

# HAPPINESS

Development with Values



*“As a nation, we are at an inflection point. Our actions today will determine the course of our future, and put us either in the path of success or failure. There will not be any more opportunities, and we have no choice but to work with the greatest sense of urgency.”*

His Majesty the King

**Bhutan Ecological Society’s CREATING COMMUNITY CARBON BANKS PROJECT**

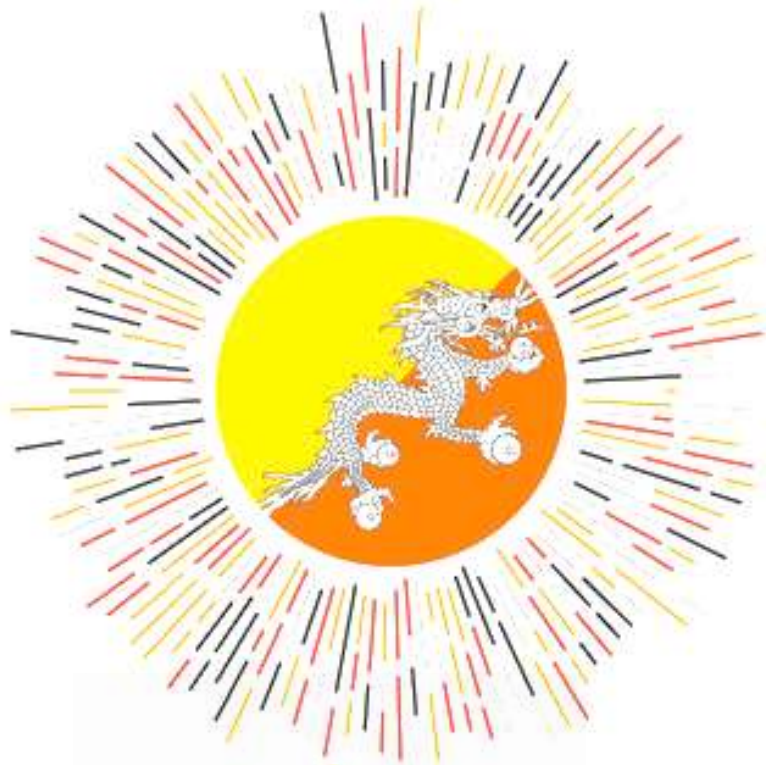
**The RAA –Ensuring Accountability**

**EE&C-Energy Efficiency and Conservation**

**CHILD JUSTICE & CHILD RIGHTS**

**ANTI-BULLYING and how to handle it**

Guidelines for Anti-bullying Mechanisms in Educational Institutions



**EARTHQUAKE SAFETY  
FIRE SAFETY  
FLOOD SAFETY  
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# HAPPINESS



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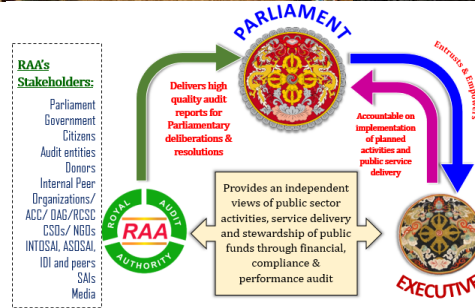
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# Editorial



## The worlds at an end

The world's on the brink! (Of extinction). It's been said. One time too many actually. But we're all still here aren't we; watching things from a distance as the earth puts on a show of climatic disasters. And we are left guessing if we are doing enough to stop ourselves from watching a supposedly fated end – the climactic end that would be our own doing. Well that's a story in the telling and climate change in the unfolding. One would think that the 'world' as in the earth, is the only entity in danger of ending. But while a strategically positioned fight from our (humanity's) side is continuously on to offset the impacts of climate change, everyday life/lives are in motion and therein we witness the many other worlds (figurative) constantly being put at risk for complete annihilation; if corrective measures are not in place.

Afforestation programs are a major component of Bhutan's mitigation efforts in easing climate change impacts. To contribute to Bhutan's climate mitigation efforts, the BES is well on its way to plant and nurture over a million high value tree crops and timber species in fallow lands and degraded forests across Bhutan which covers 3000-plus acres of fallow lands and would rehabilitate 2500 acres of degraded forests across Bhutan from 2022 till 2025.

The world of auditing is all about accountability. And in Bhutan the RAA continually ensures there is high performance from all involved in terms of demonstrating utmost integrity and accountability to showcase high performance that collectively drives home the best efforts to achieve good governance.

It's truly a world shattered if a child doesn't get a childhood that nurtures them with care and compassion. The NCWC as a lead authority is working its way through what is called the SOP to deal with Children In Conflict With the Law (CICL). The SOP in itself is an action plan that identifies, takes actions, and remedies what tributary effects may be generated. The fabric of a society or nation being a sum of all parties involved and not a standalone entity; this is surely headed in the right direction.

As long as the earth spins it continues to see threats and we'll keep trying to avert those threats with the best of mitigation tactics. And as long as life rolls from one day to the other one has to pull their weight in triumph which we seek and do achieve many times along the way which also features strife that sees struggles along a stretch that is more bumpy than even. Moving forward maneuvering the bumps is one way to do it.



# Bhutan Ecological Society's **CREATING COMMUNITY CARBON BANKS PROJECT**

The world has advanced radically in various fields of science, medicine and technology. The rate at which it progresses is dizzyingly speedy and it would seem that the sky is truly become the limit. In an ambiance of such sheer magnitude and gravity, some might go as far as to say – this age is truly the pinnacle of human civilization. But wait! There’s always a trade-off, right? Yes, in fact is really a situation that is ‘too good to be true.’ And in this quid pro quo, the inhabitants (humans/humankind) may have celebrations in order, but the host (earth) is faring rather poorly wherein a little rest and relaxation is not going to cut it (fix damages, heal mother earth etc.). Uh oh! Sorry to burst our precious bubbles, but those are the facts. And where do we even begin to lay out those facts – oceans

warming up, species disappearing, plants and animals going extinct, polar ice caps melting, glaciers melting, extreme weather conditions in action, the planet in general heating up – in a nutshell – climate change.

Well that was dark and dreary, total doom and gloom. But it IS based on a true story, that is, still in the telling. Maybe that’s the silver lining for us eight billion. We can still make amends and tread carefully to contain damages, heal what can be healed. Everyone’s on board with the plan, of course. After all there is only one earth. No spare parts or do-overs. Of the many takeaways from the global conventions and fora, and various climate conferences, the need to keep earth’s temperature at a minimum of 1.5-degree Celsius rate



The BES million+ tree (building community carbon banks) project kicked off on 13th April 2021. The kick-off was graced by HRH Ashi Chimi Yangzom Wangchuk, the Royal Patron of BES. The million+ tree initiative was inspired by and is an expansion of the BES 'fruits for all initiative' launched on 13th February 2019. The BES aims to plant 10+ million trees from now till 2030.



Focused restoration of degraded forest areas and rehabilitation of fallow arable dryland increases Bhutan's carbon storage capacity and keeps it on the carbon-negative path.

of increase is universally agreed. The intricacies in achieving that involves all the best practices of keeping the reckless plundering and pillaging (in the name of development) at bay.

It's understood, global climate change and loss of biodiversity is severely straining life support systems of our planet. Without concerted and large-scale efforts to mitigate climate change and stem the loss of biodiversity, planetary support systems may buckle and crash under current trajectories.

Most of the world is in attempts to correct their ways, and remain in the midst of setting targets to achieve net-zero by 2050 and other dates. A matter of pride then for Bhutan as it continues to remain carbon-negative and maintains over 70% of its land area under forest cover. Bhutan's GHG emissions is estimated at 3,750.563 Gg of CO<sub>2</sub>e as of 2015 are dwarfed by removals by forests estimated at 9,421.013 Gg of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Forests, however, are subject to both anthropogenic pressure and climate change related stress, and remain susceptible to degradation. Current estimates show that degraded forest spread over 1.6 million acres across Bhutan and are found both within Protected Areas and Forest Management Units of Bhutan. In addition to forests which are degraded, a significant portion of dry arable land also remain fallow. Focused restoration of degraded forest areas and rehabilitation of fallow arable dryland will increase Bhutan's carbon storage capacity and help keep Bhutan on a carbon negative trajectory.

## BES firmly plants its stand for Bhutan

The impacts of climate change have become more and more pronounced in the Himalayas. Its impact on Bhutan is obvious as a country whose socio-economic wellbeing is critically tied to climate sensitive sectors. So far, developing countries like Bhutan have focused most of their climate action on adapting to climate change. The need to consider mitigation efforts have come to the fore after the Paris Agreement in 2015, where countries are encouraged to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to mitigate climate change. Afforestation programs are a major component of Bhutan's mitigation efforts. To contribute to Bhutan's climate mitigation efforts, the Bhutan Ecological Society (BES) signed an MoU with the Department of Forest and Parks Services (DoFPS) to plant and nurture over a million high value tree crops and timber species in fallow lands and degraded forests across Bhutan (supported by Bhutan Foundation). The DoFPS provides its technical



expertise in this five-year project (inaugurated in 2018 at Kabesa, Thimphu). The project involves communities and volunteers to plant and nurture the tree plantation which covers 3000-plus acres of fallow lands and would rehabilitate 2500 acres of degraded forests across Bhutan from 2022 till 2025.

The BES has completed plantations for 2022 with a total plantation of about 140,000 trees and high value timber species. The project has also planted an additional 33,929 fruit trees and high value timber species on request from the community farmers. The plantations completed has mostly been on barren lands, fallow community farmers' lands and some lands owned by various institutions, schools, parks and monasteries across 13 dzongkhags covering the eastern, central, western and southern regions of the country. A total of 1,126 households including a few institutions, schools, parks and monasteries have been the beneficiaries of this year's (2022) plantations. This is the first batch of plantation (completed) so far, from the BES's plan to plant in addition of a million trees, and a little more than 800,000 saplings remain to be planted.

## The incoming benefits

An addition of a million trees through focused restoration of degraded forest areas and rehabilitation of fallow arable dryland will increase Bhutan's carbon storage capacity and help keep Bhutan on a carbon-negative trajectory. It will also help build small holder farm resilience by increasing farm incomes through sale of fruits, nuts, and carbon offsets.

The creation and development of state-of-the-art nurseries will ensure the continued supply of high-quality tree sapling stocks at the close of the project. Additionally, a network of private and state-owned nurseries will remain strengthened.

The project activities will be implemented throughout the country especially aiming areas that are arable fallow drylands and degraded forests. The project will support over 5000+ small holder farmers; restore over 3000+ acres of fallow land; rehabilitate over 2500+ acres of degraded forests; and sequester carbon and help maintain Bhutan's carbon stock.

## Checklist 2022 – activities implemented

**Fruit sapling purchase:** A total of 50,639 fruit saplings were planted, out of which 37,639 fruit saplings were purchased and 13,000 mixed fruit saplings were raised in Gelephu nursery managed by the Bhutan Ecological Society. The fruit trees planted for the year are a mix of

The BES's Creating Community Carbon Banks project implementation for 2022 kick-started with the aim to address environmental and livelihood challenges by building Bhutan's carbon stock, rehabilitating fallow land and, most importantly, increasing rural income through sale of fruits, nuts and timber by planting a million high value tree crops and timber species across 20 dzongkhags of Bhutan.

temperate and tropical fruits. For the temperate fruits, the saplings planted are Almond, Apple, Kiwi, Pear, Peach, Persimmon, Pecan Nut, Walnut (Soft shell) and the tropical fruits provided are Areca nut, Avocados and Mangoes.

**Tree sapling purchase:** For the tree sapling purchase, a total of 83,290 high value timber saplings were planted. Out of these 83,290 high value timber species, 76,590 high value timber saplings were purchased from nurseries around the country. 6,700 high value timber saplings have been produced from the nursery managed by the Bhutan Ecological Society. The species planted as high value timbers are Walnut (Hard shell), Oak, Blue pine, Cypress and Agar.

