Gross National Happiness Index also shows a smaller amount of pleasure among women than men.

To deal with all these issues, incidences and problems of gender disparity, the Bhutanese government has been working in its plans, schemes and programmes that underline the importance of mainstreaming gender (Ministry of Labour and Human resources 2010; ADB 2014).

“The report notes that the government's long-term strategic goal, Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness is aiming to address gender inequality through its vision of development based on the ability of all to realize their potential; equitable sharing of the benefits of development; and opportunities for all to share in decisions that affect their lives, livelihoods, and families” (Priesner 1999: 55). Under the current 11th FYP the Bhutanese government has taken many initiatives to improve the condition of women in various fields that is likely to increase their role in administration, in organizations and the parliament and provide a better tertiary education as well as youth employment opportunities. It has also authorized administrative organizations to apply gender-sensitive plans in their policies, to attain this vision (Planning Commission 2013; ADB 2014).

Table 12: Major sources of state policy promote attention to equality of citizenship rights and enjoyment of life by all citizens

Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan

Fundamental rights (Article 7):

15. All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal and effective protection of the law and shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, sex, language, religious, politics or other status.

Fundamental duties (Article 8):

5. A person shall not tolerate or participate in acts of injury, torture or killing of another person, terrorism, and abuse of women, children or any other person and shall take necessary steps to prevent such acts.

Principles of State Policy (Article 9):

3. The State shall endeavour to create a civil society free of oppression, discrimination and violence, based on the rule of law, protection of human rights and dignity, and to ensure the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people.

17. The State shall endeavour to take appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination and exploitation against women including trafficking, prostitution, abuse, violence, harassment and intimidation at work in both public and private spheres.

Bhutan 2020. A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness

The main development objectives include three that are particularly relevant:

Human development: To maximize the happiness of all Bhutanese and to enable them to achieve their full and innate potential as human beings.

Balanced and equitable development: To ensure that the benefits of development are shared equitably between different income groups and regions and in ways that promote social harmony, stability and unity and contribute to the development of a just and compassionate society.

Governance: To further develop our institutions, human resources and system of governance in ways that enable us to...enlarge opportunities for people at all levels to participate more fully and effectively in decisions that have a bearing on their lives and livelihoods and the future of their families, communities and the nation.

Sources: Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008; Planning Commission 1999; Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness Part 2: 12-15.

Apart from that, the National Commission along with GNHC is working on a network of gender focal points for increasing attention towards gender equality issues. This gender point is a network that serves as the contact/resource person to support in spreading awareness and knowledge of gender-related matters and promote gender mainstreaming initiatives in his/her respective area. Therefore, this network is not limited to NCWC and GNHC, but includes a wide variety of players from concerned ministries to autonomous agencies of government and non-government, academia to armed forces and besides all, the business community and national assembly (Planning Commission 2013).

The government at the grassroots level also plays a vital role to address the gender inequality and disparity issues by spreading awareness and through advocacy at the local level. Besides, a strong co-ordination link between the local and national government is called for, to address issues therein by an improved support.

Health

Another important area of concern of public policy is the health sector. According to the definition of WHO, improved health is not only essential to individual contentment and welfare but also for the development of a country. If a fit population exists then a country progress graph goes up.

Health is very importance for the existence of an individual. It is a pillar of all developments of any country. In the absence of a healthy body and healthy mind, people cannot think for their country and its progress. Therefore, the very initial role of any government is to take care of its people's health in every aspect and provide the best health facilities to the people.

So, health in the context of Bhutan can only be understood by the idea of overall growth, which emphasizes on conservation of religions and emotion as well as economic well-being.

The area of concern has always been providing healthcare services to all and accessible essential medicine and life-saving drugs to every one without charge. In a way, it reflects the national ideals: equity, justice and sustainability in order to preserve the prevailing national culture. The goal in the long term is to “facilitate,

through a dynamic professional health care, the attainment of a standard of healthy living by the people of Bhutan to lead a socially, mentally and economically productive life, and within the broader framework of overall national development, enhance the quality of life of the people in the spirit of social justice and equity” (Bhutan Health Information System Review and Assessment 2008).

