

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



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BHUTAN CENTRE
for MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

AN ENGAGED SOCIETY • A VIBRANT DEMOCRACY

HIS MAJESTY
THE KING AWARDS
NATIONAL ORDER OF MERIT TO
THE BHUTAN CENTRE FOR MEDIA AND
DEMOCRACY
AND 21 OTHER CSOS



NATIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (GOLD)

BHUTAN CENTRE FOR MEDIA & DEMOCRACY

Granted by His Majesty The King
on the National Day 2016

For expending time and effort towards promoting humanitarian values, our culture and tradition, and our national objectives; for working passionately and tirelessly for the benefit of others; for taking on the responsibility to provide support and assistance whenever the government is unable to reach; and for keeping alive the sacred values of compassion and empathy.

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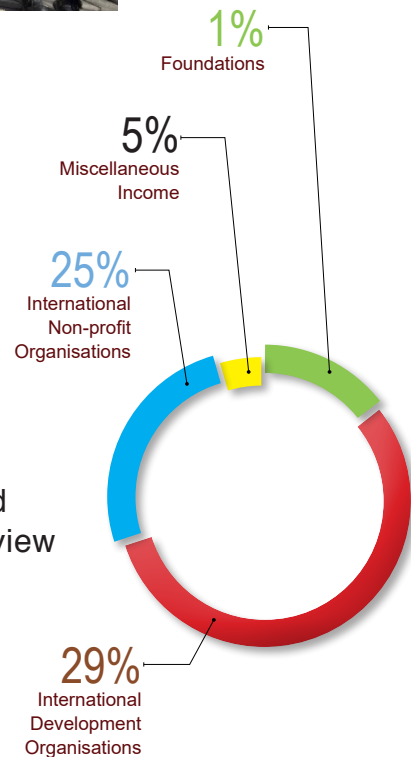


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Message from the Chair and Executive Professional Director

Contributing Towards a Culture of Democracy

The year 2016 was an especially inspiring and humbling year for Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD). After nearly eight years in the service of society, BCMD received the highest recognition possible - the National Order of Merit (Gold) from His Majesty The King. We were granted the honour, with 21 other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), a Royal gesture widely interpreted as an emphasis on the important role that civil society has in the governance of the country.

The first CSO to be formally registered under Bhutan's CSO Act, BCMD has continued to evolve, along with the Bhutanese society. And 2016, was another fruitful year when BCMD influenced change and inspired our fellow citizens. We worked hard to train a cohort of young change-makers and stepped up our efforts to help strengthen civil society and, thereby, build a more vibrant democracy.

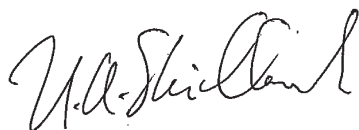
BCMD is a stakeholder of democratic change and good governance. We respect diversity, the ability to deepen democracy by listening

to differing views, and we believe that civic education must be about action and engagement to serve our communities. Such a role calls for us to step out of the comfort zone of being placid recipients of the state.

BCMD calls on our constituents to exchange views and give feedback out in the open rather than resorting to anonymity in the social media to share our real thoughts. We believe we have been able to touch many people - especially the youth - in trying to be responsible citizens in a democracy. If we can continue to inspire the emergence of active citizens, we believe we are enabling people to take responsibility for our own needs so that we can serve the needs of society. We will thus build a more harmonious society and a stronger nation.

We express our deepest appreciation to each and every person who has been involved in BCMD programmes and helped support our work. Let us, together, look forward to and ensure another inspiring and meaningful year ahead.

Tashi Delek



Chairperson
Nancy Strickland



Siok Sian Pek-Dorji
Executive Professional Director



Members of the BCMD team

BCMD Profile

The Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy came into being in 2008. In 2010, BCMD became the first Civil Society Organisation (CSO) to be registered in Bhutan with the CSO Authority. We were founded to respond to the needs of a country that made the historic transition from a monarchy to a democracy. Our first and continuing task is to contribute to strengthening a culture of democracy through innovative activities, open

forums and creating resources for democracy to share the voices of Bhutanese through Bhutan-centric print and audio visual productions.

