

Report on Community Engagement Platform

The Community Engagement Platform (CEP) operates across eight Dzongkhags, encompassing a total of 20 Gewogs. The target Dzongkhags include Bumthang, Dagana, Haa, Mongar, Punakha, Trongsa, Tsirang, and Trashiyangtse. Each CEP is an informal, village-based group with membership ranging from 5 to 15 individuals. Every group is facilitated by a coordinator whose tenure varies across groups. The process for selecting coordinators differs; some are voluntary, while others are nominated and appointed by group members. In certain groups, the coordinator position is rotated annually, whereas in others, the same individual may serve for an extended period. Currently, there are 121 active CEPs across the eight target Dzongkhags, with a total of 75 male coordinators and 46 female coordinators. The target sites are engaged in devising their own initiatives to improve their livelihood and community through the concepts of self-help, mutual help, and public help while increasing their participation in decision-making processes.

As a result of this initiative, there has been a notable shift in community attitudes, with increased engagement in decision-making processes and strengthened community resilience. Communities are now better equipped to identify their own needs and develop initiatives to address them within their capacity, before seeking external support. Local resources are utilized to implement action plans, while additional support is sought through discussions at the Chiwog Zomdu and Gewog Tshogde levels.

Since 2015, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has supported Bhutan's Community Engagement Program (CEP) through the Technical Cooperation Project and the Country-Focused Training Programme. As part of this initiative, participants have been sent to Japan to study the Jichi-kai and Jo-Kai models, which are Japanese approaches to community empowerment and participatory development. To date, 40 individuals have participated in training in Japan—5 in 2019, 15 in 2022, 10 in 2023 and 10 in 2024. Upon their return, these participants developed and implemented community-level action plans, with the 2023 cohort creating eight action plans focused on "CEP Level Changes." Additionally, 16 local trainers have been trained in-country to adapt the CEP model to the Bhutanese context, and 51 community-level facilitators have been equipped with the skills to support local implementation.

In August 2024, a training program was conducted for 19 master trainers from the target Dzongkhags, focusing on **Rural Livelihood Improvement/Drongsep Yardrak tools**. This training aimed to equip the participants with essential skills to facilitate livelihood improvement initiatives and enhance community participation using these specific tools. The Drongsep Yardrak tools are designed to support rural communities in identifying and addressing local development challenges through participatory methods, enabling more effective and sustainable livelihood strategies.

To ensure a participative decision-making process, the **Community Participatory Model** was developed in consultation with target Dzongkhags and Gewogs and field-tested in Gozhi and Toedwang Gewogs. The field-testing process involved gathering feedback directly from community members to assess the model's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The feedback from this exercise will inform further refinement of the model, ensuring that it is both relevant and impactful in increasing community participation in Chiwog Zomdu and Gewog Tshogde while promoting rural livelihood improvements and community-driven development. In the coming months, community facilitators will be trained on the tools of Dronngsep Yardrak to facilitate the community in developing a community improvement plan and ensure effective implementation of the model.



Consultation on Community Participatory Model



Discussion on tools for making a community improvement plan

Pictorial evidence of activities of CEP



CEP members of Gozhi Gewog conducting Nagngzom



CEP coordinators attending Chiwog Zomdu



CEP members in Khebisa Gewog resting on the shed constructed by themselves



CEP coordinators of Gaytsa Chiwog discussing agenda with Tshogpa



Community scanning in Gozhi Gewog



Action plan implementation after community scanning



Action plan implementation using locally available resources in Khebisa Gewog



Action plan implementation available in Kengkhar Gewog through mutual help



House renovated through mutual help in Ngatshang Gewog



CEP members planning in Drepong Gewog

Number of CEPs formed are as follows

No	Dzongkhag	Gewog	Chiwog	No.of CEP formed				
				2021	2022*	2023	2024	Total
1	Punakha	Limbukha	Dompala	3				3
		Goenshari	Drochukha			3		3
			Zhelngosa	4				4
		Toedwang	Thambji-Tamidamchu			3		3
			Tsachufu			4		4
2	Dagana	Gozhi	Dogaak	9				9
			Upper Gozhi		11			11
			Middle Gozhi		9			9
			Lower Gozhi		7			7
			Ballaygang			13		13
		Drukjegang	Pangna Patala	6				6
		Khebisa	Gibsa			5		5
3	Trongsa	Nubi	Gagar Karshong			10		10
		Langthil	Jangbi			10		10
4	Tsirang	Patshaling	Pangthang			5		5
		Semjong	Tashiling			5		5
5	Haa	Eusu	Dumcho-Beltsho			4		4
		Gakiling	Rangtse (Yokha village)			4		4
6	Mongar	Drepong	Laptsa	3				3
			Bumpazor-Drepong		4			4
			Bainangri-Nyamla		3			3
			Chaksuzor-Tsangkhar		4			4
			Zunglen-Chiwog		2			2
		Chali	Pangthang	6				6
		Kengkhar	Yudaric Chiwog			5		5
		Ngatshang	Phanas			4		4
7	Bumthang	Chumig	Gaytsa			9		9
		Tang	Tandigang			3		3
8	T/yangtse	Yangtse	Bimkhar				6	6
		Ramjar					1	1
	Total			31	40	87	7	165