But in reality the situation of health is not good due to many reasons and constraints. The first constraint is the lack of human resources which is largely ridiculing aspects in the health progress structure. To deal with this problem it is necessary that human resources are available at all stages like for programme organization and promotional areas to make stronger the overall health and mainly the decentralized organization of health facilities (Annual Health Bulletin 2006-2008). At present, the Bhutanese Government is capable of producing not more than 5 doctors in a year; this is insufficient. One way of tackling this is to facilitate extra applicants to join the medicinal duties. Skilled medical and management experts are also far less than what it is required. Since the paramedic training and instruction can be carried in Bhutan, the number here is satisfactory. These paramedics not only take care of primary healthcare facilities but also deliver the needful services. Again, the same group handles the department of health services. The human resource scarcity means that each personnel needs to cover a lot a ground, which often leads to failure of services being provided on time (National Health Survey 2000: 16-24).

Due to the insufficient funds the Health Ministry of Bhutan relies a lot on working together with collaborators to increase human resources for health in Bhutan. But, these collaborating partners could not provide a financial assistance for a long-standing leadership; it will take a lengthy period of time for the Bhutanese government to attain independence in human resources for health (Bhutan National Human Development Report 2000: 45-50).

The settlements are scattered and far-flung in Bhutan because the tiny nation located in a rugged territory. This hinders providing health and other social services at the doorstep. When it is combined to the scarcity of personnel, it explains the limitations to reducing the mortality rate. Therefore, the Bhutan government with the help of DANIDA and World Health Organization (WHO) started the solar-powered radio communication system to link the basic health unit to the district hospital (Bhutan

National Human Development Report 2000; Bhutan EPI fact Sheet 2004) and a telemedicine programme with the partnership of the Japanese government and World Health Organization. The electricity and basic telecom infrastructure is an important area under health but the development speed in this part is slow. However the government has been capable to connect both the 'Regional Referral Hospital and National Referral Hospital' and improved the transfers and discussions among them. To access significant health literature the service is also being utilized by the hospital employees. However, much necessities to be done, and the equipments compulsory for this plan are generally very costly (Proposal to GAVI 2000; Bhutan National EPI Coverage Evaluation Survey 2002).

Bhutan's economic status is not so good which reflects in its dependency on the external assistance for its equipments or medicines and vaccines. Therefore, the Bhutanese government is buying quality of medicines and vaccines with the support of World Health Organization. "The extended time taken to acquire the tools or their extra parts and consumables (like reagents and x-ray films) carries on hindering observation and other very important works at the hospitals" (Ministry of Health 2013: 15-20).

Having attained to a particular stage in health treatment, the focus has been shifted to improvising the healthcare facilities' quality. The instances like patients dying for non-availability of doctors are still prevalent. It has been taken care of to a great extent still there is so much to improve upon (Ministry of Health 2013: 55).

A large amount of work remains to be done even if the Health Trust initiatives have been started, i.e., to build up the necessary assets, create a monetary organization, and legalize the proceeds of trust funds. Bhutan will be able to measure the trust fund initiatives' impact on creating sustainable healthcare facilities (Health Trust Fund 2012; Ministry of Health 2008). There is no coordinated effort to solve the problems. The Bhutanese government has already looked two decades in advance, keeping the main challenges in mind and in building a clear future focus for its citizens. The government of Bhutan in its document of Bhutan Vision 2020 has placed its main concerns for all the areas for the coming 15 to 20 years. In this document, eight main concerns have been brought out to direct the health area throughout this whole phase.

Throughout the formulation of the Five-Year Plans, these eight long-term main concerns have been focused on (RGoB 2011).