Through our activities every year, we believe we have been able to plant the seeds for a greater consciousness for what it means to be a citizen in Bhutan.

Team

Siok Sian Pek-Dorji, Executive Professional Director
Jigme Choden, Programme Manager
Tshewang Lhamo, Programme Officer
Kesang D Choden, Programme Officer
Sherub Dorji, Asst. Programme Officer
Phuntsho Choden, Asst Programme Officer
Kinley Tshering, Asst. Programme Officer
Yeshey Choden, Finance Officer
Karan Katwal, Admin-Finance

Core Programme Areas

Programme I : Inspiring Active Citizens

Programme II : Encouraging and Expanding Public Discourse

Programme III : Resources for Democracy

Objectives

- » **Create a responsible citizenry that will actively engage in the practices of democracy**
- » **Strengthen the professionalism of the media and help educate both media professionals and their audiences as to the role of the media in building a democratic society**
- » **Create public spaces for civic discourse**
- » **Create multimedia resources for/on media and democracy and promote their distribution**
- » **Strengthen the institutions of civil society, most of which are newly created.**

Vision

“A GNH inspired vibrant democracy that engages all citizens.”

Mission

To nurture democracy in Bhutan through civic engagement, public discourse, and media-literate citizens.



His Majesty The King awarded National Order of Merit to 22 CSOs in recognition of their services

A New Era for Bhutanese Civil Society

Bhutan's 109th National Day was significant for the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Bhutan as His Majesty The King recognised the work and importance of Civil Society through a National Order of Merit Award for CSOs. One religious organisation and 22 CSOs received the National Order of Merit (Gold) during the National Day celebration in Trongsa on December 17 2016.

Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy was one of the CSOs to be awarded the National Order of Merit. BCMD shares this honour and recognition with all our partners, benefactors, supporters and the many youth who engage with us. We are grateful to our board directors and donors from both, past and present.

The commendation on the plaque awarded to the CSOs stated:

“For volunteering time and effort towards promoting values, our culture and tradition, and our national humanitarian objectives; for working passionately and tirelessly for the benefit of others; for taking on the responsibility to provide support and assistance wherever the government is unable to reach, and for keeping alive the sacred values of compassion and empathy.”

The award is a recognition of the highest order. It symbolises the beginning of a new era for civil society in Bhutan. His Majesty spoke to the CSOs after the award ceremony and spoke of the need for future generations to understand the importance of service to the country and the people. It gave the CSOs the motivation to work harder towards achieving a common goal of a Gross National Happiness country. The civil society fraternity celebrated this recognition in a special gathering in the capital, Thimphu with all CSOs and members of the CSO Authority on December 21 2016.



Participants of the 2nd Youth Summit at Paro reflecting on cultivation of democratic values

Inspiring Active Citizens

BCMD, through its “Inspiring Active Citizen” programme “area” enables men, women, and children to better understand the roles of citizen in a democracy. Through trainings on civic education, the centre aims to strengthen civic engagement - encouraging youth and people’s commitment to participate in constructive activities contributing to strengthen a culture of democracy.

Through the centre’s support, citizens learn the importance of staying informed on critical national, regional, and local issues to make better political, economic, social and cultural decisions. The programmes give people an opportunity to engage in local issues to explore local issues, to find solutions, and be engaged citizens. A fine example to “Inspiring Active Citizen”

among many is the *Lhakhang* at Bondey in Paro refusing to accept imported packaged food for *tshog* after groups of youth mapped the community and undertook advocacy on supporting local produce to reduce waste and packaged food.

Changing mindsets and engaging citizens are central to the long term sustainability of Bhutan, particularly at a time when development aid is phasing out. It is also critical to the strengthening of a culture of democracy. While Bhutan’s government will have to adopt efficient strategies to make optimum use of the State’s resources, people will have to learn to be more active citizens to at least try and resolve certain local issues without relying on government resources. As we often say at BCMD: An Engaged Citizenry, A Vibrant Democracy.

Reflections from the 1st Youth Summit

Even while in college, Karma Yonten now a 2017 alumnus of College of Language and Cultural Studies used to think that youth could not play any role in democracy. He used to think that youth couldn't make any difference in society or do much to bring a positive impact in local communities.