**Monitoring, data collection and maintenance:** The million + tree team from the society travelled across plantation sites covering 13 Dzongkhags (districts) and 25 gewogs (blocks) and 76 chiwogs (villages) to gather the GPS coordinates of the plantation sites and to monitor the growth of the fruit tree saplings and the high value timber saplings.

**Data analysis and reporting/Development of carbon frameworks:** The data collected by the million + tree team were assessed and with the GPS coordinates of the plantation sites collected from the field were used in generating plantation site maps. The data also shows that of the total 136,194 fruit tree saplings and high value timber saplings purchased for the planting season, 133,929 saplings were planted. 2,265 saplings were either injured or damaged during distribution and transportation.

The BES is also in talks with GainForest, a non-profit organization on carbon credits and carbon accounting. Information systems design.

An app for the million + tree project has been developed and launched. This app can be accessed through <https://app.bes.org.bt/> from the Bhutan Ecological Society's webpage.



# Creating Community Carbon Banks Project by the BES



The BES has finished plantations for the first year of its million-plus trees project. The project has also planted an additional 33,929 fruit trees and high value timber species on request from the community farmers. The plantations completed has mostly been on barren lands, fallow community farmers' lands and some lands owned by various institutions, schools, parks and monasteries.







## The journey to a million... and then some

The BES has finished plantations for the first year of its million-plus trees project. Here's a recap to the glorious endeavour that swept across the land and planted a trail of trees which will count in the millions when it's done. And it will be done!

The BES's Creating Community Carbon Banks project implementation for 2022 kick-started with the aim to address environmental and livelihood challenges by building Bhutan's carbon stock, rehabilitating fallow land and, most importantly, increasing rural income through sale of fruits, nuts and timber by planting a million high value tree crops and timber species across 20 dzongkhags of Bhutan. BES with support from Bhutan Foundation collaborated with Desuups and local communities in planting 100,000 trees for the first year of plantations. The project planted 50,639 fruit trees and 83,290 high value timber species in 13 dzongkhags (districts), bringing the total number of trees planted to 133,929.

The plantation as of last year covered 13 Dzongkhags, 25 gewogs and 67 chiwogs. In Bumthang, 3,645 fruit trees were planted by 63 households and 2,060 high value timber species by the Ura gewog school. Chukha has 4,600 high value timber species planted by 5 community forests. In Dagana, 1 household has 600 high value timber species. Lhuentse has 48 households with 1,832 fruit trees. Mongar has 65 households with 1,619 fruit trees. Pemagatshel has 55 households with 410 fruit trees. Punakha planted 4,615 fruit trees and 2,556 high value timber species by 327 households. Sarpang has 260 households with 27,818 fruit trees and 2,700 high value timber species. Thimphu has planted on two barren areas, Samazinkha and Education City with a total of 300 fruit trees and 50,720 high value timber species and 9 institutions, schools and monasteries with 320 fruit trees and 3,115 high

value timber species. Trashigang has 120 households with 1,824 fruit trees. Trashiyangtse has 39 households with 245 fruit trees. Tsirang has 93 households with 4,415 high value timber species and 16 community forests with 3,030 high value timber species. Wangduephodrang has planted 95 fruit trees by 5 institutions, schools and monasteries. Supplementing the government's Million Tree Project, saplings were provided to WengkhARDC (2,773 fruits were distributed in the eastern region as a support to the government's million tree project).

**An App to track the millions:** The million + tree dashboard, an App developed and launched for this project can be accessed through <https://app.bes.org.bt/> on the Bhutan Ecological Society's website. This app shows the data on the million + trees project. It will also serve as a platform for interested fallow land owners to register for requisitions of fruit trees and high value timber species for the coming plantation seasons.

**Carbon frameworks:** With regard to the development of carbon frameworks, BES is in talks with a non-profit organization, GainForest. BES is looking into a potential collaboration with GainForest to work on carbon accounting and carbon credits. The talks between the two organizations are still in the early stages and a number of meetings scheduled for this year. BES is also working to establish a nursery in Wangduephodrang. This nursery will cater to the production of temperate fruit saplings and high value timber saplings for distribution in the next plantation season.

**Reference: BES; Pictures: BES**

✉ For more information, please visit [www.bes.org.bt](http://www.bes.org.bt)  
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Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



# Energy Efficiency and Conservation

## What is Energy Efficiency and Conservation?

“Energy efficiency simply means using less energy to perform the same task – that is, eliminating energy waste” and “Energy conservation means reducing the consumption of energy by producing or using less of it” In short, Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE&C) measures are different means to reduce waste of energy.

Energy is an essential input for socio-economic development and a vital engine for economic growth. Bhutan has been developing which has led to increased urbanization and reduced poverty rates. As the country’s socio-economic development increases,



How to conserve energy at home;

1. Utilize natural light
2. Turn off light and electronics when not in use
3. Replace old light bulbs with LEDs
4. Use efficient cooking stoves, star rated energy efficient appliances etc



so does the energy consumption with more industries emerging in the market, the living standard of Bhutanese have also increased which allows the majority of the Bhutanese to use more appliances, equipment and vehicles, all of which results in more usage of energy. Therefore, more hydro power projects have been planned and constructed in the last few years to address the growing energy demands of the country and also the imports of fossil fuels like LPG, kerosene, diesel, petrol, etc. has been increasing over the years. In addition, there are substantial rural settlements and public institutions (schools and monasteries) where firewood is still consumed for cooking and heating purposes. The continued use of firewood has a lot of negative impacts; it affects the health of users in the long run, it creates pollution (which adds to climate change) and it depletes our beautiful forest. As the population and energy demand grows, the demand for firewood will also continue to grow.

Considering all these concerns, the Department of Energy, MoENR has identified that one of the easiest methods to save energy is the promotion and implementation of energy efficiency and conservation measures in different sectors of major energy

consumers like building, industry and transport. The department is also putting in efforts to promote clean cooking in Bhutan by promoting electric cooking appliances especially in the rural communities. But what can we, as an individual energy consumer do to help address these above issues? We can each contribute to energy saving by doing what we can at individual, household and community level. There are different measures we can adopt which range from zero investments to some investments like switching off gadgets, devices and appliances when not in use, use of insulation tape at doors and windows for air tightness, incorporation of passive house designs like sun orientation for maximum natural lighting and ventilation, using of LED lamps, efficient cooking stoves, star rated energy efficient appliances etc.

EE&C will bring reduction in the daily operation costs at an individual and household level without compromising the thermal comfort, and at a collective larger scale, implementation of EE&C measures has the opportunity to enhance economic benefits by saving energy losses, increasing domestic savings, and reducing expenditures incurred on the import of fossil fuels and electricity during lean seasons. As per the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Policy 2019, the annual savings potential in electricity consumption, averaged over the 15 years projected period, in the building, appliances and industry sectors is about 155 million GWh annually.

Energy efficiency & conservation can start from small, conscious decisions at our homes and offices (or schools) where we spend most of our time. Make use of technologies that will bring reduction in your energy bills without compromising the comfort and productivity and finally spread awareness, especially to our youth about the importance and benefits of EE&C both at personal and national level.

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དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་གཞུང་།  
Royal Government of Bhutan  
རྒྱལ་ཡོངས་ཨམ་སྲུང་འཕེལ་བྱེད་ལྷན་ཚོགས།

National Commission for Women and Children



 Austrian  
Development  
Cooperation

# CHILD JUSTICE & CHILD RIGHTS



*What comes to mind when one reads this: ‘Standard Operating Procedures on Case Management for Children in Conflict with the Law’? For the uninitiated mind; it most definitely leans to a thought that strings a long chain of thought, wherein children who ‘come in conflict’ with the law are to be handled with the most stringent and punitive tactics. Fortunately, it’s not at all the case.*

They say it takes a village to raise a child. These days it also includes state support backed by strong legislative provisions and international conventions. That collectively strikes a united chord to gauge, understand, and act on the complexities that evolve around creating and sustaining the favorable environment of care and concern — for childhood to crossover into adolescence, and for youth to graduate to adulthood — all these of course hits at bringing up a child in an atmosphere that is markedly characteristic of safety, civility and laws that safeguard and ensure their rights, child rights.

The other side of the spectrum therefore is about how to correct those who find themselves on the other side of law and order—remedy their behavior and way of life strictly toeing the line of right and wrong and at the same time do it keeping in mind that everything being done, is being done to bring them back on path. Bottom line — help them lay claim to a rite of passage which is their right.

Specific to this purpose is the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on Case Management for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL). A Child in conflict with the law means a child who is above 12 years of age but below 18 years and is found to have committed an offence.

## SOP on Case Management for Children in Conflict with the Law

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008 reflects commitments of the country towards ensuring that children are protected against all forms of discrimination and exploitation including trafficking, prostitution, abuse, violence, degrading treatment and economic exploitation. The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) including its two Optional Protocols, further confirms the country’s commitment to promote and protect the child rights.



The Parliament of Bhutan passed the Child Care and Protection Act 2011 (CCPA) to ensure the provision of effective and appropriate services for the care and protection of children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law. Designated as the Competent Authority to implement the Act, the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) strives to establish a systematic and well-coordinated protection mechanism for children in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.

Recognizing the emerging protection issues related to women and children and the need for proper mechanisms and systems, the Standard Operating Procedures on Case Management for Children in Conflict with the Law (SOP) was developed to ensure the provision of effective, appropriate, systematic and timely services to prevent and respond to the protection issues faced by children who come in conflict with the law. The SOP contains the integral roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders involved in dealing with children in conflict with the law. Further, it provides for the provision of a continuum of care and support services from the registration of a case till its closure, post-care and reintegration services.

The SOP has been developed jointly by the Royal Court of Justice (RCJ), Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Royal Bhutan Police (RBP), Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) and the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC). Going forward, the onus of implementing and institutionalizing the child justice system and streamlining the approach to rehabilitate and reintegrate children in conflict with the law lies with the commitment of all the key stakeholders.

*At the heart of the SOP to deal with CACL is the resolute attempt to protect the child's right to having a fair shot at life although an unfortunate turn of event may have briefly altered the course of their life. To achieve this, a network of stakeholders is onboard with the Royal Court of Justice, the OAG, the RBP, the National Commission for Women and Children and the BNLI all leading from the front.*

### Objectives of the SOP

The main objectives of the SOP for the CACL are to: (a) provide guidance in dealing with the child in conflict with the law to ensure the best interest of the children; (b) Standardize the procedure for dealing with child in conflict with the law (CACL) to ensure accountability, transparency, consistency and uniformity; (c) Specify the respective roles of the key agencies involved with CACL; and (d) Enhance collaboration and coordination among the key agencies involved in administration of child justice.

### Guiding Principles

In implementing this SOP, the key agencies and others must adhere to the Guiding Principles provided in Chapter 2 of the CCPA, and regulations, which is in line with the Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC). In determining the best interest of the CACL, the guiding factors can be referred under rule 9 of the CCPA&R 2015, and includes the following:

(a) Best interest of the child: In any actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be the primary consideration. Amongst others they include the following:

- The health, development, safety of the child;
- The importance of keeping children within their families;
- The taking of a child into custody only as a last resort;
- The need to rehabilitate and reintegrate children back to the society and not to focus exclusively on punishment;

(b) Non-discrimination: A child must be treated fairly and equally with respect and dignity without discrimination on grounds of race, sex, language, religion, political or other status.

(c) Participation: A child must be provided with the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceeding either directly or through a representative or an appropriate body by encouraging maximum participation during the proceedings.

(d) Adopting a child-friendly approach: A child shall be treated with professionalism, fairness and respect. This prevents unnecessary conflicts and distrusts.

(e) Arrest and Detention as a last resort: A child must be subject to arrest and detention only as a measure of last resort and that too for the shortest possible period. Given the vulnerability associated with young age, subjecting children to arrest and detention can have very negative consequences. It separates children from their families, exposes them to abuse and association with criminals, disrupts their education and adversely impacts their health and nutrition.