Education

People cannot exist without education because it acts in an extremely significant way in their life; it is the base for enlarging critical thinking. There is a straight relationship between the education policy and the socio-economic and political situation. Education helps individuals for making their living along with developing abilities to participate in the development of the country. Therefore, education is not only important for the development of individual life but is an essential instrument for bringing about proper growth. In a few decades, the main concerns regarding education should be modified as actually, it is the means to decrease social disparities and amend the skewed growth (Carnoy 1974; Chakravarti 2002); it has to be redefined by a powerful and noticeable confirmatory operation. The planning of education has to start—that education that presents the individuals with the options ‘to lead valuable and valued lives’. “Education being a key issue for developing a country, the countries should create their policy on education by the main goal of making its citizens able for developing the country in a sustainable manner” (Mackey 1993:20).

Image 9: School Children in Bhutan



Source: Borgen Magazine⁷³

⁷³ Borgen Magazine, URL: www.borgenmagazine.com.

But the education graph is not as good as it seems, as is easily understood by the employment situation. “In Bhutan the employment situation is not extremely acceptable due to the fast growth of the education area and the lack of excellence employment for a good digit of educated youths. Furthermore, the Bhutan government has not the clear vision of making policy from the rustic youth’s point of view which is consequential in serious migration from rustic to urban areas” (Ministry of Education 2010: 20). In Bhutan, any citizen, who does not have an official academic degree, is not able to contest in elections as mentioned in the recently created constitution of Bhutan. The ground reality of Bhutan is that there is a shortage of services for higher education to make ready all the youngsters of Bhutan. As a result, a huge majority of the population of Bhutan is left behind from a chance for contesting elections and getting elected to the Parliament (Sengupta 2008: 88).

One of the aims of the Bhutanese government policy is getting better pre-service and in-service teacher education because Bhutan still does not have enough number of excellent teachers. The Bhutanese government will give incentives in the form of shortage grant and complexity grant to those teachers who are providing their service in distant and rustic areas. The fair allocation of teachers in schools is encouraged by the 11th Plan, who to be spread through the entire nation. In order to present varied chances of advanced learning both inside and outside Bhutan, one of the main goals of the Bhutanese government’s 10th Five Year Plan was to direct and make easy the growth of higher education. Under the 11th plan the Bhutanese government has listed objectives to attain gender equality in secondary and tertiary levels of teaching. “This confirmatory achievement will be supportive in successful consumption of female human capital in the labour market and to deal with gender inequity in extra remunerative jobs of higher profile occupations” (RGoB 2012: 37-45). The government needs to improve the participation of girls in the tertiary education; at least 80 girls for 100 boys.

Bhutan has suffered from the lack of a Non Formal Education programme which is now a big challenge in front of Bhutanese government. Thus, the Bhutanese government is trying to develop the technical, occupational associations in schools and the Non Formal Education programmes in districts and villages, in order to encourage education in these areas. Along with these programmes, adult education

has been started in Bhutan, so that the literacy rate of Bhutan will increase and the people will become more capable in terms of the development process (Ministry of Education 2012).

The Bhutanese government in its strategy highlights the promotion and encouragement of students with higher secondary education degrees to join as NFE teachers and work on a part-time basis. The motive behind this strategy to improve the present low condition of higher education which is at 8.2 percent (Tertiary Education Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2010); therefore, the Bhutanese government is trying to increase the number of tertiary education organizations. The seats for admission in colleges and institution of higher education are limited (Ministry of Education 2012; RGoB 2012). In this regard, a master map was prepared by the Royal University of Bhutan to come out this problem as well as to provide admission opportunities to about 9,000 students. But these are also require developing the infrastructure to produce extra academic space appropriate for catering to tertiary education programmes.

