Good Governance and Gross National Happiness

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Henceforth our responsibilities will always be the first and foremost, the peace and tranquility of the nation; the sovereignty and security of our country; the fulfilling of the vision of Gross National Happiness; and the strengthening of the new system of democracy.

His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, December 17, 2006

3.1 Introduction

There is a plethora of definitions of governance; various institutions define it differently depending upon their own contexts. For instance, from the development view point, the World Bank identifies three aspects of governance: i) the form of the political regime; ii) the process by which authority is exercised for the management of a country’s economic and social resources; and iii) the capacity of government to formulate and implement policies and discharge functions.1 Similarly, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA 1996) defines it as “the exercise of power by various levels of government that is effective, honest, equitable, transparent and accountable”. Daniel Kaufmann et al (2005), in aggregating governance indicators, identifies six dimensions of governance: i) voice and accountability; ii) political instability and violence; iii) government effectiveness; iv) regulatory quality; v) rule of law; and vi) control of corruption. In general, most of the literature agrees on common dimensions of governance like participation, rule of law, transparency, accountability, effective delivery of services and equity.

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Good governance is one of the nine domains of Gross National Happiness (GNH) aimed towards enhancing the well-being of the Bhutanese people. Unlike other domains, governance cuts across all domains/sectors and therefore, its effect on the society at large arises from the cumulative efforts of all sectors. Article 9 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan states, “the State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the successful pursuit of Gross National Happiness”. Though the constitution has been adopted only recently, happiness has been the main concern of all our monarchs, especially the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Happiness has also been the ultimate purpose of social and economic development plans and programs since the early seventies. Although GNH was not expressed explicitly then, the provision of free health and education services, development of basic infrastructure, supply of clean drinking water, allotment of free timber to build houses, granting land and other *kidu* have been all aimed towards reducing misery and enhancing the welfare of the citizens. The pursuit of GNH is further continued by changing the political system from a monarchy to a parliamentary democracy.

It is evident from the reigns of all the successive Kings of Bhutan that the ultimate purpose of governance has been to bring greater well-being and happiness to a greater number of people. In this respect, governance in Bhutan has always been an integral part of the system of government and of political structures, which reflect and internalise GNH values. In particular, efficiency, transparency and accountability have been the main thrust of the good governance exercise carried out in 1999 and revised in 2006 to enhance good governance in the country.

### 3.2 Dimensions of good governance

In the absence of past research and information on good governance, it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an in-depth study. Although a single good governance index has not been constructed, this paper elucidates some overview of the indicators of good governance and cross tabulation among certain variables based on the survey data administered to 950 respondents in twelve districts in the country.

For GNH, good governance has been categorised under four basic dimensions:

1. Effective government
2. Democratic culture
3. Trust in institutions and leaders, and
4. Corruption

These dimensions are further broken down into components, and components into indicators. They are chosen based on clear purpose, usability to policy, and simplicity and ease of constructing indicators that are comparable across time.

3.2.1 Effective government

The dimensions of efficient government can be measured by various components like overall direction of the government; performance of the central government in delivering services; performance of the judiciary in rendering justice; and performances of leaders at dzongkhag and gewog levels.

The overall direction of the government is measured by asking the respondents to rate whether the government is going in the right or wrong direction. 85.9% (N=813) agreed the government is going in the right direction, while only 7.9% disagreed. The reasons for the latter are the anxiety of transition to democratic government, corruption associated with politicians, and the diminishing role of His Majesty the King in governance. These are expressed mostly by those respondents who reported there is corruption and who are dissatisfied with the functioning of the central government. For instance, out of 534 respondents who reported corruption is common in the country, 9% reported that the government is going in the wrong direction. Similarly, out of 43 respondents who reported dissatisfaction with the functioning of the central ministries, 23.3% reported government is going in the wrong direction.

Concerning the overall performance of the central government in the 12 months preceding the survey, respondents were asked to rate different services provided by the central government as excellent, good and poor. Figure 3.1 shows the results. Though majority of the respondents reported services like education, health and protecting environment as excellent, services like providing electricity, road, creating job and reducing gap between rich and poor were rated poor. Dissatisfaction with the provision of electricity and roads was reported more by rural respondents in lower income bracket. For instance, 16.6% and 15.8% (N=791) of the rural respondents with annual household income of less than Nu. 50,000 mentioned central government as poor in providing
electricity and road respectively. On the other hand, urban respondents with higher income reported central government as poor in terms of creating employment and reducing income gap. For instance, 25.8% and 19.5% (N=159) of urban respondents with income above Nu. 50,000 reported central government as poor in reducing gap between rich and poor and in creating job respectively.

**Figure 3.1 Performances of central government in the past 12 months**

Similarly, the performance of courts is measured by asking the respondents to rate the performance of courts in providing quick justice, and fair and impartial trial as excellent, good and poor. 12.3% (N=950) rated courts as poor in providing quick justice and 6.1% poor in providing fair and impartial trial.

**Figure 3.2 Performance of judiciary**
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Figure 3.3 Duration and number of court cases decided between 1991-2006

Figure 3.3 shows the number of cases decided between 1991 and 2006. Courts across the Kingdom decided 93,176 cases: 58,595 (63%) cases decided in less than 108 days and the rest (34,581) in more than 108 days.\(^2\)

If we assign the poor ranking of the courts’ performance to the total cases decided, 12,112 cases (4495 decided in more than 108 days and 7617 in less than 108 days) would be perceived as poor in receiving quick justice, and 5591 cases (2075 decided in more than 108 days and 3516 in less than 108 days) as poor in receiving a fair and impartial trial. That means on an average, in one year, 757 cases decided would be perceived as poor in receiving quick justice and 349 cases as poor in receiving fair and impartial trial. The perceived reasons for not delivering quick justice are attributed to a shortage of judges and the lengthy procedures of the courts. Similarly, reasons attributed for unfair and impartial trial are favouritism and bribery. In a GNH state, receiving quick and impartial justice is an important indicator of the safeguard of the rights of the citizens and the promotion of equity and the well-being of the people. Therefore, Article 9 of the Constitution of Bhutan states “The State shall endeavor to provide justice through a fair, transparent and expeditious process.”

An increasing number of cases appealed to the high court are also an indication of the people’s dissatisfaction with the decisions of courts at the lower level. The number of cases appealed to the high court increased

from 123 in 2004 to 173 in 2006. For the latter, 73 cases were affirmed. Similarly 10 cases were appealed to His Majesty in 2004 and four in 2006\(^3\).

People at a higher educational level reported more dissatisfaction with the courts. For instance, 33.8% (N=65) of the respondents with higher educational qualification (above class 12 plus vocational qualification) reported the courts as poor in providing quick justice. Similarly, 16.9% reported the courts as poor in providing a fair and impartial trial. Urban respondents expressed more dissatisfaction with the courts. For instance, 17.6% (out of 159) of the urban respondents considered courts as poor in providing quick justice and 14.5% considered the courts as poor in providing fair and impartial trial. This may be due to larger number of cases registered in urban courts. As an example, courts in Thimphu alone decided the highest number of cases from 1991-2006: 7900 cases that took less than 108 days and 5799 cases that took more than 108 days. Independence of the courts was also perceived to be important. Out of 76 respondents who reported the courts as not independent, 34.2% reported the courts as poor in providing quick justice and 32.9% as poor in providing fair and impartial trial. Out of 71 respondents who got involved in the court cases in the past five years, 19.7% reported the courts as poor in providing quick justice, and 15.5% reported them poor in providing a fair and impartial trial.

Looking at the perception of courts by dzongkhags covered under the survey, 32.8% of the respondents from Thimphu followed by 8.6% each from Dagana, Wangduephodrang and Tashigang reported the courts as poor in providing fair and impartial trial. Similarly, 19.7% of the respondents from Thimphu, 13.7% from Samdrupjongkhar, 12% from Dagana, and 10.3% from Wangduephodrang reported the courts as poor in providing quick justice.

Good leadership at all levels is an integral part of good governance. When asked to rate the performances of leaders as excellent, good and poor, gups and tshogpas were rated relatively better compared to dzongdags as shown in figure 3.4. This is because people hardly go to the dzongkhag and hence, rarely know their dzongdag. On the other hand, people interact more with their local leaders.

From the grassroots-rural perspective, local leaders like gups and tshogpas are more important than dzongdas since they interact and rely on them during most occasions. This context provides more opportunities to assess their leaders’ skills and performances. People rated the gup’s performance excellent if the gup was excellent in ‘past working experience’, ‘maintaining harmonious relation’, and ‘understanding community problems’. Reading and writing skills, though important, are not necessarily a determining skill for gups to perform well. The same relationship also applies to tshogpas.

Similarly, in a society where Buddhist culture plays a significant role, leadership qualities must be assessed from khen tse nus sum (knowledge, love and power) as well. Compared to tshogpas, gups were rated better in all these qualities. For instance, 48.6% (N=797) rated gups as excellent and 44.5% as good in understanding local problems; 44.9% excellent and 44.5% as good in understanding local problems; 44.9% excellent and

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4 Other leaders could not be included in the survey questionnaire because then the government was in transition during the time of survey.
44.7% good in resolving local disputes; and 49.2% excellent and 44.5% good in promoting harmony among people in the community. Though these qualities appear less important, they are parts of the Buddha’s eightfold paths like right intension, right effort and right action. These leadership qualities are vital as people derive immense benefits from such qualities.

### 3.2.2 Democratic culture

*The Economist’s* Democracy index measures whether countries are full democracies (scores of 8-10), flawed democracies (scores of 6-7.9), hybrid regimes (scores of 4-5.9) and authoritarian regimes (scores below 4) by focusing on five general categories: free and fair election process; civil liberties; functioning of government; political participation; and political culture.⁵ In the democracy index of 167 countries in January 2007, Sweden is on the top with 9.88, Iceland is second with 9.71, India is 35th with 7.68, Bhutan is 147th with 2.62, Laos is 155th with 2.10, and North Korea is at the bottom with 1.03. This index grouped 28 countries as functioning democracies, 54 countries as flawed democracies, 30 countries as hybrid regime and 55 countries as authoritarian regimes.

As emphasized by His Majesty the King, democracy is more than political parties and elections. It is about ideals, values, and principles of democracy.⁶ In Bhutan, the foundation for democracy has been nurtured by creating the right conditions of political and economic environments that include age-old values.⁷ The establishment of the National Assembly in 1953, the initiation of decentralisation through the establishment of Dzongkahg Yargye Tshogdue (DYT) in 1981 and Gewog Yargye Tshogchungs (GYT) in 1991, the devolution of power to the first elected cabinet ministers in 1999, the gup election in 2002 through adult franchise, the democratic parliamentary election in 2007, and the adoption of constitution in 2008 are all steadily geared towards building a vibrant democracy in the country.

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⁶ His Majesty the King’s address to the graduates of 2007 (Kuensel, 24 October, 2007)
⁷ His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo always emphasized that the democracy in Bhutan could never be initiated at other times than now when the country was enjoying unprecedented peace, stability and prosperity. More over it is the King’s wisdom not to rely entirely on the system of absolute monarchy where successive Kings may not be always wise and benevolent.
DYTs and GYTs are important decentralised forums where several problems and issues are discussed and decisions taken at the dzongkhag and geogw level respectively. The analysis of the minutes of DYTs and GYTs of different dzongkhags categorised the nature of discourses into requests, problems, progress reports, future plans, decisions and so forth.\(^8\) The request category discourse pertains to requests by villagers for seed and sapling, bulls, brown Swiss bull, nublang, artificial insemination, fertilizers and chemicals, farm tools and machinery, infrastructure like feeder roads, irrigation canals, etc. Problems discourse pertains to crop destruction by wild and stray animals, cadastral surveys resulting into excess land and payments, illegal tree fellings, delayed supplies of seeds and fertilizers, not supplying jersey bulls, donkeys, etc. Progress reports pertain to progress achieved in the vaccination of mithun and dogs, artificial insemination of jerseys, the supply of maize seeds and walnut saplings, treatment of domestic animals, etc. Future plans include demonstration of growing barley, maize and vegetables, growing paddy, walnut and mushroom, supplying donkey and mithun, starting poultry farm, developing feeder roads, etc. Within the decentralised powers of DYTs and GYTs, they take decisions on buying bulls, mithun and jerseys, supplying chili and potato seeds, imposing fines for crop damage, auctioning stray cattle, establishing insemination centers, planting trees to prevent landslides, etc.

Although democratic culture differs from country to country, in Bhutan people’s participation in planning, decision making and the electoral process, free and fair elections, freedom of the media, independence of the judiciary and respect for fundamental rights are some important components in building a vibrant democratic culture. Participation carries different meanings in different contexts. According to the World Bank, participation is the “process through which stakeholders influence and share control over priority setting, policy-making, resource allocations and access to public goods and services.”\(^9\) From the Bhutanese perspective, it refers to the people’s participation in planning and prioritizing collective needs, executing rural infrastructure and maintenance services, and choosing leaders at different levels. The zomdue, or public meeting, is an important social, cultural, political and economic forum where people from every household participate.

\(^8\) Dorji Penjore, *Nature of discourses in GYT and DYT-Part II*, 2004 (power point presentation).
\(^9\) http://www.worldbank.org/participation.htm
When asked “have you participated in zomdue in the past 12 months”, 73.7% (N=950) reported that they participated, out of which 54.1% was male and 45.9% female. In a year, on average, about 80% of the respondents participated in at least 10 village/chiwog and gewog zomdues. It is evident from the survey that the zomdue is a particularly rural phenomenon where 84.3% of the rural respondents participated compared to 20.8% of urban respondents.

It is clear that zomdue participation increases with advancement in age but drops down after the age of 60. For example, 62.2% of the respondents in the ages 18-30 participated in zomdues compared to 89% of the respondents in the ages 46-60. This is because the tshogpa/chipon emphasizes the need of goshey nyenshey (people who can comprehend and listen well) to participate in any zomdue. Similarly, with the advancement in household income, people’s participation also drops down. For instance, 89.1% of the respondents within the income bracket of Nu. 25001 to 50,000 participated in zomdues compared to 41.2% of the respondents with income level above Nu 100,000. With regard to marital status and participation, 83.2% (N=648) of married couples participated in zomdue compared to 47.3% (N=243) who were never married.

Attendance is one thing and active or effective participation another. 33.7% (N=950) of the respondents mentioned that they spoke in various zomdues. Of this, 83% were male and 17% female. 71% spoke sometimes, 15% every time and 14% most of the time. In general, people in the ages 60s and 40s spoke more. For instance, 53.6% (15) within the ages 61-65 spoke out during the zomdue followed by 44.3% (27) within the ages 41-45. Similarly, 57.1% (24) of the respondents within income level Nu. 50001-75000 spoke in the zomdue followed by 46.3% (25) with income level above Nu. 100,000. Illiteracy, lack of exposure and shy character were some of the reasons for not being able to speak in the zomdue. The other compelling reason for people attending zomdues was to avoid an absentee fine of Nu. 100 per household per zomdue.

Participation in the electoral process is another important determinant of democracy, in exercising one’s voting right, and more importantly, choosing good leaders and holding them accountable. Following the Royal Edict, the first universal suffrage election at the gewog level was carried out in 2002 for all gups in 199 gewogs out of 201 for a term of three-years. The election based on secret ballot was participated in by those eligible voters who were 21 years and above. However, the first
gup election was marked by low voter turn out. Out of a total of 213,550 eligible voters in 199 geowgs, the voter turn out was 34.4% or 73,607 (Ura 2004). Some of the reasons cited for low voter turn out were long walking distances to polling stations, the lack of citizenship identity cards, and requiring eligible voters to cast votes only in the gewog where their census was registered. Similarly, the voter turn out during the subsequent gup election in 2005/6 was just 31.4%.

**Figure 3.5 Final results of National Council election (NCE), 2007 and National Assembly election (NAE), 2008**

Compared to the gup elections, the voter turn out was very significant in the National Council and National Assembly elections as shown in Figure 3.5. During the first democratic elections held for the National Council and National Assembly in the country, the voter turn out for the National Council was 52.1% compared to 79.4% for the National Assembly. Although no study has been carried out to assess the big marginal difference in the voter turn out, it may be speculated that in the National Assembly election which took place after the National Council election, there was relatively more campaign time, and party workers in each constituency garnered more voters’ support and participation.

Freedom of the media is vital not only for fostering vibrant democracy but also for providing timely and factual information to the public. When respondents were asked “to what degree is media free from government influences?” 21% (N=510) reported the media as not free and 14% reported don’t know. In real terms this 21% accounts for 88,523
Bhutanese. Looking at the relationship between trust in the media and their freedom, of 177 who reported trust somewhat in the media, 31.1% reported the media as not free. Similarly, more people with higher level of education reported the media as not free. For instance, 41.3% (N=65) of the respondents with higher education reported the media as not free compared to 24.1% (N=117) of respondents with primary education. Compared to other occupational groups, employed and students mentioned the media as not free: 30.5% (N=156) of the employed and 18.1% (N=131) of the students reported the media as not free.

**Figure 3.6 Age and perception of elections as not free and fair**

![Figure 3.6](image)

**Figure 3.7 Household income and perception of elections as not free and fair**

![Figure 3.7](image)

Another essential indicator of democratic culture is free and fair election. When asked “on the whole how would you rate the freeness and fairness
of such election process”, 10% (N=950) mentioned it as not free and fair, and 12% reported don’t know. Bribery was cited as the main reason for elections as not free and fair. As evident from figures 3.6 and 3.7, age and income have significant influence on people’s perception. For example, most people below 30 years of age reported elections as not free and fair compared to those above 30 years. Similarly, more people with higher income also reported election as not free and fair.

**Figure 3.8 Perception of fundamental rights**

Concerning fundamental rights, Article 7 of the Constitution of Bhutan provides comprehensive rights to its citizens. The survey question included some of the most basic and fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution. As illustrated in figure 3.8, Bhutanese enjoy a considerable degree of fundamental rights, except for a small percentage of perceived discrimination based on race, sex, religion, language, politics or other status, and no freedom of speech and opinion. This was characteristic of those whose sense of belonging in the local community was weak. Similarly, people with a higher level of education reported discrimination based on race, sex, religion, etc.

As shown in figure 3.9, among the dzongkhags covered under the survey, Dagana followed by Wangduephodrang, Samdrupjongkhar, Samtse and so forth ranked on the top level in terms of perception of discrimination based on race, sex, etc. Similarly, Tashigang followed by Gasa, Haa, Pemagatshel and so forth expressed a higher level of no
freedom of speech and opinion. For instance, according to the worldwide governance indicators (Kaufmann 2008) for 212 countries for the period 2007, 2003 and 1998, Bhutan’s voice and accountability indicator was rated low in the percentile rank between 0-25.

Figure 3.9 Perception of human rights by dzongkhags

3.2.3 Trust in institutions and leaders

Trust in leaders and institutions are important for political stability and the strengthening of political legitimacy. Though it is not an immediate problem for Bhutan, it is an inevitable concern whether Bhutan’s parliamentary democracy will foster social and institutional trust. To measure trust in institutions (central ministries, dzongkhag, gewog, media, police and courts) and leaders (dzongdag, gup and tshogpa), respondents were asked to rate their level of trust on the scale trust, distrust and trust somewhat.
Figure 3.10 Trust in institutions

As evident from figures 3.10 and 3.11, Bhutanese institutions and leaders enjoy a considerable degree of trust and confidence from the people because the level of distrust reported in them is very low. This may be because those institutions and leaders had the opportunity to grow and be nurtured under the benevolent leadership of the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. Secondly, the exhibition of high trust may be due to influences of values
and strong community vitality. The distrust reported in the courts was 6% (N=950), 5.8% in police and so on. Though the level of distrust in courts and police was low, it was mostly associated with the perceived notion of favouritism, nepotism, delayed justice and discrimination between rich and poor. The distrust reported in leaders was even less.

However, some significant trends are observed when the threshold level of trust in institutions and leaders is changed to ‘trust somewhat’. For instance, 29.7% (N=950) reported trust somewhat in police, 21.9% in courts, 19.7% in gewog administration and so forth. In the case of leaders, 23% (N=950) reported trust somewhat in tshogpas, 21.2% in gups and 18.7% in dzongdags. This is again related to perceived discrimination between affluent and non-affluent people, lack of support in land substitution, partial settlement of certain civil disputes and so forth.

**Figure 3.12 Educational qualification vs. distrust in institutions**
As shown by Alesina and La Ferrara (2002), trust is related to characteristics such as income and education. As illustrated by figure 3.12, though not a linear relationship, the level of distrust in police increased with the advance in educational level. But there is a clear linear relationship between distrust in media and in advancement of educational level. Similarly, as the household income increased from Nu. 50,000, the level of ‘trust somewhat’ in police, the courts and the media also increased, as shown in figure 3.13. In the case of trust in leaders, it decreased with the increase in income level. For instance, trust in gups and tshogpas dropped from the 70th to the 30th percentile when income went up from Nu. 50,000 to over Nu. 100,000.

3.2.4 Corruption

Corruption essentially means “impairment of integrity, virtue, or moral principle; depravity, decay, inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means (as bribery), a departure from the original or from what is pure or correct and/or an agency or influence that corrupts.”

Generally, corruption is considered as abuse of power by a public official for private gain.

A system that is transparent and accountable, and committed to controlling corruption, is a fundamental feature of good governance and

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10 http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/corruption
democracy. Globally, Bhutan is ranked relatively better in the control of corruption. For instance, Bhutan was ranked 46th out of 180 countries according to the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) in 2007.

In order to measure perception of corruption in the country, respondents were asked “in your opinion, how common is corruption in the country?” 56% (N=949) reported that it was common. Similarly when asked “how many civil servants do you think are involved in corruption?” 58.4% (N=944) reported a few and 22.7% reported most of the civil servants. About the trends of corruption in the country, 44% reported that it increased over the past five years and 16% reported that it remained same in the country (Anti-Corruption Commission 2007).

When asked what were some of the reasons for corruption, 43.3% (N=944) agreed that it was due to lack of clear rules and laws, and weak enforcement of the laws while 32.4% agreed it was due to complicated and lengthy procedures. According to the Doing Business Report 2007, Bhutan was globally ranked 138 out of 175 world economies on the ease of doing business and reforms. This indicates lengthy procedures in obtaining credit, dealing with licenses, starting businesses, etc.

Figure 3.14 Opinion on the existence of various forms of corruption (%)
Figure 3.14 shows various forms of corruption. When respondents were asked to agree, partly agree, and disagree on the prevalence of multiple forms of corruption, misuse of government money was rated high with 49.1% (N=948) followed by misuse of government pool vehicles and subordinate staff. However, when agree and partly agree scales are combined, the cumulative effect becomes very significant. For instance, the misuse of government money increased to 74.7%, misuse of government pool vehicles to 72.6%, misuse of subordinate staff to 71.2% and so forth. This study confirms a similar study by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on corruption perception in 2007. According to the ACC’s corruption perception survey report, misuse of public funds (80.9%) and human resources (77.4%) were ranked higher in the perception of corruption while collusion in procurement (58%) was ranked lower.

Corruption is mostly reported by urban respondents. For instance, 79.2% (N=159) of the urban respondents reported that corruption was common compared to 51.6% (N=790) of the rural respondents. As the level of income and educational qualification advanced, people also reported a greater incidence of corruption. For instance, 51% of the respondents below the income level of Nu. 25,000 reported corruption as common compared to 78.6% of the respondents whose income is above Nu. 100,000. Similarly, 50.6% (N=545) of the respondents with no formal education reported corruption compared to 86.2% (N=65) of the respondents with higher education background.

3.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the survey, the following policy interventions are suggested to alleviate problems related to governance.

1. Different dzongkhags and gewogs have different development priorities. Current formulae of resource allocation based on area, population, environment and poverty could be enriched further by including different dimension of insufficiencies or constraints faced by urban and rural areas. In this respect, weighted criteria for a resource allocation mechanism based on a multi-dimensional approach that considers level of education, income, land ownership, access to roads, and good housing for gewog and dzongkhag is suggested.
2. Efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at all levels by different agencies like renewable natural resources, health, judiciary, police, power, city corporation, immigration, etc. needs to be carefully studied. Wherever possible, it is vital to provide a facility of integrated services from one window. In the overall context of parliamentary democracy, it is also fitting that sectors initiate specific decentralisation plans and programs within the overall framework of decentralisation process. Though lack of capacity and funds at the local level are the major constraints, this can be addressed if administrative capacity, human resource development, office infrastructure, fiscal devolution/discretionary grants, etc. are given utmost priority.

3. Unemployment is steadily growing in the country from 2.5% in 2004 to 3.2% in 2006. This is further exacerbated by youths migrating to urban centers for employment. As the density of population is more clustered between the ages 10-24, unemployment in this age group is challenging: 6.5% between 15-19 ages and 11.4% between 20-24 ages (Labour Force Survey 2006). This calls for a policy intervention for gainful employment of youth in rural areas and the reorientation of a certain part of the educational curriculum to job requirements.

4. On average, in a year, if 757 cases decided are perceived to be poor in receiving quick justice and 349 cases as poor in receiving fair and impartial trial, the judiciary must be strengthened both in terms of its independence and its capacity. Besides, it is important to make the judiciary friendly, accessible and quick.

5. Corruption, though not rampant, is a growing concern in Bhutan. A thorough study needs to be carried out to understand holistically the incidence, prevalence, severity, cost, etc of bribery and corruption at different levels. A scientifically objective corruption index, if developed, will facilitate remedial policy and actions.

References