(f) Respect for Children's Privacy and Confidentiality: Confidentiality protects them from public exposure and stigmatization. The privacy of CICL must be respected and information shall be shared only with appropriate authorities.

## Competent authority and key institutions for child justice system

**Competent Authority:** The Act has identified the NCWC as the Competent Authority responsible to enforce the provisions of the Act. Any matter pertaining to care and protection of children must be taken up with the Competent Authority.

**National Women and Children Welfare Committee:** The Act envisages the setting up of a child welfare committee to advise the Competent Authority

regarding establishment of homes, training and rehabilitation of CICL and coordination amongst the agencies involved. The National Women and Children Welfare Committee (WCWC) has been setup with the approval of the cabinet to function as a technical body providing advisory support and expert services to the NCWC.

### **Dzongkhag/Thromde Women and Children Committee:**

The Cabinet has approved the formation of the Dzongkhag/Thromde Women and Children Welfare in accordance with the provisions of the Child Care and Protection Rules and Regulations. The Committee is required to provide assistance to the Competent Authority and to render timely services to women and children in need of care and protection including CICL in their respective Dzongkhags and Thromdes.

### **Royal Court of Justice (Family and Child Bench):**

The Act mandates the establishment of a Child Justice Court or bench to be presided over by a judge who is well versed in child rights and protection issues. A family and child bench has been established in Thimphu Dzongkhag court in accordance with the provisions of the CCPA. However, in all other Dzongkhags, matters relating to children are dealt by the regular courts.

**Royal Bhutan Police Women and Child Protection Unit/Desk (WCPU/D):** The WCPU/D is a specialized division under the RBP created for the specific purpose of handling all matters relating to women and children.

**Bhutan Narcotics Control Authority:** Bhutan Narcotics Control Authority being the nodal agency of Narcotics and Psychotropic substances, the Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Substance Abuse Act of Bhutan 2015 mandates the authority to provide treatment to the minors with substance use disorder as per section 152 and 154 of the Act through Treatment Assessment Panel (TAP), Drop-in Centers and other institutions based treatments.

### **Office of the Attorney General:**

The OAG as the central prosecuting agency of the State, reviews investigation/assessment reports referred by RBP pertaining to CICL. The OAG as mandated under Article 29 of the Constitution reviews and expedites proceedings in cases of CICL. The OAG endeavors to make exceptions in cases of CICL to protect their rights and welfare, affording them corrective measures such as alternatives to prosecutions.



The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008 reflects commitments of the country to ensure that children are protected against all forms of discrimination and exploitation including trafficking, prostitution, abuse, violence, degrading treatment and economic exploitation. The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) including its two Optional Protocols, further confirms the country's commitment to promote and protect the child rights.



**Bhutan National Legal Institute:** The BNLI as the nodal agency for conducting pre- and in-service training of Judicial Service Personnel will build capacity of judges and other judicial personnel on child justice administration. BNLI also conducts legal dissemination and awareness programs to the general public in coordination with relevant agencies.

**Homes:** The CCPA requires the establishment of various homes by the government on its own or in association with voluntary or Civil Society Organizations for the purpose of providing care and protection to contribute effectively towards rehabilitation of Child in Difficult Circumstances (CIDC) and in conflict with law.

The Act provides for the establishment of following homes:

Shelters: (i) Child Home (for children in difficult circumstances to ensure the provision of education, health and other development services for the child based on the child's age, gender and ability);

(ii) Remand Home (for temporary care and protection of the child during the period of inquiry or adjudication);

(iii) Special Home (for the care of child in conflict with law by way of providing accommodation, facilities for development of child's character, abilities). The Youth Development and Rehabilitation Centre at Tsimasham is the closest example of such a facility under the present scenario;

(iv) Closed Facilities (for the care of child in conflict with law involving an offence of third degree and above);

(v) Aftercare Home (for temporary care of child released from a home to ensure a smooth transition from detention to life outside the home);

Presently, Nazhoen Lamtoen a civil society organization is the only organization catering such support services.

## Rights of the Child in Conflict with the law

In dealing with the CICL, the following rights must be complied with:

(a) To be treated with respect and inherent dignity;

(b) To be kept separately from adult offenders at all times;

(c) To be transported in a separate conveyance from that of adult offenders;

(d) To maintain contact with family members through correspondence and visits, except in exceptional circumstances;

(e) To prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance;

(f) Of privacy to be fully respected and protected at all stages of the proceedings;

(g) To legal aid for children whose parents/ guardian are indigent person;

(h) To protection against legal consequences and social stigma;

(i) To alternative measures, if not a recidivist or habitual offender;

(j) To separate hearing, if other person accused of same crime is an adult;

(k) To minimum sentencing, if not a recidivist or habitual offender.

(l) To provide any statements in the presence of the child's parents or guardian, social worker, or legal representative in attendance who shall also affix their signature to the said statement;

(m) Not to be handcuffed unless required in for the safety of the society

(n) Not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and

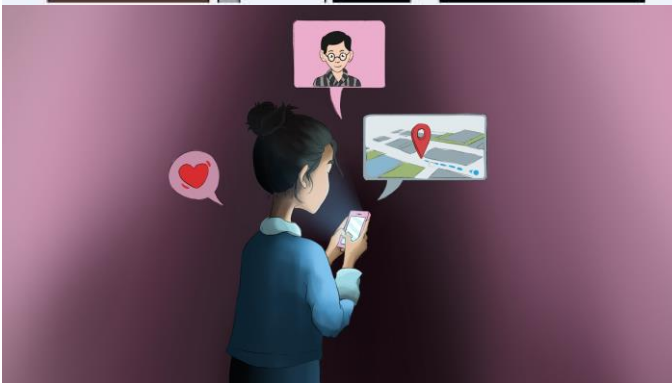
(o) Not to be deprived, unlawfully or arbitrarily of his or her liberty.

**Child below the age of criminal liability:** A child below the age of 12 at the time of the commission of the offence is deemed incapable of committing a crime and cannot be subject to criminal proceedings. If the child is below 12 years of age and is in conflict with the law, the child must be handed over to his parents, guardian or closest relatives after advice and cautioning. A joint undertaking must be signed by the parties to ensure that the child do not come in conflict with the law again. If the child is at or above the age of criminal responsibility and is alleged to have committed an offence, the child must have to be dealt through a specialized approach which takes into account their vulnerability, personality, specific needs for education and intellectual maturity. If the child is determined to be a CIDC by the Probation Officer, the child shall be referred to the Protection Officer for necessary support.

**Procedural aspects relating to a CICL:** The police must follow the SOP on CICL of RBP for detailed procedural aspects. The police must notify the parents or legal guardian of the child immediately on initial contact. In the absence of parents or legal guardian a Probation Officer will be notified within 24 hours

**Role of RBP and OAG:** In absence of the child's parents or legal guardian, the police must take statement from the child in the presence of the probation officer or independent witnesses or social worker or legal representative. The police officer must explain the reason for the arrest to the CICL and the offence alleged to have been committed in a language the child can understand. Detailed records pertaining to the





NCWC is the competent authority to enforce the provisions of the Child Care and Protection Act 2011. Any matter pertaining to care and protection of children must be taken up with the Competent Authority.

child must be maintained at the police station and further forwarded to WCPU/D at the RBP, HQs. On receiving the Investigation/Assessment Report from RBP, the OAG shall determine whether the case merits alternative measures/diversion as per the Diversion Guideline or prosecution as per child Prosecution Guidelines. The prosecution of the CICL will be before the Child and family Court or bench/court as designated by the Court procedure or practice.

**Role of BNCA:** BNCA can provide treatment to those minors who are involved in substance abuse as per section 141A, 152 and 154 of the Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substance and Substance Abuse Act 2015. A minor committing the offence of substance abuse for the fourth time shall be liable to be sent to juvenile correctional centre for at least one year for treatment and rehabilitation. In this regard, the prevention methods and the expansion of the services through Drop-in Centers (DIC), Rehabilitation Centers and after care services (run by the CSOs and RGoB) will be enhanced.

**National Women and Child Welfare Committee:** The WCWC will provide technical backstopping to the Competent Authority on issues and services pertaining to women and children. Further, it will comprise a pool of Experts on women and child protection issues. The functions of the committee are to provide advisory, supervisory and other technical support to the Competent Authority in the following areas:

- (a) Advise and supervise institutions established for protecting and promoting the rights of women and children;
- (b) Recommend regarding matters concerning protection of women and children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law;
- (c) Coordinate with stakeholders on the identification and prevention of the issues relating to women and children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law;
- (d) Recommend any agency or organization to provide their services to prevent and protect women and children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law;
- (e) Provide technical support and expertise on issues related to women and children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law;
- (f) Monitor and assess the performance of the relevant agencies in the provision of protection services to women and children;
- (g) Promote and provide inputs for operationalization and improving coordination mechanisms and SOPs on women and children related issues; and
- (h) Report and present to the NCWC twice a year and as and when necessary.

### **Role of the Dzongkhag/Thromde Women & Child**

**Committee:** In the absence of parent or guardian, the appropriate Dzongkhag/Thromde Women and Children Committee will appoint a guardian at the earliest, but no later than 48 hours of receiving the notification regarding the CICL.

The Dzongkhag/Thromde Women & Child Committee will appoint a legal guardian for a child if:

- (a) the parent/s are incapacitated or unfit and unable to care or act on behalf of the child;
- (b) there are reasons to believe that the presence of the parent/s pose an immediate risk to the child's life and wellbeing;
- (c) the child's parent/s are serving a prison sentence;
- (d) the child is an orphan; or
- (e) there are any other circumstances that are found not to be in the best interests of the child.

The Dzongkhag/Thromde Women and Children Committee must:

- (a) advise the Protection Officer;
- (b) consult, recommend and monitor the progress of the cases;
- (c) collaborate with the Competent Authority regarding matters beyond their purview;
- (d) issue directives in relation to cases in consultation with the Competent Authority;
- (e) coordinate with the stakeholders on providing after care services and support; and
- (f) monitor, assess and submit information to the Competent Authority through the CMIS at the Dzongkhag/Thromde level.

### **Role of the Competent Authority**

A CICL must be provided with counseling and/or other necessary services where required. The Competent Authority may seek assistance of CSOs and other service providers where required. The NCWC is designated as the competent authority and has the responsibility of ensuring promotion and protection of the rights of children in their best interest within the country and the Competent Authority must:

- (a) assess and propose amendment of legislation and policies that restrict the rights of children;
- (b) monitor the Dzongkhag/Thromde Women Children Committee;
- (c) maintain a list of the probation officer;
- (d) provide necessary mechanism for monitoring and review of institutions that provide social service, probation services and after care;

### **Alternative measures for dealing with children in conflict with the law**

Alternative measures refer to programs for dealing with a CICL without resorting to formal court

proceeding as an alternative to prosecution. It provides the CICL with the opportunity to make reparation to victim and the community.

The primary goal of alternative measures is to promote sense of responsibility, prevent criminalization, and facilitate rehabilitation and social reintegration of children. Alternative measures offer the victim and community members the opportunity to be involved in resolving the case and have the accused take responsibility for their behavior, and help repair the harm that has been done to the extent possible.

The use of alternative measures addresses the criminal actions of the accused while preserving their dignity and requiring them to be accountable for their behavior. Alternative measures can be used in cases where the offence committed by the child is not of a serious nature. If the offence is not serious and the child has no history of past criminal behavior, the child may be considered for an alternative measure program.

### **Disposition and Alternative Sentencing**

Dispositions and adjudication will be administered by the Courts as per the Child Friendly Court Procedures/Civil and Criminal Code of Procedure through issuance of disposition order/court order/Judgment. Dispositions may include Alternative Sentencing of the Courts by way of Probation or release; Conditional Discharge; Family Conferencing disposition; and Suspension of sentencing.

**Thrimthue:** The court will also use their discretion to make an order to pay fine in lieu of imprisonment if the offence committed by the child is a felony of fourth degree and below and the child is not a recidivist or child habitually in conflict with law.

**Restitution:** The court will order the child, parents or the guardian to restore damaged property if the child is responsible for damaging property of another person.

**Reintegration:** To ensure the smooth transition from detention to life outside the home, the service provider must focus on assisting the child for reintegration and rehabilitation programs enabling them to become a productive member of the community, which is an integral part of child justice system.

**Reports to be treated confidential:** All documents relating to a child shall be treated as confidential and where the need to disclose documents arises, the consent of the child, parents, guardians or legal representative needs to be obtained or upon the order of the court.



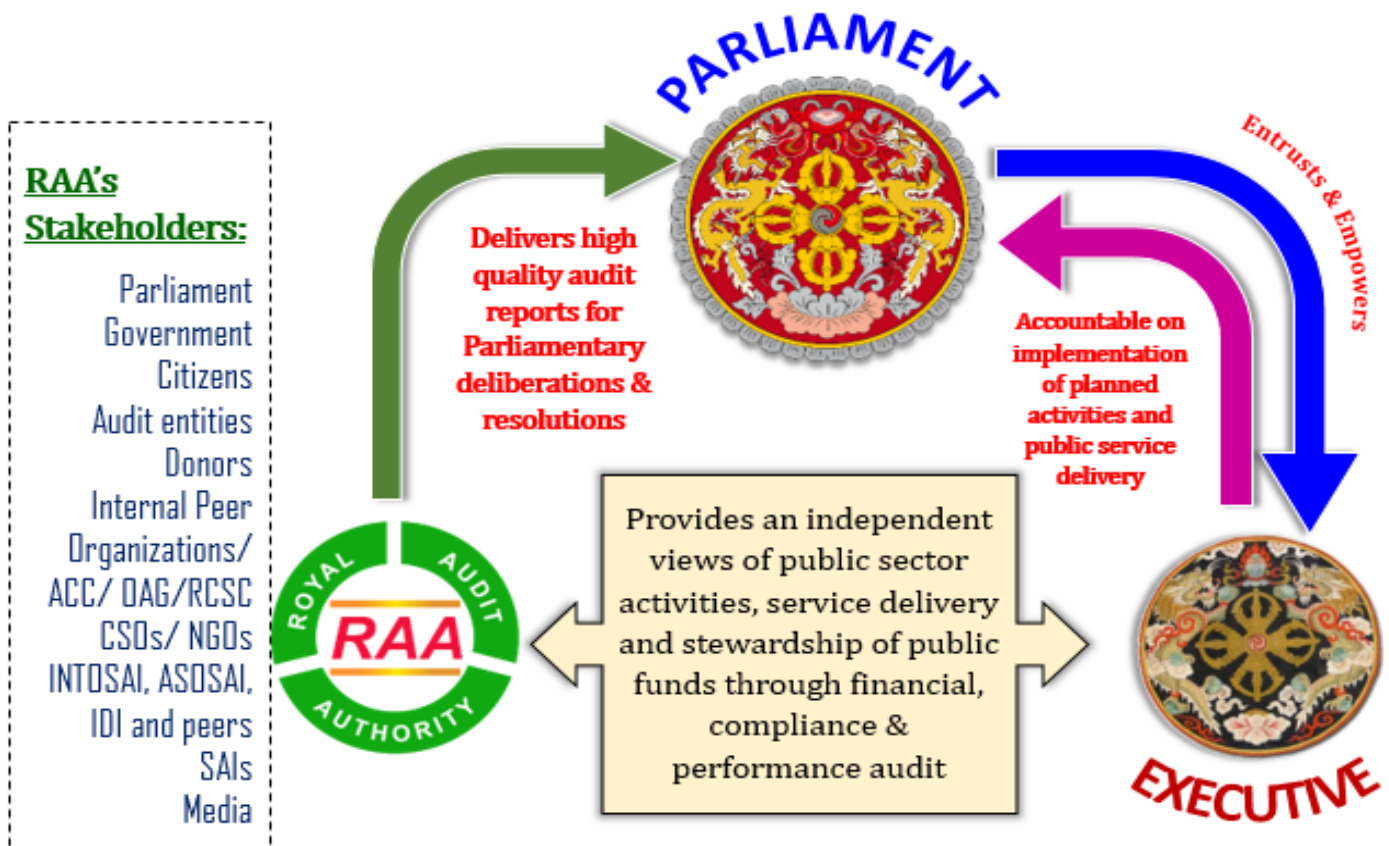
*CORRUPTION is unambiguous. There is no great or small CORRUPTION. And no one is above the law.  
– His Majesty The King.*

## **The RAA – ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY**

Such a thing is that thing called accountability. It's a quality inborn, it's a trait that can be taught, it's a virtue that can be honed throughout life and made more intense. It is as much a result of a clear conscience as much as it is a knee-jerk reaction induced by a guilty conscience. Just as home is the start point for all things to be learnt about life, accountability too can be learnt by eye (sight), ear (sound) and heart (mind). Likewise, places of learning like schools and colleges too are fertile grounds to initiate, orientate, acquaint and groom young minds to toe the 'accountability' line. Accountability is taking ownership of one's actions, owning up to one's mistakes, it is also about not looking the other way toting the belief that 'ignorance is bliss.' It's a personality trait acquired and inborn, it can be produced on-the-go and at the most correct moment. The timing at which one courageously and unabashedly flaunts it to strike an intervention; and

the choice one makes in applying it or not applying it makes all the difference. And the difference they are huge depending on what's at stake – ranges from personal reputation to national pride.

The tidal wave of frustrated emotions someone feels seeing hard-earned money or sincere efforts and hard work being poured down the drain is very understandable. It's clear as day, cut and dry. Someone has said it truly — there is no such thing as a free lunch — meaning that someone is always paying for what another enjoys or takes credit for, and believes to be 'free lunch.' This writeup is about 'Accountability' and how the Royal Audit Authority (RAA) is in action for about forty years in the more than six decades of nation's developmental history. Now how does it connect to the existence of such a thing as



free lunch or the non-existence of it? Matter of fact – in every possible way!

The RAA as the supreme audit institution of the country is the epitome of accountability. Its very being is built on the bedrock of accountability. Its mere presence, in name and in physical structure is a reminder of the benefits of being accountable for one’s actions; the rewards thereof to be reaped. Or of the consequences there remains to be faced if found on the other side, the wrong side of accountability.

People say ‘accountability’ like it’s just a word; only feeling the true weight of it when things seriously go wrong. Like for an example, when they find out that two structures (buildings or bridges) have been built with money and resources meant only for one; and neither of the two structures are reliably usable. Or for instance when a construction keeps failing deadlines and additional money and resources are continuously pumped in only to fail more deadlines. What of the money and resources seemingly left unused or secretly misused? Well, that’s ‘free lunch’ for the one, or ones who planned the series of actions for things to unfold in a particular manner. And in saying ‘free’ it’s not really free, because the state (government) pays for it. And enjoying free lunch here would mean shaving off of state funds, undermining valuable time and energy invested for the entire duration of the work. This

highpoint of realization pumped and laden with delayed wisdom is what makes ‘accountability’ such a desired quality and a need of the hour, all our waking hours.

Accountability is in a sense definitely – one size fits all – if they be receptive of embracing and endorsing the underlying values. From the smallest of task or duty one is assigned to, from handling a small developmental activity to managing the biggest budgeted national projects/programs, from honestly purchasing and managing the most basic of office stationary to transparently procuring cost-intensive hi-tech equipment/machinery; accountability is everywhere, and in everything.

It has been the norm for some good number of years now, RAA is continuously being viewed and understood by the general public as an institution whose forte is not just in dealing with finance-related audits that dishes out the reprimanding memos directing them to buckle up. The performance audits being conducted continually is hitting the mark efficiently as people/ministries/ departments/agencies/corporations/businesses are advised, admonished, applauded to make changes in their workings to perform better.

## Evolution of the Royal Audit Authority

A need for an audit system was conceived since the inception of the country's planned economic development as early as 1960. In 1961, the 16th Session of the National Assembly resolved forming a Committee of Accounts and Audit with its members comprising one representative of His Majesty the King and one representative each from the Government, the Monk Body and the public. The Committee was bestowed with the responsibility of proper maintenance of revenue and government properties.

Since then, the RAA as it stands today, went through various organisational and structural changes from a mere Committee to Audit Department and then finally establishing it as fully autonomous body in 1985. As it went through these stages of changes, the Royal Decrees of 1970, 1997, 1999, 2000 and 2005 were issued covering the mandates and strengthening further its institutional status and independence in its operations.

In October 1969, the 31st National Assembly Session decided to set up an Audit Department. The Department was bestowed with the responsibilities to audit the accounts of the erstwhile Finance Ministry, the erstwhile Development Ministry, the erstwhile Home Ministry (including the Royal Bhutan Police), the erstwhile Trade Ministry, the RBA, the RBP, and the National Militia. They were also empowered to audit His Majesty's accounts. Based on the resolution of the 31st Session of the National Assembly, the Royal Decree of 1970 was issued establishing an Audit Department.

In 1985, the Audit Department was declared autonomous and re-named as the Royal Audit Authority. The first ever written regulations on audit was introduced in 1989 with the formulation of General Auditing Rules and Regulations. In December 2005, a Royal Decree declared the RAA as one of the Constitutional Bodies in preparation for transition to Constitutional Democratic form of Government to be instituted from 2008.

In June 2006, the 85th Session of the erstwhile National Assembly enacted the Audit Act of Bhutan 2006, providing the RAA with organisational and functional independence and authority to determine and administer its own organisational structure, budgetary and personnel requirements. Later the Audit Act of Bhutan 2006 was repealed and the Audit Act of Bhutan 2018 was enacted in the 11th Session of the Second Parliament that provides much better and enhanced mandates like audit of mines and minerals.



### ROYAL AUDIT AUTHORITY

**Vision:** "A credible Supreme Audit Institution that promotes value for money and good governance in public operations and contributes towards achieving the societal aspirations of Gross National Happiness."

**Mission:** "RAA is an independent constitutional body which contributes to accountability, transparency and effective service delivery. In the service of Tsa-Wa-Sum (the King, Country and People), we audit without fear, favour or prejudice and provide timely, reliable and quality audit services to assist effective decision making in the public sector."

#### Core values

**Integrity:** We are independent, honest and incorruptible in our conduct and remain impartial and trustworthy.

**Transparency:** We are transparent in all our dealings and actions, and promote culture of openness and submit ourselves to scrutiny.

**Team work:** We believe in team spirit and diversity to unleash our full potential in achieving common goals through mutual respect, trust and support.

**Accountability:** We are accountable for our own actions in a similar way we propound accountability in audited agencies.

**Professionalism:** We perform quality audit services through dedicated and competent work force conforming to auditing standards and best practices.



# EARTHQUAKE SAFETY

*Before an Earthquake*



- Building Codes
- Land use planning

**Design and build earthquake resilient homes**

**Insure your home and properties**

**Develop a disaster management plan for your family involving all members and update your plan regularly**

**Prepare and Keep a Disaster Supplies Kit**

**Identify and secure objects that could fall, slide or collide during shaking or block exits**

**DROP**

**COVER**

**HOLD**

**Practice "Drop, Cover, Hold" and earthquake drills periodically**

**Identify and know evacuation routes, evacuation site or safe places outside your building**

Ambulance	112
Fire Fighter Division	110
Royal Bhutan Police	113
Traffic Police	111
Disaster Communications and Helpline Unit	999

**Know the contact information of emergency services**

**Learn about the disaster management plans of your dzongkhag, gewog, community, school and organization**



# EARTHQUAKE SAFETY

*During an Earthquake*



## IF YOU ARE INDOOR



Stay calm and immediately move away from non-structural hazards like windows, cupboards, alter, fans etc.



Do not run during shaking but drop to the floor and protect your head & neck until the shaking stops



If you are near a study table, get under it and Drop Cover Hold on to the table's leg



If you are on the bed, stay there and protect your head with the pillow



If your sitting in a theatre or stadium, brace yourself and protect your head with your arm



If you have mobility impairment, brace yourself and protect your head & neck



Carefully exit the building after the shaking stops



Do not go back inside after you have exited the building

If you are on the ground floor of a stone or adobe earth houses, exit quickly and carefully as soon as shaking starts



## IF YOU ARE OUTDOOR



Find a clear spot and drop to your knees to prevent falling down on the ground

If you are in a vehicle, go to a safe location and pull over



Find a clear spot away from buildings, trees, powerlines and rockfalls



# EARTHQUAKE SAFETY

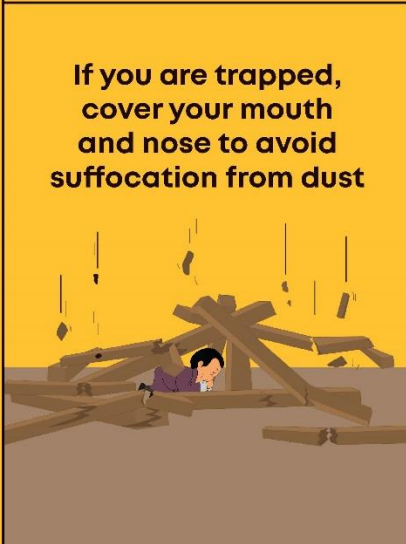
After an Earthquake



Expect aftershocks after an earthquake



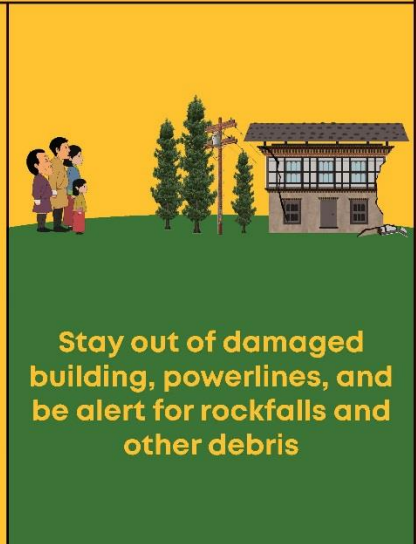
Do not enter the damaged building



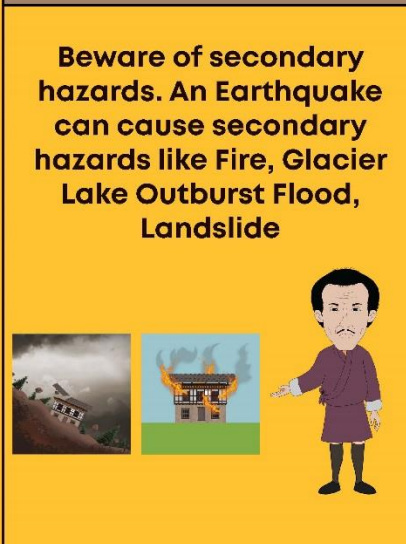
If you are trapped, cover your mouth and nose to avoid suffocation from dust



Use phone only if there is a need for an emergency assistance. Short messaging rather than voice call is advisable



Stay out of damaged building, powerlines, and be alert for rockfalls and other debris



Beware of secondary hazards. An Earthquake can cause secondary hazards like Fire, Glacier Lake Outburst Flood, Landslide



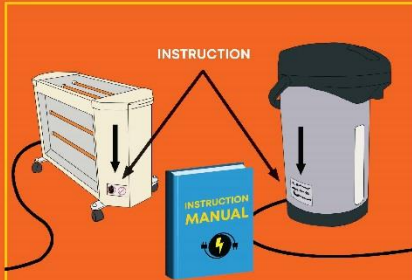
Don't be misled by rumors or disinformation. Stay informed and rely on information from authorized agencies





# FIRE SAFETY

Before a Fire

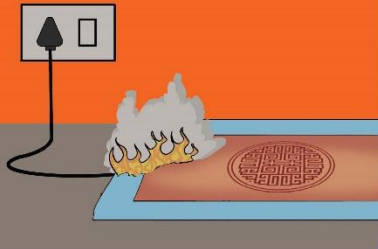


Use heater and electrical appliances as per manufacturer's instruction



Inspect and repair electrical appliances and avoid overloading

Don't run electrical wires or cords under carpets

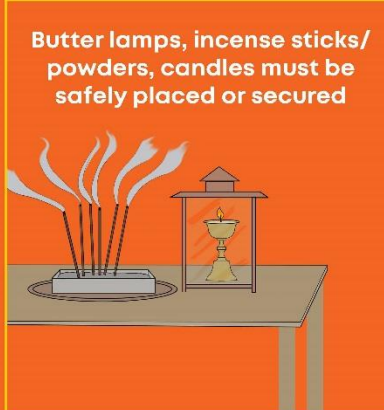


Avoid or limit storing of hazardous materials such as kerosene, gas cylinders, dry wood near or inside the house



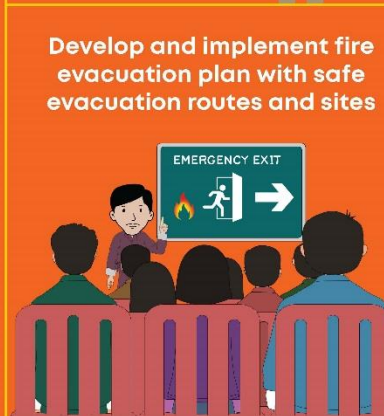
Keep matches, lighters and flammable products away from children and heat sources

Never leave fire unattended and ensure that the fire heat is completely extinguished



Butter lamps, incense sticks/powders, candles must be safely placed or secured

Remember **PASS** while using a fire extinguisher



Develop and implement fire evacuation plan with safe evacuation routes and sites

Install and maintain fire extinguisher and learn to use the correct types of fire extinguisher

# FIRE SAFETY

During and after a Fire



**Learn how to turn off the Miniature Circuit Breaker (MCB) and gas cylinder**

**Do not use any match, lighter or electrical switches in case of a gas leak**

**If you smell smoke or see fire, try to extinguish small fires using fire extinguisher, sand, water, wet blankets within the first two minutes of fire**

**If you are not able to extinguish the fire, get out quickly, alert others, activate fire alarm and call fire services or police**

FIRE (110)  
POLICE (113)

**Evacuate the building quickly and carefully by following the evacuation routes and go to a safe evacuation area**

**If there is smoke in the room, "Get down low and GO, GO, GO". Inhaling rising smoke and toxic gases may kill you**

**Do not run if your body catches on fires as it increases oxygen thus enlarging the fire**

**If your clothes catches on fire: STOP DROP AND ROLL to extinguish the flames**



# FLOOD SAFETY

Before a flood



Select a safe site for your building and avoid building houses or amenities within the flood risk areas

Keep water channels, drains and gutters clear of debris

Know the flood and landslide prone areas in your locality

If you live in flood prone areas, consider relocating or consult authorized agencies for advice and directives

Know the Flood Early Warning System and Evacuation Plan of your community

Participate in community flood preparedness action and mock drills

Identify your safe evacuation routes and sites

Stay informed and monitor the weather on TV/ Radio/ social media and follow the advisory

Follow all evacuation instruction and order from relevant authorities

If you have time before evacuating, switch off miniature circuit breaker (MCB) and turn off the gas



# FLOOD SAFETY

*During and After a flood*



<p><b>Go to higher ground as soon as possible in absence of an evacuation plan or instruction</b></p> 	<p> <b>Never attempt to cross or swim in any flowing water during a flood</b></p>	<p><b>Stay away from bridges and river embankments</b></p> 
<p> <b>Don't walk or drive in the flood water</b></p>		<p><b>Stay away from underpasses as it can be filled with water</b></p> 
<p><b>Stay away from falling power lines because the water may have been electrically charged</b></p> 	<p><b>If your vehicle stalls in water, abandon it</b></p> 	<p><b>Do not drink, play or swim in flood water</b></p> 
<p> <b>Don't consume fish or water species left by flood</b></p>	<p><b>Make sure that food and drinking water is not contaminated</b></p> 	

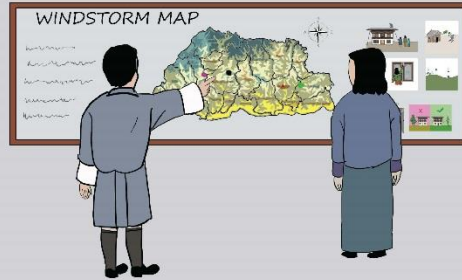


# WINDSTORM SAFETY



## Before a windstorm

**Know your history and risks of windstorm in the area**



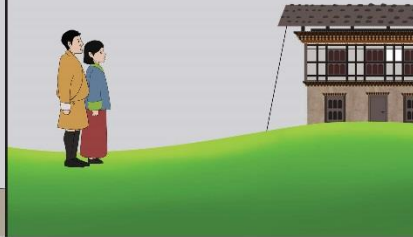
**Design and build windstorm resistant roofs**



**Periodically check the stability of roofing, windows and doors**



**Identify safe places in and outside your building**



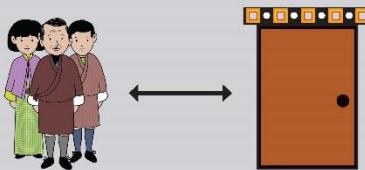
**Monitor weather and get information from relevant agencies**



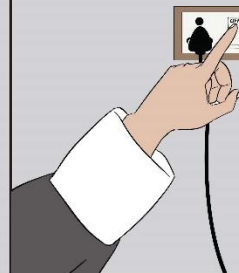
## During and after a windstorm

### IF YOU ARE INDOOR

**Close all windows and doors**



**Stay indoor away from all windows and doors**



**Turn off electricity and other appliances**

**Evacuate to lower floors of an identified safe location in the house**

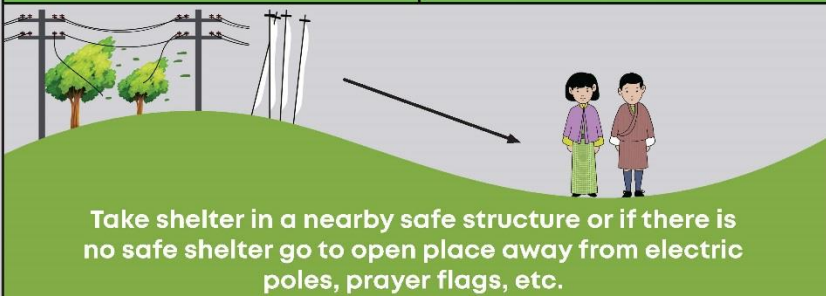


**If you live in a temporary and unstable structure, evacuate to a stronger shelter**



### IF YOU ARE OUTDOOR

**Check and assess building conditions before entering your house**



**Take shelter in a nearby safe structure or if there is no safe shelter go to open place away from electric poles, prayer flags, etc.**

**If you are driving pull over to a safe place and stay inside**



## PHYSICAL BULLYING

## VERBAL BULLYING

## SOCIAL BULLYING

## CYBER BULLYING



## Bullying and How to Handle It - Bhutan

Bullying has become rampant in all schools all around the world. Thousands of kids are insulted, picked upon and demoralized by being called a colorful plethora of derogatory names. Yes, school is supposed to be tough. But it's not supposed to be so tough that it makes you want to hide beneath your covers and stay at home. Usually children are ready to face the most stringent teachers but they are terrified of encountering a crowd of bullies. Although many steps have been taken to put a halt to it over the years, there is no denying that the bullying epidemic still exists today.

It has been estimated by research that the bullying epidemic has worsened even more over time due to the increased diversity of beliefs and cultures. The fear of being bullied has pushed around 160,000 students into staying at home instead of attending school. As a matter of fact, bullying has also paved way for the concept of home schooling. The dangerous part about bullying is that victims of this act are 2-9 times more likely to consider suicide as a means of escape.

### What statistics reveal?

In addition, 14% children belonging to high school think of suicide and approximately 7% actually attempt it every year. The number of student deaths by suicide is rising day by day as the bullying epidemic continues to spread. Gays and lesbians are more likely to be the target of bullying and the number of bullying episodes



The myth that bullying is necessary to attain greatness is a myth in the sense that there is no research to back it up. None. In contrast, there is extensive research spanning decades that provides evidence for the long lasting, serious harm to the brain by all forms of bullying and abuse.

and the consequences are absolutely staggering. It is gradually impacting the youth.

Previously, episodes of bullying were not as widespread and were reported to the right authorities by the audience watching it. However, conditions are deteriorating rapidly because not only the victims themselves but also the onlookers are unwilling to speak up against the act as they are fearful of being the next target. Child bullying is considerably more damaging although adult bullying also has its effects.



### How the victim suffers?

The bullying epidemic is a progressive act, which has different stages. The severity of bullying varies as per every stage. At first it starts from the looks and the stares from peers. Then the child has to suffer through giggles and whispers everywhere they go. Now is the stage of name calling, in which abusive language is included. The last step is the physical abuse in which children may be pushed, tripped or beaten. In some cases, bullying goes to such extremes that children are used as constant slaves and punching bags for entertainment purposes.

This is damaging to the personality of the victim in particular. The scars of bullying last for a long time and sometimes are permanent if those children are not provided with proper counseling or therapy. The pits of bullying are the verbal assault that the child has to bear on a constant basis.

### Problems Faced

A teacher or adult might stop physical abuse but no one can put a stop to the verbal comments and snickers that a child has to face. It is said that despite being the smallest part of the body, the tongue can inflict damage of the highest degree. This is indeed true but the main dilemma is that many people choose to overlook bullying. This ignorance and compromise with the act has probably the reason behind the aggravation of the bullying epidemic. When caught fighting or abusing, in most cases, both the victims and bully are given the same punishment. This can further discourage the victim from speaking up and turn them against the system. Long term physical and emotional baggage is carried by children who are the victims of bullying but numerous teachers and parents choose to ignore it by saying that 'it happens all the time' or 'it's just a stage and will pass'. This is wrong and steps need to be taken to put a halt to it for proper upbringing of your child.

### Action plan for parents

Parents often make the mistake of going in denial because they do not wish to believe that their child could be an outcast and they feel ashamed. They are unaware of how to deal with their children when they find that they have been the objects of bully. Read on further to know some of the steps you have to take when you find out if your child is a victim:



### Identify the indicators of bullying

Figuring out that there is a problem can be difficult unless your child comes home with bruises or a black eye. The child's personality will send up red flags when bullying occurs. A lack of interest in favorite activities changes in eating and sleeping pattern, depression and deviance from usual routine are all signs of bullying. If you suspect that your child is being bullied, it is best to talk to them first and explain that there is no harm in admitting it.

### Talk to your child

First of all, you have to comprehend what bullying exactly and explain the same to your child. Experts have defined bullying as an act where a person intentionally torments someone in an emotional, physical and even psychological manner. You need to tell your child that bullies can do much more than pushing and hitting. Your child needs to understand the difference between personality differences and bullying because children often tend to confuse that. Bullies will try to scare you, say mean things about you and take away your lunch money. When someone tells your child that they don't want to play together; that isn't bullying. Bullying is when they tell others not to play with you. It is essential for your child to understand the distinction between these two acts.

### How you as a parent can help?

Explain to your child that it isn't their fault that they have become a victim. The self-esteem of your child would have been considerably damaged with constant bullying and you need to tell them that it's not because

of who or what they are. The problems actually exist with the bullies themselves. Appreciate your child for discussing the problem with you and assure them that by telling the truth they have also saved other children, as further bullying would be prevented.

Your child also needs to know how to avoid the situation of bullying. You can suggest to them that they switch restrooms and go to a different one from the bully. Ask your child to make up a buddy system through which they are not alone whenever they are in the hallway. Explain to your child that reacting with tears and anger doesn't help because it encourages the bully. Once the bully realizes that the victim is no longer getting upset, they will get bored. By pretending that the bully is invisible, you can make bullying boring for the bully. This requires practice but it is very effective.

### Contacting the school

Contact the school administrators and address the situation with them. Don't let things go, expecting them to be resolved on their own. Involvement of teachers and principals is necessary. If a bully is victimizing your child, there is a possibility that there are other victims as well. Become your child's advocate and empower them to stand on their own. Before long, they will stop being bullied. Bullying is a very grave and serious business and more and more schools have established a policy of a zero tolerance approach to this act. However, this does not mean that it has stopped happening. Anti-bullying rules have been set up and teachers no longer opt to look the other way but the school authority can only do so much.

Children will still find opportunities to bully and insult other kids and peers. Parents should empower their children at home and make them strong enough to deal with anything. Dealing with bullying is no easy task but it has to be handled the right way particularly when your child is the victim.

*bhutaneducation.info , illustrations by NCWC*





The PEMA

## Guidelines for Anti-bullying Mechanisms in Educational Institutions (OCTOBER 10, 2022) THE PEMA CENTER SECRETARIAT

**Title:** This guideline shall be called the ‘Guidelines for Anti-bullying in Educational Institutions’.

**Commencement:** This guideline shall come into effect from October 10, 2022.

**Background:** Bullying has detrimental bearings on children’s health, wellbeing and learning. Some of the impacts of bullying include physical injuries; anxiety; post-traumatic stress disorders; psychological distress; depression; lack of confidence; self-doubt; low self-esteem; and even suicide. Bullying can also hinder the ability of those involved to concentrate and learn effectively, increasing the risk of truancy; and lead to abuse of substance, display of violent behaviours, and lowered academic competence and performance. Some of these consequences can spill over into adulthood.

Globally, one in three children are affected by bullying. In Bhutan, 27% of the students reported to have been bullied of which 2.4% were bullied ten times or more. While bullying was found to have occurred similarly regardless of age or sex, 34% of boarding students were bullied as opposed to 24% of day scholars.

**Objectives:** Given the pervasive links of bullying with children’s health, wellbeing and learning, this guideline aims to:

- Nurture a safe and harmonious learning environment for the children and youth;
- Enhance psychological wellbeing and resilience of the children; and
- Provide a strategic reference for the educational institutions to base their anti-bullying initiatives on.

**Application:** This guideline shall apply to all the educational institutions in Bhutan, both public and private.

**What is bullying?** Bullying is defined in myriad ways, but four characteristics cut across widely accepted definitions. Bullying is harmful; intentional; entails a power imbalance; and has an element of repetition. Bullying can be physical as well as verbal. Further, bullying can also be perpetrated

online through emails, gaming and social media platforms, also known as cyberbullying.

However, mere teasing or joking without any intent to inflict harm, trading of insults and expressing ideas may not constitute bullying, if accepted by the receiver.

### Characteristics of bullying

Bullying usually involves three parties, namely initiators or students exhibiting bullying behaviour; targets or the victims of bullying; and bystanders or those who witness bullying.

Firstly, bullying is intentional, indicating the presence of a deliberate intent to inflict physical or psychological discomfort, or both, to another person. Secondly, bullying entails a power imbalance, signifying actual or perceived unequal relationship between the bully and the bullied owing to physical appearance, social status, gender, digital capability, or access. Thirdly, bullying has an element of repetition which means bullying can either take place repeatedly with the same target or with different targets. Fourthly, bullying is harmful because the resultant coercion or intimidation has short and long-term physical or psychological harm on those being bullied, those who bully, and the bystanders.

### Policy and Legal Environment

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan mandates the state to, “take appropriate measures to ensure that children are protected against all forms of discrimination and exploitation including trafficking, prostitution, abuse, violence, degrading treatment and economic exploitation” (Article 9, Section 18). Likewise, the Child Care and Protection Act outlines the guiding principles, objectives and provisions focusing on the overall development of the child in a conducive environment, while the provisions on assault; battery and related offences; and harassment on Chapter 12

of the Penal Code of Bhutan could apply according to the gravity of bullying incidents.

On the Policy front, the National Youth Policy focuses on overall growth of young people between the age group of 13-24 years of age through unique and diverse interventions. Further, the 30th Education Policy Guidelines and Instructions contain Guidelines for School Discipline Policy which grades bullying as a 'level 2 offence.

### Signs of bullying in a student

The signs of bullying in a student are categorized as physical signs and psychosocial signs.

**Physical Signs:** Some of the physical signs include, but not limited to:

- Truancy, declining academic performance and loss of interest in academic works;
- Repeated loss or damage of clothes, bags, money, electronics or other belongings;
- Stealing;
- Unexplained cuts, bruises and injuries;
- Changes in eating pattern or loss of appetite/weight;
- Coming home hungry;
- Changes in sleeping patterns;
- Feeling sick or unwell repeatedly;
- Inability to speak up in class;
- Bedwetting;
- Association with bullies; and
- Beginning to bully younger children.

**Psychosocial Signs:** Some of the psychosocial signs include, but not limited to:

- Signs of anxiety about going to school/institute/college;
- Unexplained and sudden behaviour changes;
- Appearing withdrawn or avoidance of social events they otherwise cherish;
- Feelings of helplessness and reduced self-esteem;
- Appearing apprehensive, but refusing to talk about what bothers them;
- Being frequent target of teasing, mimicry and ridicule at educational institutions; and
- Self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves and talking about suicide.

### Attributes of a student exhibiting bullying behaviour

The underlying reasons for bullying include unhappiness; feelings of inadequacy; difficulties at home; and desire to appear powerful. At times, students bully because they have been bullied as well. Some of the indicators of a student who exhibit bullying behaviour are categorized as physical and psychosocial signs.

**Physical signs:** Some of the physical signs include, but not limited to:

- Getting into brawls and quarrels;
- Befriending other students who exhibit bullying behaviour;

- Being aggressive to parents, teachers or other adults;
- Possessing unexplained extra belongings or money;
- Dominating and controlling situations and others;
- Expressing difficulty in adhering to rules.

**Psychosocial signs:** Some of the psychosocial signs include, but not limited to:

- Declining responsibility for their actions;
- Holding positive views toward violence;
- Indicating lack of empathy for those who are bullied;
- Exhibiting egocentric and manipulative demeanours;
- Craving attention.

### Preventive Measures

The preventive measures must be guided by the aspirations to promote safety; instil foundational competencies; create awareness in a sustained manner; and develop the capacities of the teachers, support staff and parents/guardians. Students must be informed and reminded that bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. To institute effective anti-bullying preventive mechanism, a whole-of-society approach must be adopted.

Prevention of bullying in the school entails innovative and appropriate efforts at various levels. The traditional approaches of one-time awareness do not fulfil the need for continuous and consistent efforts required at different levels. Therefore, the prevention efforts will target in addressing the factors and causalities within the ecological framework. The proposed prevention mechanisms draw insights from the ecological model which acknowledges that human behaviour is influenced by interaction of the individual at multiple levels. Every effort at different levels will entail universal, selective as well as indicated prevention programs. The activities mentioned in the prevention framework are the foundational requirements under each category and does not limit schools from exploring need-based activities within their environment.

**Prevention Programs and Mechanisms:** The ecological model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, organization, community, and systemic factors. It helps understand a range of factors that put children at risk for bullying or protect them from experiencing or initiating bullying. The model also suggests that it is necessary to act across multiple levels at the same time, to be able to prevent bullying. This guideline considers prevention at five levels.

**a. Individual Level:** The first level identifies biological and psychological factors that increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or initiator of bullying. Prevention strategies at this level promote attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that prevent bullying. While the focus is to address bullying among children and youth, it is necessary to allow adults to work at the individual level to develop the right attitude, understanding and skills required to guide and respond to the needs of the students.

**b. Relationship - Interpersonal Level:** The second level examines close relationships that may increase the risk of experiencing bullying as a victim or initiator. A child's closest social circle in the form of peers, teachers and family members influence their behaviour and contributes to their experiences. Prevention strategies at this level include promotion of healthy relationships and interactions.

**c. Institutional and organizational level:** This level reveals the need for enabling organizational culture, practices, and programmes to enhance enriching experiences for children and influence behavioural development. A culture of care and connection, safe environment, and programmes to support guidance and norms to form behaviours and habits contribute to reducing numerous problems, including violence, and bullying in schools.

**d. Community level:** This level explores the social settings within the schools and beyond, in which social interactions occur. A community has enormous influence over a child's development. Prevention strategies at this level focus on improving the physical and social environment in these settings and by addressing other conditions that give rise to violence and bullying in communities.

**e. Policy and System Level:** This level explores the need for enabling system where robust policies are in place. Such a system must embrace a holistic approach including psychosocial aspects to meet diverse needs of the children.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Roles of the educational institutions:** The management of the educational institutions must ensure that:

- All students, teachers/instructors/lecturers (hereafter referred to as teachers) and support staff are encouraged to exhibit positive social skills, resilience and character traits;
- The educational institution promotes a violence-free culture;
- The educational institution promotes an inclusive environment whereby everyone respects diversity;
- The educational institution devoid of a counsellor liaise with a nearby educational institution that has counsellor;
- The educational institution's policy and measures on anti-bullying informed by this guideline, but contextualized as required are promoted regularly during assemblies/gatherings and on the educational institution's social media handles;
- All the teachers and support staff are trained on the anti-bullying measures;
- All the students know what to do in the event they experience bullying;
- All the stakeholders understand their respective roles as laid out in this guideline;
- Innovative monitoring systems such as CCTVs in place to deter bullying in the premises, where feasible;
- Additional measures are adopted to ensure that vulnerable pupils such as persons with disabilities

and those with varied gender orientations do not fall victim to bullying;

- A safe environment is ensured for the students to openly discuss about bullying that may have occurred to them or their peers without the fear of experiencing further bullying or discrimination by instituting a confidential reporting system;
- A needs and risk assessment on bullying is carried out annually and interventions are designed accordingly;
- The children have opportunities to acquire social and emotional skills to promote healthy social behaviours and to build their resilience and self-esteem;
- Safe and responsible use of digital technologies, also known as digital citizenship and etiquette, are promoted, both within and beyond the educational institution's premises;
- Children are encouraged to talk to peers, elders, teachers or parents if they experience bullying/cyberbullying, and that parents and guardians are educated on bullying/cyberbullying;
- Essential foundational competencies like emotional intelligence, mind-training methods and pro-social skills are imparted to develop pupils' emotional resilience;
- Value education classes in the educational institutions embrace anti-bullying lessons;
- Proper record of bullying incidents is maintained and submitted on a monthly basis.

### Roles of the teachers/support staff

- Teachers must maintain positive teacher-student relationship;
- All the teachers and support staff must know how to seek help and follow proper procedures to address bullying incidents;
- Teachers-on-Duty must ensure that areas where bullying is likely to take place are monitored during recess, lunch break and other free times;
- A teacher may be tasked with the responsibility to conduct action research to find out the prevalence of bullying; how safe students feel; and propose recommendations to improve anti-bullying efforts in the educational institution.

### Roles of the parents: Parents must:

- Acquire positive parenting skills and foster a home without domestic violence;
- Be equally involved in preventing bullying in the educational institutions;
- Cultivate or rebuild strong and positive relationships with their children;
- Understand that children acquiring their orientation, bearings and sense of direction from their peers or those who are not responsible for them may render them emotionally vulnerable;
- Talk to their children regularly to find out if they bully or are being bullied;
- Be aware of the procedures to follow if they believe their children bully others, or are the targets of bullying; and

- Understand that the measures used to correct the behaviours of students exhibiting bullying behaviours intend to help them acquire vital life skills, in lieu of promoting punitive measures.

#### **Role of students**

- Participate and cooperate in all the prevention programmes;
- Engage in learning foundational skills;
- Refrain from engaging in any act of bullying or violence against others;
- Conduct oneself in accordance with the norms and expectations of the institution.

#### **Responses**

Educational institutions may appoint a Wellbeing Focal Person, and designate the responsibility of presiding over bullying incidents to the School Wellbeing Team. Bullying incidents reported to any staff members must be referred to the focal person and the class teacher(s)/mentor(s).

**Incident Management Procedure:** Educational institutions must institute an effective complaint management procedure which embraces confidentiality, empathy, and restorative measures. Students must be encouraged to use Google forms, emails, or suggestion boxes to report bullying incidents. In addition, students may also choose to report either by themselves in person or through peers or parents. For instance, students may submit their complaints using the available form.

While managing the complaints, the educational institutions must maintain proper records and ensure utmost confidentiality, unless the nature and gravity of the case demands otherwise.

**Roles of the educational institution management:** The management of the educational institution must ensure that:

- The responses to bullying incidents are guided by compassion and empathy;
- Corrective measures are in place to respond to bullying incidents;
- Any incidents of suspected/reported bullying incidents are immediately attended to;
- Oversee the work done by the focal person and the School Wellbeing Team;
- The class teacher(s) and the mentor(s) of those involved in bullying incidents collaborate with the Wellbeing Focal Person, mentor(s) of those involved, and the School Wellbeing Team to address the matter;
- Ensure that in-depth assessment is carried out so that the responses do not merely end up treating the symptoms while overlooking the underlying causes altogether.

**Roles of the Wellbeing Focal Person:** The focal person shall:

- Acquire appropriate knowledge and skills to prevent and respond to bullying incidents including cyberbullying in the educational institution;

- Ensure that all the parties involved receive fair opportunity to express their opinions about the bullying incident;
- Conduct in-depth analysis of the situation including background check;
- Not model aggression or resort to public humiliation while dealing with bullying incidents;
- Inform the parents/guardians of the pupils involved, as deemed appropriate;
- Seek support of the class teacher(s) and mentor(s) concerned in expediting the procedures involved in resolving bullying incidents;
- Prepare a succinct report of the bullying incident(s) and appraise the School Wellbeing Team; and
- Take adequate measures to discourage sensationalized reporting in the event bullying incident(s) attract media interest.

**Roles of the School Wellbeing Team:** The School Wellbeing Team shall comprise:

The Head of the Educational Institution;  
Counsellor/Wellbeing Focal Person (Member Secretary);  
and  
Any other members as deemed necessary.

**The Team shall:**

- Meet on a quarterly basis. However, ad hoc meetings may be conducted as and when required;
- Coordinate all anti-bullying prevention and response measures in the educational institution;
- Share the contact details of the focal person(s) with the students and their parents;
- Take final decisions on bullying incidents;
- Be objective, fair and consistent in responding to bullying incidents in the educational institution;
- Ensure that all corrective measures are exhausted prior to handing down reprimands/sanctions;
- Maintain utmost confidentiality about the bullying incidents to avoid public humiliation of the pupils involved;
- Refer cases that require advanced support and intervention to the relevant authorities as deemed appropriate;
- Endorse the biannual reports on bullying incidents.  
\*Note: The Head of the Educational Institution shall submit the biannual reports to the parent agency.

**Support to the target of bullying:** The target(s) of bullying must receive steady support to overcome any difficulties they may experience as a result of bullying. Some of the ways in which they could be helped include, but not limited to:

- Removing them to a safe location, if necessary;
- Facilitating mental health or medical interventions, if required;
- Thanking them for reporting about the bullying incident;
- Reassuring them support and protection;
- Providing counselling services, as required;
- Supporting the target in restoring their self-esteem and emotional resilience; and
- Encouraging them to maintain and share evidences, if any.

**Corrective measures to the students exhibiting bullying behaviour:** In collaboration with the class teacher(s) and mentor(s) concerned, the focal person may conduct a background check of the students exhibiting bullying behaviour to establish the underlying causes of their behaviours prior to the appraisal of the incident to the School Wellbeing Team. Some of the ways in which they could be helped include, but not limited to:

- Calming them down;
- Reassuring them that the educational institution is trying to help correct the behaviour;
- Encouraging them to capitalize on the opportunity to acquire vital life skills in the process;

Imparting targeted or individualized educational and psychosocial skills to correct their behaviour;

Providing increased positive attention and monitoring;

- Facilitating clinical assessments and interventions for students exhibiting extreme and repeated bullying behaviours.

**Involving Parents/Guardian:** The parents/guardians of the students involved in bullying may panic and retort. Worse still, some parents might disregard the matter altogether or advise the child to harden up, stand up for himself/herself, hit back or ignore it. These measures are not only counterintuitive but might even backfire. Instead, it may be advisable to keep calm and use the following strategies:

- Reassure the child that s/he has done the right thing by disclosing the incident(s);
- Listen to the child to get his/her perspective and grasp the extent of the situation;
- Let the child know that bullying is not his fault, and that the parent/guardian and the management of the educational institution will collaboratively remedy the situation;
- Communicate the matter to the management of the educational institution;
- Monitor the child closely.

Parents of the children involved in exhibiting bullying behaviour must cooperate and help the Wellbeing Focal Person, the class teacher(s) and the mentor(s) to help correct the attitude and behaviour of their children to prevent recurrence of such untoward circumstances. Likewise, parents of the children found to have been bullied must take active role in consoling and restoring the self-esteem of their children to complement the efforts of the Wellbeing Focal Person, the class teacher(s), mentor(s) and others involved.

**Measures that may not work:** Administrative sanctions such as suspension, exclusion and expulsion of students are known to be counterproductive as the threats of severe punishments against bullying could discourage the targets and bystanders from reporting the bullying incidents which may in turn exacerbate the academic and behavioural problems of those involved. Thus, punitive measures must be exercised with utmost caution in the event those involved do not show signs of improvement even after exhausting all restorative measures.

Further, peer-led approaches such as peer-mediation and conflict resolution assume bullying to be a conflict, while in essence, it is a form of victimisation. Such measures send a wrong message to those involved because it implies a presence of disagreement between peers of equal might, and it signals that both the parties are equally wrong. Besides, it may also further traumatise and victimise the pupils who have been bullied.

**Monitoring and Accountability:** At the school level, the principal shall monitor, as well as be held accountable for the implementation of this guideline in the school concerned.

At the Dzongkhag level, the Dzongkhag Education Sector shall monitor, and be accountable for the implementation of this guideline in the schools under their jurisdiction. The Dzongkhag Education Sector shall ensure that all the focal persons in their respective Dzongkhags are trained on effective strategies to prevent and respond to bullying incidents. Further, the Dzongkhag Education Sector shall also ensure that the School Guidance Counsellors cater their services to the schools devoid of School Guidance Counsellors in their respective Dzongkhags until all the schools in their Dzongkhags get School Guidance Counsellors.

At the national level, the Ministry of Education shall monitor, as well as be held accountable for the implementation of this guideline in the schools of all the 20 Dzongkhags. The ministry shall ensure that the Dzongkhag Education Sector train the focal persons.

With regards to the Institutes/Colleges, the Royal University of Bhutan/Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan/Parent Agency shall hold the Institutes/Colleges accountable for the implementation of this guideline.

The Ministry of Education/Royal University of Bhutan/Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences/Parent Agency shall institute a mechanism to manage the data on bullying and ensure timely reporting to The PEMA Center Secretariat, biannually.

Entities, both individuals, institutions or organizations failing in their duties to uphold the provisions of this guideline, shall be dealt with, as per the existing laws of the country.

### Interpretation and Revision

The PEMA Center Secretariat shall be the final authority for the interpretation and clarification of the provisions of this guideline. Any revision to the provisions of this guideline must be submitted in writing to The PEMA Center Secretariat.



Contact Helpline At 1010/ 112



Email Helpline: [helpline@thepema.gov.bt](mailto:helpline@thepema.gov.bt)



འབྲུག་བརྒྱུད་འཕྲིན་ཚོང་ཁང།

**BHUTAN TELECOM LIMITED**

**5G**

## Services at the speed of 5G and 4G – courtesy of BT

It is the age of information and it is the age of the knowledge worker. The advancements in the area of Information and Technology is key and cornerstone in this- to pave the path ahead achieving one giant progressive stride after another. Bhutan brought in the internet and associated technologies only in 1999 and introduced mobile technology a year later in 2000. The tag of a newcomer is however quickly shed and now far behind it. The country has consistently upped the ante and continually upgraded and equipped itself with the latest tech to stay up-to-date and benefit users who have availed the services.