One more challenge to higher education is due to different causes like unavailability of occupations, lengthy distance of schools from homes, etc. Because of it, illiteracy is slowly growing which is increasing the problem of a high percentage of school dropouts and under the FYP, the Bhutanese government has not found any appropriate solution to come out of this problem. The World Data on Education Report (2008) has mentioned that currently, the Bhutanese government is concentrating on developing policies to keep students in schools. Therefore, the aim is to increase the student participation in schools and to decrease the dropout rate of students in schools. “The transport and communication structure has not developed completely across the nation, which is a huge obstacle for getting 100 percent literacy rate. In addition, nomadic groups and groups living in isolated regions are the ones who are not adequately touched by the public education structure. There was a vast increase in figure of schools from 1997 to 2002 with the inclusion of Non-Formal Education (NFE) centres and the inclusion of monastic education organizations. To counter the challenges stated above the NFE structure was commenced which gives literacy and numeracy abilities in Dzongkha to Bhutanese who have not got any type of education” (RGoB 2013: 34).

Candidates Shortlisted for Scholarship

NAME	DISCIPLINE	FUNDING
Karma Tenzin	MBBS	RGoB
Pema Thinley	B. Dental Surgery	GOI
Sonam Jamgey	B. Microbiology	GOI
Sonam Lhundhup	B. Food Sc. Technology	GOI
Ugyen Dorji	B. Agriculture	GOI
Govind Adhikari	B. Architect	GOI

Source: Undergraduate Students Shortlisted for scholarship⁷⁴

Apart from this, another problem is that the leaders in Bhutan are completing their own requirements without giving the concern to the ordinary citizens by their education policies which is observable from the above list. Any country where different groups are existing has to create integration between the diverse racial groups. Therefore, with the support of a progressive inclusive policy, Bhutan tries to integrate all groups in Bhutan to solve this problem (World Data on Education 2008; Ministry of Education 2012). There has been unhappiness among the minority groups of Bhutan, and, if Bhutan carries on to differentiate them by different plans, the socio-economic and political material of the country will be extremely in a weak position pressurizing everybody as well as the ruling community of the Drukpas (ADB 2014).

Regional Disparities

In a democratic system like that of Bhutan, the administrative system consists of central government and that at the local level. The central government consists of three parts: executive, legislature and judiciary. The legislature comprises two parts: the National Council and the National Assembly. Under Article 11 of the Bhutanese Constitution, the Upper House also known as the National Council was founded in 2008. The National Council consists of 25 members of which 5 members are nominated by the King and the remaining 20 are elected by the people from 20

⁷⁴ Undergraduate students shortlisted for scholarship, URL: *R G o B* www.education.gov.bt/documents/10156/163141/seleaction+result+for+undergraduate+scholarship+2012?version=1.0.

Dzongkhags. These members hold their term for five years which starts from the date of the first sitting. The National Council is to make sure that the government completes the goals of the individuals through a public review of policies and issues and the government defends the attention of the state and scrutiny of state functions. Along with this, the National Council also functions as a house to re-examine issues related to safety and sovereignty and the welfare of nation and individuals to be brought to the King's observation, and before the National Assembly and the Prime Minister. The Bhutanese National Assembly (*Gyelyong Tshogdu*) comprises of 47 members who are elected representatives from 47 constituencies. The major functions of the National Assembly are to pass, modify or repeal laws and approve the national budget. Generally, the National Council meets twice a year at least. The National Assembly also verifies and approves the Five Year Plans which are prepared by the Bhutanese government in discussion with the individuals of each *Dzongkhag*. It also acts on matters which could influence the safety, happiness and well-being of the people. The legislature formulates and expresses the will of the State through the policies. However, the *Ngalop* community which is staying mostly in the western and central areas of Bhutan and the *Sharchop* community which is living in the eastern part of Bhutan are the two dominating communities in the National Assembly and a majority of bills are passed by these two communities without any concern for the *Lhotshamp* who are staying in the southern part of Bhutan. The *Ngalops* and *Sharchops* are predominating in the government, civil services and their cultural norms and policies have been declared by the monarchy to be the standards for the citizens. These two communities try to make policies which are more beneficial for their own regions. The underrepresentation of the southern region does not give it any weightage in the decision-making process as southern region can always be overridden by the majority belonging to the western and eastern regions. This creates regional disparities to some extent in the country (Joseph 1999: 34).