But that was until he attended the 1st Youth Summit in 2015 that made Karma Yonten realise that the youth actually do have an important role in democracy. "It made me realise that we, the young people can actually be the 'Agent of Change,' that our masses always talk and dream of," Karma Yonten said.

Since, that day, he has become more proactive in taking up his role as a young citizen. This realisation has led him to initiate number of community services and local actions at his college. His initiatives include waste management and electric fencing for a village to reduce crop damage from wildlife in Taktse, Trongsa. "I also initiated an organic food offering to reduce packaged and processed food in an effort to decrease waste."



Taktse villagers talking to College of Language and Cultural Studies, Radio Station, Rigzhung Lungta about local issues

The Youth Initiative

A graduate from Jigme Namgyel Engineering College, Karan Bir Urao has been attending BCMD's Youth Initiative Camp since 2016. He still continues to participate in the centre's number of youth-oriented activities. Here's how he feels about YI Camp.

Karan Bir Urao said that YI Camp is a platform for all the Bhutanese Youth. "Many say that democracy is people's voice. But it's not only about voice of the people alone. Democracy is an every day exercise. And that's exactly what youths from different schools and colleges do at YI Camp," Karan Bir Urao said.

In the camp, we - the youth discuss issues and problems in various communities to plan simple local solutions. Local Action plans are then taken back with young minds to implement in respective communities.

The camp also gives youths a chance to visit places of paramount importance in a democracy such as the parliament.

"YI is one of the ways to solve problems in our community," Jigme Namgyel Engineering College Graduate, Karan Bir Urao said.

23
Activities

626
Participants

2016 HIGHLIGHTS





Encouraging and Expanding Public Discourse

The success of democracy depends on the openness of society and the ability of people to give feedback and share their views. In a society where respect for the elder and the government is ingrained, many people hesitate to speak up openly or to raise questions to seek clarification. The latter – asking questions -- is often mistaken for questioning the integrity of the elder or an authority. As a result many people choose to keep quiet, even when they have useful suggestions to improve systems.

Many people also tend not to voice opposing or alternate views in a public forum even when they have valid opinions. The youth struggle to share their voice and their beliefs about what's good for society. There's a communication gap between citizens and the policymakers meant to serve them. Feedback is often vented anonymously, and often, in a negative tone.

BCMD tries to address this gap through programmes to “Encourage and Expand Public Discourse”. We host forums, seminars and conversations with a cross section of people to foster a more open and inclusive culture of discussion on issues of public and social concerns. Our project is to strengthen the networking of Civil Society Organisations - pilot activities to give voice to civil society members, and to create a greater awareness of CSOs. We aspire to enable citizens, both young and old, to become more comfortable with sharing their views and concerns to contribute to Bhutan's democratic change.





CSOs coming together to build and expand civil society network

CSO Fair 2016

Entitled “Celebrating Civil Society,” the thematic fair focused on the four pillars and nine domains of Gross National Happiness, to create an exhibition that revolved around the five main interrelated themes -- Governance, Livelihood, Environment, Education, Health, Culture, and Mutual Benefit Organisations.

CSOs came together to educate and create awareness on the work of CSOs targeting the policy-makers and the public.



CSOs showcase their products in the fair



YI Members speaking on opportunities for growth on national television

Youth on National Television

“ One should be thoughtful of how an individual should use social media and what information to share and post online.”

Youth Initiative Member,
Meera Ghalley.

BCMD’s members of Youth Initiative learn to share their views on youth related issues through a TV forum titled “Youth Speaks”. This particular programme is a string of panel discussions to give youth a space to voice their opinions and learn public speaking.

During the panel discussion, YI members spoke of opportunities, government and Civil Society Organisations provide to youth to develop and enhance skills.

In 2016 around 15 youths from different colleges including Paro College of Education went on to speak about topics such as, Youth Led Initiatives, Child Protection and Youth Opportunities.

The International Democracy Day

In partnership with a number of Civil Society Organisations, BCMD observed International Democracy Day at two different colleges - Sherubtse College in Trashigang and Paro College of Education on September 15 2016.

The International Democracy Day was observed in these colleges to create awareness on contributions of civil society in the country. CSOs including Kindney Foundation, