

Danish supported programme on Good Governance and Public Administration Reforms

The co-operation between Bhutan and Denmark in the field of Good Governance and Public Administration is not new. In December 1997 an agreement was signed on a five-year Good Governance/Public Administrative Reform Programme 1997-2002 with a budget of DKK 42 million. In July 2003 a second phase of the Good Governance and Public Administrative reform programme started with a total budget of DKK 44,5 millions. In parallel with this programme Danida has supported good governance in Bhutan through the local grant authority with a total amount of approx. DKK 25 million. This has included support within the areas of HRD, institutional strengthening, IT equipment and construction and the main beneficiary institutions have included Office of Legal Affairs, Phuentsholing, Samtse, Sampruk Jongkhar and Gelephu Courts, National Assembly Secretariat, High Court and Law Enforcement Agency. Support has also comprised the media sector and the Bhutan Broadcasting Service, BBS.

The second phase of the Good Governance programme primarily targets central level capacity building and institutional strengthening with the aim of supporting the decentralisation process and the task and responsibilities described in the 9th five year plan and the approved Chathrim (acts) for the District and Geog Development Committees (DYTs and GYT). The Good Governance programme is structured in 4 components/9 sub-components in accordance with key governance structures (i.e. executive, legislative, and judiciary) and selected co-operation partners. The components and their sub-components are listed below.

After the review of the programme in 2004 it was agreed with the Government to utilise the unallocated funds under the programme to support to the National Assembly. This sub-component – under component two - seeks to assist the National Assembly and its Secretariat in developing the required capacities to meet future challenges brought about by the Constitution, including systems and organisational and individual capacities required to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the National Assembly's performance of its legislative, oversight and representational functions.

As part of the continued support to the constitutional process and the National Assembly a project of DKK 9,4 million was approved in 2005. This Project makes resources available to implement additional activities for the upgrading of the National Assembly Hall of Bhutan, closing performance gaps through training and education, and developing adequate systems and procedures to support the National Assembly and its Committees in its work. It is designed to pursue synergies with the above mentioned sub-component: 'Strengthening the National Assembly and its Secretariat', under Component 2 of the Programme.

To get exposure and an 'outside' view on systems improvement initiatives the new project will facilitate parliamentary twinning with the Danish Folketinget, both between politicians and the secretariats as well as interactions and exchange of lessons learned with other parliaments and parliamentary bodies and facilitate exposure partly through the provision of Technical Assistance. The twinning with Folketinget is suggested to start in February or March with a visit by the National Assembly Secretariat to Folketinget. This first visit is i.a. seen as a planning visit where the longer term twinning between the two parliaments can be

scheduled, which is expected to involve politicians e.g. members of different committees and administrative staff including support staff to the committees.

Component one: Support to the Decentralisation Process and Civil Service Strengthening

The objective of Component one is: Decentralisation and Civil Service in Bhutan strengthened to facilitate the new tasks and responsibilities in accordance with the 9th plan and the newly approved Chathrims for DYT's and GYT's.

Three sub-components have been identified under this heading:

1. Support to the Decentralisation through Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs
2. Support to the Royal Institute of Management
3. Support to the Royal Civil Service Commission

Component two: Support to Legislation and Judiciary

The objective of Component two is: Enabling legislation and rule of law to be strengthened and sustained at all levels.

Three sub-components have been identified under this heading

4. Support to the Office of Legal affairs
5. Support to the Ministry of Communication
6. Support to the National Assembly and its Secretariat

Component three: Support to Media

The objective of this component is: BBS' potential as an important player in good governance and in the democratic, social and cultural development of the country strengthened through increasing the number of audiences and decentralising the programme production and through reinforced professionalism and capacity to produce interactive media programme.

One sub-component is included in this component:

7. Support to Bhutan Broadcasting Service

Component four: Support to Core Fiscal Institutions

The objective of this component is: Two core fiscal institutions strengthened and consolidated as a prerequisite for fiscal decentralisation.

The two sub-components in this component are:

8. Support to the Department of Revenue and Customs
9. Support to the Royal Audit Authority

The duration of the Programme is March 2003 to February 2008. The project on additional support to the National Assembly and its Secretariat started on 1 January 2006 and will be finalised coinciding with the Programme in 2008.