Conclusion

Bhutan is a small and under-developed country facing various challenges in the public policy area. Therefore the Bhutanese policymakers along with their NGOs, IGOs and their donors always try to make policies and development plans to deal with these socio-economic and political challenges like lack of good governance,

decentralization process, youth unemployment, gender inequality, poverty, illiteracy, health etc.

The present 11th Five Year Plan (2013-2018) of the Bhutanese government is the single-most important factor towards dealing with these challenges and in reaching the development objectives. Under the current FYP, the Bhutanese government realized that along with health, providing basic public facilities and education are the most effective tools that affect every area of development and poverty alleviation by empowering the people at the grassroots level. To provide education is not only empower the people but it also helps to identify, interpret and take action upon the plans and policies and information given by the government, which also helps in the establishment of a vibrant democracy and successful governance. In the same way, the understanding of Bhutan's idea of a "knowledge based society" is completely dependent on a technically expert labour force with competencies benchmarked to foremost manufacturing values and means to be considered worldwide but to proceed locally.

Chapter: VI

Conclusion

Each country has its own way of a public policymaking process depending on the circumstances exclusive to that particular country and socio-political systems prevailing therein. This process differs from country to country, sometimes greatly. In the case of Bhutan, the public policymaking process is very unique, for it not only describes the purpose and objectives of its procedure but also reflects its traditional values and basic roots of the culture which is rightly nourished under the GNH philosophy by the policymakers. The government, starting from the First Five Year Plan (1967), always emphasized on the GNH rather than the GNP. It shows the Bhutanese government's concern for the happiness of its people over other things, and to carry a perfect balance between modernity and traditionalism. This basic thinking forms the core of the Bhutanese government's emphasis on prioritizing the social and cultural growth separately from the economic growth where the majority of the other nations would not be so balancing the cultural and economic growth. Thus, through the FYPs the government has been aiming to provide improved services and facilities to the citizens to make sure of their happiness.

The government has been formulating and implementing the public policies for the welfare of the citizens but without destroying the essence of Gross National Happiness, which focuses on balancing materialism and non-materialism. The ultimate objective of public policies in Bhutan is the happiness of all people.

Therefore, the policymakers consider the GNH is the central theme of public policymaking process and what is its connection with other main concerns which affect the process of policymaking. Interestingly, it is obvious that Bhutan has always kept two scopes of objectives viz. the directing ideologies and self-determination and the independence and safety measures of the nation state while in process of planning and executing policies.

These two objectives are powerful elements of the public policymaking procedure in Bhutan as well as the maximization of idea of GNH; however Bhutan has to make sure that there is no bargaining because of its "uniqueness, harmony and

synchronization, constancy, self-dependence and sustainability”, the origin philosophy of Bhutan. So, we can say that not only the government, but the Bhutanese as well take the GNH very seriously. It forms the main values and main principles of framing the development plans and policies which is clearly visible in every Five Year Plan as it is in the 9th, 10th and 11th as well as upcoming 12th Five Year Plan. In the GNH the people form the centre of the development, good governance, corruption-free society and ecological conservation. In Bhutan, all the policy formulation process is undertaken by the Planning Commission, which is known as the Gross National Happiness Commission. The GNHC has policy screening tools in the form of GNHSTs and every policy must meet the fitness test of that tool. So, there is a framework in which all policies are assessed thoroughly. From the last 6 or 7 years or so, the government has been trying to come up with a mining policy but that couldn't see light as it failed the fitness test of GNHSTs for the likely impact that it may cause to local people and the environment, culture, and growth put together. It raised a question, is the growth of this kind sustainable? So, the Bhutanese government gives utmost priority to the GNH in all its policy formulation which is a pragmatic view.

For lawmaking, Bhutan has a Parliament which places great importance on policymaking keeping the GNH values at the core. In policymaking, many a question would be asked at the end of the day. Like, what would be the purpose of the policy? Whether it is to serve society, or to serve community, or else to serve the people? Will it make the people better off? When they make any policy, will they compromise the ecological principles? Will it lead to corrupt or good governance? Will it produce sustainable growth? So in the policymaking process, all these aspects have to be addressed.

