

Questionnaire

Part One

Overview of trends in achieving gender equality and women's advancement

Give a brief analytical overview (3 to 6 pages) of trends in your country in implementing the Platform for Action. This overview or broad picture should, for example, describe the country's policy with regard to achieving the goal of equality between women and men and should be linked to your national action plan or other plans or strategies.

In many respects, the status of women in Bhutan is different from that of other countries. Bhutanese society is strongly influenced by the Buddhist precepts of compassion to all sentient beings, and the practice of these has extended well into the treatment of the sexes.

His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan, has been the fountainhead of philosophy, concepts and policies of the national development for nearly three decades. It has always been His conviction that the ultimate purpose of government is to promote the happiness of the people. It was this belief that inspired him to state that Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product, whereby happiness takes precedence over economic prosperity in our national development process. Happiness forms the basis for the assessment of well being of the society.

Since 1995 and thereafter, as reflected in the various reports and documents presented for the Review of the Platform for Action, there is no discrimination between men and women in Bhutan. Bhutanese women enjoy equal rights and opportunity in every facet of life. Hence, there have been no specific project or activity undertaken in Bhutan in accordance with the Beijing Platform of Action because they were either not necessary or were already incorporated as part of the country's overall sectoral development policies as mentioned below.

In 2002, more than 21% of the national budget have been allocated to the social

Drop-out rates for both girls and boys are expected to decline.

for female candidates in the technical institutions, diversifying the career
ratio of 1:4 to male trainees

The admission
relaxed to m
opportunitie

programmes still form important components of education

4. Non-formal
programmes in Bhutan, 70% of the

Plan objective to increase improved water supplies to 30% and 20% in
rural and urban households, respectively, by establishing water supply systems
with the help of the consumers will greatly benefit all sections of the population.

participation of women in decision making for such as community meetings is
women representatives elected by the people in the National
(National Body) were 3 women 1995, increased to 9 in 1999. This
is the fact that, both men and women have equal freedom and
opportunity to participate in the Government.

still over
Assemb
clearly i

A Youth Guidance and Career Counselling Unit has been established in the
Education Division. Female teachers and counsellors will counsel girls against
dropping out of schools, girls will be informed of career choices, and to be more
conscious of health care, etc.

The introduction of group lending and saving schemes in the rural areas by the
Financial Corporation, the only financial institution
in the country, will bring about a wider participation by the
women. These schemes are expected to provide
new avenues and opportunities for income generation.

Bhutan. Deve
providing rur
rural populati
the rural popul

reduce population growth to 2.56% by the end of 8th Plan.

Government v

achieve the replacement level by year 2012 and bring the population growth rate
to 1.3% by year 2017 through such measures as awareness raising, enhancing
women's reproductive health (MCH) care, social programme for adolescents, introduction of family
planning measure, greater community participation, legal measures, etc. all go
towards improving the quality and health status of the population in general,
and women in particular.

the socio-economic
reduction of its incidence,
issues related to income
of the population

development policies have been directed to
However, the RGOB will continue to la

11. The Marriage Act of 1980 was amended during the 74th session of the National Assembly in 1996:

- Compensation and separation allowances, to be paid by any spouse who is seeking a divorce or defaulters in an adultery case, is now based on the

even on basis as opposed to Nu. 100 (about US \$ 10) to Nu. 1500.

daily wage rates ranging between earlier amounts ranging between

Where a married couple has been granted a divorce, custody of the child under five years of age is given to the mother. The father has to pay child allowance according to a mutually settled agreement. In the absence of any such agreement, the father shall pay a sum in cash amounting to 20% of his net monthly income (should not exceed 40% of his income) till the child attains eighteen years of age.

receive from the pregnant and if the son succeeds, the woman months of his daily child support any such child analysis

person committing the offence in amount of The father of a child born out of wedlock shall according to a mutually settled agreement, in the agreement, the father shall pay a sum in cash amounting to 20% of his net monthly income (should not exceed 40% of his income) till the child attains eighteen years of age.

Marriageable age for women has been raised from 16 to 18 considering women's health and family planning.

section for the offence of Rape under the Marriage Act has also been amended. Rape has now been categorised under Rape by Married Person, Rape by Unmarried Person, Gang Rape, etc. A person guilty of the offence of Rape have to pay compensation to the victims ranging from Nu. 500 to Nu. 1,00,000 (Twenty five thousand for one or more years) in addition to medical expenses. The person committing the offence also have to face imprisonment ranging from a duration of one year to a lifetime depending on the type of rape and the age and the marital status of the victim.

integrated into the sectoral programmes of the Association of Bhutan, a NGO supplements the further advancement of women. Some of the activities conducted are in accordance with the Beijing Platform

14. While the women's government, National Government's effort following programme

for Action.

- a. Although Bhutan does not have the problem of abject poverty, National Women Association of Bhutan (NWAB) provides income generating avenue to rural women to ease their economic burden, such as, weaving, handicrafts production and other home-based small productive enterprises.
- b. NWAB provides skilled labour training to women in weaving, tailoring and knitting.

NWAB operates rural savings and loan scheme, which enables the women to have access to credit and help inculcate the habit of savings among women.

Under the Project Skills Development Programme, Ministry of Trade and Industry, funded by Helvetas, tailoring, basic hair cutting, basic plumbing, electrical wiring etc. were taken up. Out of 229 people trained about 67% of the beneficiaries were women.

Policy and Institutional measures

Discuss how equality and women's advancement are addressed in the national budget. This could include an indication of the percentage of the overall budget that is allocated for women-specific policies/programmes, and any increases/decreases since 1995. What percentage of all this allocation comes from the state budget? Describe efforts to monitor budgetary allocations achieving gender equality and advancement of women.

In question one, part one, gender discrimination is not an issue in the national budget. There is no separate national machinery for the advancement of women. The aim of the RGOB is to incorporate and promote all measures relating to development within all sector projects and programmes in their

Human Rights.

No mechanism has been established because the need for it was not felt. Further, it was felt that it would capitalize on the existing machinery.

government's role of sustainable human development.

b. Describe the arrangements that have been made to coordinate the various follow-up efforts to global conferences.

Since no gender specific programmes were separated from the national plan programmes, the Royal Government of Bhutan's plans and programmes follow its automatically the effort towards all well being of the society with or without conventions.

c. Describe the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in planning follow-up activities. Do members of NGOs participate formally in the mechanism established to follow-up the Beijing Conference?

In keeping with the spirit of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/182, a National Women's Association was formally established in April 1992.

The National Women's Association of Bhutan (NWAB) is the only non-governmental organization in Bhutan that works at all levels of the development process. The NWAB aims to:

- to encourage women to take part in the implementation of socio-economic development programmes and all other nation-building activities;
- to improve the socio-economic status of women, especially rural women;
- to create awareness among women of the importance of proper maternal and child care, nutrition, skin diseases, water, hygiene, sanitation etc. in order to improve the general health of the people.

The under mentioned activities carried out by the NWAB are in line with the Beijing Platform for Action:

to provide access to rural women to ease their economic burden by providing small productive enterprises.

to operate and manage a health centre in the rural areas of the country.

country which enables the women to have access to credit and help

to the habit of savings among women.

- promoted female literacy by conducting non-formal education programmes to the girls who attend the weaving classes.
- provides skills training to women in weaving, tailoring and knitting.
- through its nationwide district level associations, NWAB ensure women's participation in the development planning process of the government.

Three

Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices

In relation to each of the twelve critical areas of concern, describe best practices or innovative actions taken by the government or other actors (NGOs), civil society, the private sectors to achieve the objectives in each critical area of concern in the Platform for Action. Your response should refer to the country's national action plan, and could include example of legal measures, reforms, media campaigns, pilot programmes or projects. Please cite, in particular, any targets which were set in the governments's national action plan or other relevant plans, and to what extent these were achieved. (For example, a target may have been to appoint more women to the cabinet. To what extent was it achieved?)

The format enclosed to answer the twelve critical areas are not used as most of the

s programmes from the national plan.

women programmes are implemented therefore, it is difficult to score

the overall national objectives of the women's development strategy. However, some successful areas are mentioned below.

Women in economy

Under the project, it is possible then to create job opportunities for self

67% of the beneficiaries were women. The programme included Basic Hair Cutting, Basic Plumbing, Basic Sewing, Electrical House Wiring and Basic Cooking.

training of women

to develop employment opportunities

Education

in the basis of gender. The

ment of girls improved remarkably due to strong effort from the government.

und 40%. The objectives of the Reproductive Health Program is to:

- increase the percentage of pregnant women availing antenatal services from 51 to 80%.
- raise the percentage of pregnant women with access to safe delivery to 40%.
- decrease the number of early marriage and teenage pregnancies.
- Reduce maternal mortality rate from 3.8 to 1.5.

ther, in addition to the health workers, the village health workers was formally established in 1993 to enhance health facilities and also improve women's awareness of issues related to basic health, nutrition and family planning. In this context the involvement of women voluntary health workers in providing health services is a priority area of intervention. At present, available statistics show that though in a few districts women health workers exceed 60% of the total, overall they only constitute around 22%.

Women in power and decision-making

The National Assembly (Legislation Body) has 150 members of whom 105 are men and 45 are women (representative of the people). Till date, there are 9 women members representing the people in the decision making body. Women make up 17% of the

Violence against women

Chinese society in general condemns violence in any form. According to Chinese law, assault of any kind is illegal and the victim is protected. All assault and violence cases are usually first reported to the police, then refers the victim for medical examination to evaluate the extent of injury and to receive appropriate treatment. In case of severe injury the victim can directly go to the hospital and later file the case to the police. If the cases could not settle by the police, the case is referred to the High Court. There are no separate files or records specific for violence against women.

Amendment for the offence of rape under the marriage act is mentioned in question one, part one, for the protection of women.

Obstacles encountered

What obstacles were encountered and what lessons were learned in implementing policies and other measures in each critical area of attention? For example, despite

(Vision for women of the globe)

In the next millennium the Bhutanese women vision that

There will be 1:1 ratio of male and female population in the world. We cannot say that all countries will be a female dominant but women will be playing equal role at

no longer be at home, looking after the household work and children responsibility both at home and in the office.

participating with equal strength in the decision making position.

customs and traditions or suppressing women. Prevalent in all countries.