The launch of 5G mobile services is the latest on the national tech landscape while previously launched 4G services are regularly improved with efficient enhancements.



## 5G services by Bhutan Telecom

As a company dedicated to providing the best services to its clients and in keeping with technological advancements in the field of ICT, Bhutan Telecom (BT) launched 5G services in September, 2021. 5G services is being introduced as a long-term initiative for clients and to meet the increasing demand for high-speed mobile data connectivity as well as to support digital transformation initiatives of the Royal Government.

As 5G is a new technology, deployment is carried out in phases. In the first phase, 5G services was made available in selected locations in core areas of Thimphu and Paro Dzongkhags. Since its launch in 2021, BT has covered all core areas in Thimphu, Paro, Punakha, Chukha, Wangdue, Samtse and Sarpang. While coverage in other districts are underway and will be rolled out in a phased manner.

While 5G technology is being implemented as part of BT's commitment to provide the best services by capitalizing on latest technological advancements, it may not be possible to fully harness the benefits of the technology owing to limited applications and compatible handsets in the beginning. In addition, mobile data connectivity with 5G technology will be multiple times faster than 4G and, therefore, result in equally faster data consumption as compared to 4G.





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The availability of a live 5G network will help BT understand the technology better and explore development of 5G applications relevant to Bhutan. BT also expects to be able to better understand the 5G supporting handset ecosystem through phases of the project. Currently, only a few models of phones/handsets in the local market supports 5G technology.

Going forward, BT will continue to enhance its 4G network coverage to meet the current data requirements in the country. Based on the uptake of 5G services in the select areas, and most importantly, guided by the long-term vision of the country as envisioned by His Majesty the King, BT plans to expand 5G network in the core areas of the rest of the country.

### **Bhutan Telecom's VoLTE services**

Bhutan Telecom Limited (BT) launched voice and video calls over its 4G networks in November 2022. The Voice over LTE (VoLTE) and Video over LTE (ViLTE) service is available for all B- Mobile customers with a VoLTE supporting device and a 4G enabled SIM card and is offered at no additional cost than standard call tariff.

VoLTE provides customers with HD voice quality and 2 to 3 times faster call set up time. With VoLTE call, the older voice technology issues of background noise, jitter and other distortions are eliminated for a crystal clear voice and video call experience.

VoLTE customers can also enjoy the ability to simultaneously make HD calls and browse various applications at 4G speeds, unlike the previous technologies where voice call for a 4G LTE customer would mean fall back to 3G/2G networks and subsequent slower speed and quality. Customers know they are on VoLTE network when they see a VoLTE symbol on their devices' status bar and have the option to toggle on/off through device settings. While it is possible to switch between voice and video calls during a VoLTE call, video calls are possible only if both the caller and the receiver handsets support the technology. Also, calls to and from a VoLTE customer's handset will use VoLTE service regardless of the handset or network used at the other end of the call.

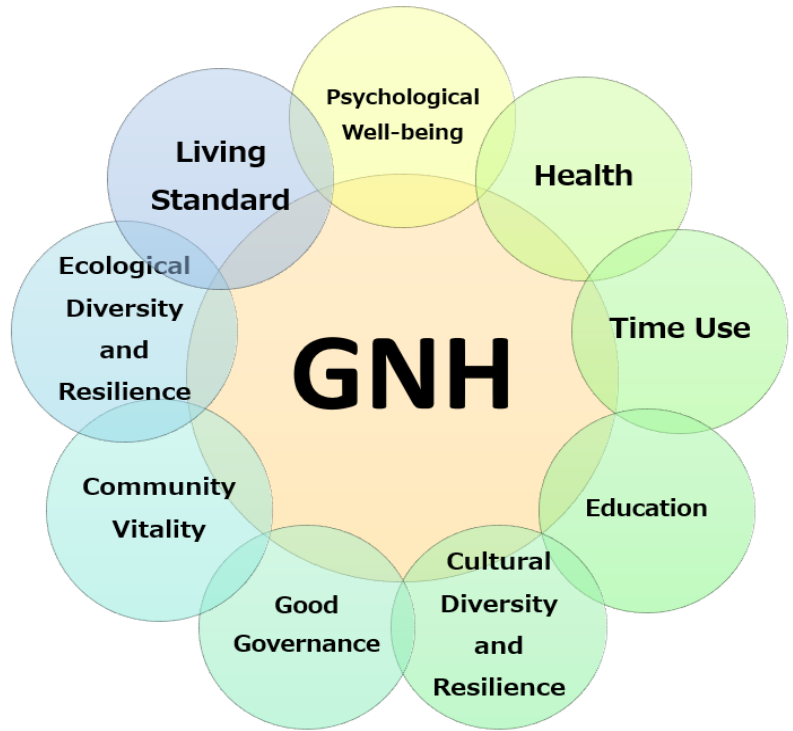
Currently, Smartphones that support VoLTE include Samsung A53, Samsung A52, Samsung M32, Samsung M33, Samsung A33 and Samsung S22 Ultra and S22+ Ultra. Bhutan Telecom will continue to expand the VoLTE service in terms of coverage that include both the network and the variety of handsets in an effort to heighten customer experiences through cutting-edge communication technologies.

# HOW TO VISUALISE THE LEVEL OF

# HAPPINESS ?

*GNH Survey in partnership with the Centre for Bhutan and GNH Studies and JICA*

Gross National Happiness (GNH) has been the guiding development philosophy of Bhutan. Over the years, GNH has not only guided Bhutan’s socio-economic development but has also gained wider international recognition as an alternative model of socio-economic development. The Centre for Bhutan and GNH Studies (CBS) has initiated series of GNH Surveys since 2006 to develop GNH indicators and measure GNH. The two most recent GNH surveys conducted in 2015 and 2022 was supported financially by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).



## What is GNH Index and How to Measure It?

The GNH Index was first developed in 2008 to measure the progress towards maximising well-being and happiness of the people. The index is comprised of nine domains: 1) psychological well-being, 2) health, 3) time use, 4) education, 5) cultural diversity and resilience, 6) good governance, 7) community vitality, 8) ecological diversity and resilience, and 9) living standard.

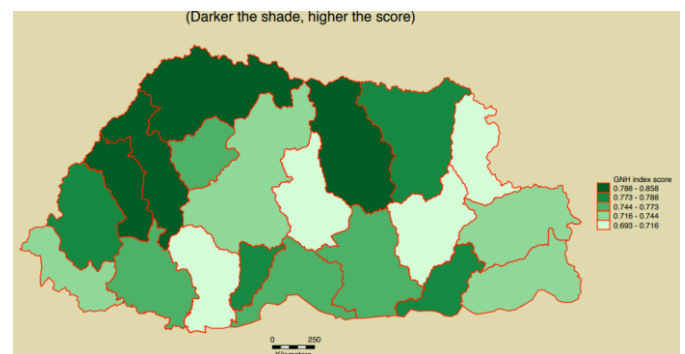
Three nationwide GNH Surveys were carried out in 2010, 2015, and 2022 in addition to a large-scale GNH pilot survey in 2007-2008 to develop GNH indicators and the GNH Index to be used as baseline indicators for planning and as target indicators to assess progress of the planned development.

## What is the Level of Happiness?

The GNH Index is a single number ranging from zero to one with zero being the lowest possible value and one, the highest possible value. The GNH Index in 2015 was 0.756 which grew statistically significantly from 0.743 in 2010. Overall, 91.2% of people reported experiencing happiness while only 8.8% of people were unhappy in 2015.

2015 GNH Index	Percentage of people who are
Deeply Happy	8.4%
Extensively Happy	35.0%
Narrowly Happy	47.9%
Unhappy	8.8%

Across districts, GNH was highest in Gasa, Bumthang, Thimphu and Paro, and lowest in Dagana, Mongar, Trashi Yangtse and Trongsa.



In addition, the survey shows some remarkable features of happiness in Bhutan.



- ✓ Men tend to be happier than women
- ✓ Urban residents tend to be happier than rural
- ✓ More educated people tend to be happier

Source: CBS (2016) *A Compass Towards A Just Harmonious Society: 2015 GNH Survey Report*

### GNH Survey 2022

The objective of the survey is to consolidate and strengthen the GNH Index, so that it can drive policy in Bhutan and serve as a model to other interested organisations and governments. In addition, this survey was carried out to measure and understand changes in the level of well-being of the people over time, progress in social development, and differences in well-being among regions and groups within the country.

The data of the survey are collected based on interview by enumerators. The number of target respondents are 11,440 people which were randomly selected from all 20 dzongkhags. This year, in collaboration with De-suung Office, desuups were involved in the survey as enumerators.

The nationwide field surveys were carried out by 8 enumerator teams in different dzongkhags between April and August 2022. In this survey, the enumerators visited respective houses of target population for interview. They asked more than 150 questions, and it normally takes more than an hour and a half per person to complete the interview.



This year, all enumerators used tablets to collect answers and it largely reduced the time of data entry and analysis. In addition, the survey includes the

additional questions about COVID-19 this year to know the socio-economic and psychological impacts of lockdown over the past few years. The report of the survey will be released by CBS by early next year.



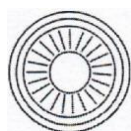
### JICA's Cooperation in Bhutan

For many years, JICA has been working together with the government of Bhutan in areas such as agriculture, infrastructure, health and education. JICA believes that these areas are closely related to the nine domains of GNH and hopes to improve the living standard and well-being in the country. The wide range of cooperation, not limited to the GNH Survey, has become the basis of close relations between Japan and Bhutan.

In 2022, the Government of Japan celebrates Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year with the seven south Asian countries. Also, Japan celebrates 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the conclusion of the JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers) Agreement between Japan and Bhutan.

Guided by the vision of GNH, Bhutan is now ready to graduate from the group of Least Developed Countries (LDC) in 2023. JICA, as a development partner, continues to work with the people of Bhutan to promote socio-economic development even after graduation of LDC to promote conditions that will enable the pursuit of GNH.

✉ *This article is contributed by JICA Bhutan Office.*



CENTRE FOR BHUTAN &  
GNH STUDIES





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## Electrical Safety Tips



**DO NOT** tie wires to electric poles for drying clothes.



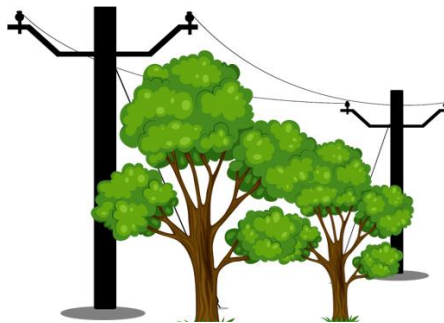
Avoid parking heavy vehicles and dumping muck/garbage near/under power lines.



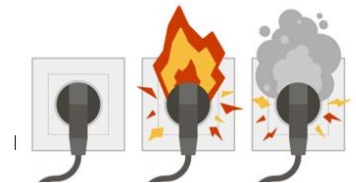
Make sure plugs fit securely into outlets. Don't force a plug into an outlet if it doesn't fit.



Be aware of power lines when doing routine outdoor tasks such as cleaning a pool, using a ladder, pruning trees, and installing or removing an antenna.



**DO NOT** plant trees near or under the electrical lines.



**DO NOT** overload outlet with too many electrical extensions.



If you excavate ground, make sure that there are no power cables in the ground, especially in town areas. You will need to obtain clearance from BPC for digging in towns.



**DO NOT** cut down trees near power lines.



**NEVER** put metal objects in live parts of appliances or outlets.



**DO NOT** erect prayer flags below or near any electrical lines.



Unplug appliances before cleaning.



Check and replace damaged electrical cords/sockets.