The government makes various policies like education policy, health policy, environmental policy and policies for the political development which reflect its balancing approach. In the education policy, the government of Bhutan has adopted a modern as well as traditional education system which is an important part of their education policies. In the area of health, the situation is as much similar where the government adopted both the systems of modern, as well as traditional medicine system in the health policies which not only maintain modernity but also preserve the

culture and traditional values through various policies. The environment policies also make for a balance by ensuring preservation instead of degrading the environment.

This approach of public policymaking process also falsifies the second hypothesis, which states that the “Public policymaking process is based on GNH philosophy but its implementation leads to regional disparities in Bhutan.” This statement is not true due to the unique context of policymaking procedure followed by the policymakers in Bhutan to fulfil the needs and give equal opportunities, rights and happiness to its citizens. But at the same time, if the government is making some particular policies for the welfare and improving the situation of the most vulnerable communities in Bhutan, then it does not mean that it is creating any discrimination. The Bhutanese government has its own parameters and priorities for making any policies which are not similar to those of other nations. If the Bhutanese government enacted a special marriage act for the Lhotshampas, it does not mean that this act or policy is spreading any kind of regional disparities among the Lhotshampas and other communities. It only wants to preserve the rich culture and traditional values in Bhutan without any interference from the outside involvement. The objective of the policy structure is to produce an atmosphere where every individual without any pressure would build up self-confidence devoid of any biased behaviour from the state side.

Therefore, this approach of policy structure and a process of sustainable growth speed have always supported this small nation. This approach and process is helping in preserving and protecting Bhutan’s cultural and environmental values which are based on the GNH philosophy.

The journey of policymaking cannot be completed without the participation of non-government institutions, which are actively giving their contribution to the government organization. But sometimes, there are some issues where a contradictory situation crops up between the government and non-government institutions on issues such as the ban on meat. According to the Lunar Calendar, there is a ban on selling of the meat during the first and fourth months. For that, the government has made a policy and now a law on banning on the selling of meat. And that is largely owing to the religious sentiments of religious leaders and of the concession of the people. The same thing was applied to the Tobacco Act as this was connected to the environment as well as cultural sentiments of Bhutanese. Along with this, the

government of Bhutan still follows and supports the traditional education system in the education policy due to the great influence of the religious leaders on the traditional education system. A large set of Bhutanese population provides religious education for their children.

The government always places great concern to the religious leaders' opinions whenever some policies come under religious matters. The government never makes and implements any policies without taking the religious leaders into confidence, and often takes their opinion on that particular issue. In Bhutan there is a policy that every minister and religious leader has a particular dress code while attending the Parliament sessions. For the ministers, they have to carry an orange and blue-coloured scarf; the King has to wear a yellow coloured scarf. The same thing applies for the common people while entering any government institutions. They have to wear a white-coloured scarf. So these are some dress codes for every individual for different purpose and occasions. These rules and policies are not forcibly implemented on the Bhutanese but actually they have great faith and sentiments attached to their religion and culture hence, they willingly and voluntarily follow them. Therefore, they have influence on some of the areas which are related to the religious sentiments and have much influence of non-religious institutions when it comes to issues like meat, tobacco, education, religion, dress code, etiquettes, etc.

Inter-governmental organizations are providing a constant assistance through their development programmes, activities and plans in Bhutan. The largest portion of the Bhutanese economy depends on external aid for its development policies as well as its entire government revenue. Since the beginning of 1960s, Bhutan started to receive aid from several of its donors, agencies and countries through the Colombo Plan. There are some other organizations such as the World Bank which are providing interest-free loans to help with the development policies. Another aid that Bhutan has received is through international and foreign volunteer programmes, which are actively working in Bhutan to assist and advise in the areas of education, health, agriculture, urban planning, etc.

Since Bhutan is a latecomer to modern development, the country better knew the mistakes that other aid receiving countries have committed. Bhutan's development policy is very clear which is guided by the achievements of self-reliance with less

dependence on external aid. But to some extent, it is fair to say that external assistance determines the nature of the public policy process. The case of the bio-safety bill that was drafted and passed in Parliament was largely due to the requirement for the project assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture received from the FAO. So, to that extent Bhutan is totally immune from external assistance, especially donor influence when it comes to the policy or lawmaking process, but that influence is not totally dependent on external pressure. Therefore, we saw that some degree of influence of the donors is always present while receiving assistance or sometimes this assistance usually comes with the tight conditions of the donors. But Bhutan has not really been under the pressure of that assistance where the donors dictate the policymaking process because Bhutan has a very capable bureaucracy of its own, which is capable enough to observe and think what is suitable for Bhutan or have it tested by the GNHSTs. In the case of WTO membership, the same thing has happened. The Bhutanese government has not signed the membership of the WTO because it is a small economy with a small export base and is not an international competitor. The WTO is a rule-based multilateral business system and Bhutan knows the rules of WTO very clearly, but it is not that much a strong economy that can stand with the developed economies of the US, China, Japan and India, which are the members of WTO system. So at the end, Bhutan came up with a conclusion that it is a rule-based system which will not benefit the Bhutanese people.

Therefore, the Bhutanese government and its bureaucracy are capable and sensible to deal with the international pressure. But it does not mean that Bhutan is not facing any problems and challenges. Sometimes, it is very difficult for the bureaucracy and ministers to give proper time to deal with these problems but the conversation continues on this problems. They discuss and debate on these issues and collect the people's views on the same issues. And at the end, they come up with the alternative. According to the Bhutanese government, if it must take two or more steps to get there it will do so because if it rushes things, then it will miss something and therefore when it gets it, it would not be sustainable. So, it is not compulsory all the time that everything will go perfectly in the policymaking process. But the actors talk to each other and at the end they will make policies which are not compromising the overall national vision.

At the end, the first hypothesis is also falsified which states that “External aid and assistance in Bhutan determines the nature and pattern of the public policymaking process.”

Bhutan’s government faces many problems with the public policymaking process like extreme fragmentation in the structure; an excessive overlap between policy making and implementation and a particular challenge in approach that is the concept of being traditional and modern, static and dynamic at the same time.

The current 11th FYP working on the above challenges pursues the ‘Results Based Planning (RBP)’ approach. This approach is working in an effective manner. So that, at the end of this current 11th FYP, better results and returns are to be attained. The returns and results are clearly mentioned as ‘Key Result Areas’ which have been recognized at national, sectoral, district, municipal and block levels. In this regard, at the national level, there are ‘16 National Key Results Areas’. The progress strategies and plans of all central ministries, constitutional bodies and self-governing organizations, districts, municipalities and blocks have to be united and contribute to the accomplishment of the key result areas.

Even though in Bhutan the socio-economic advancement of the country depends on the basic leading principle of GNH, the socio-economic journey of advancement could not complete without the opening of the GNH Index which is the main core of the GNH and is providing proper guidelines and making sure that plans, programmes and policies are completed reliably with the ideas of the GNH.

The government of Bhutan has been trying to identify the intersecting matters that are inextricably connected by the overall process of advancement in the 11th FYP. After identifying the intersecting matters, the government has prioritized the mainstreaming of socio-economic and environmental issues into every stage of the decision-making procedures of policy structuring, making, preparation and financial planning and execution at the beginning and trying to figure out the social, economic and environmental conditions which can later affect the process of development. Therefore, following the above approach, the government not only improves the environmental, social and economic situations but also involves itself into the process

of smart developmental running and always keeps working to attain the objectives of the 11th FYP and GNH results.

On a concluding note we can say that public policymaking process is not a thing which could achieve its objectives overnight as it is a process which requires proper coordination and support of government organizations with non-government organizations and inter-governmental organizations. The democratic process was adopted from 2008 onwards. Therefore, it will take long time to incorporate the new process with the old system and administration.

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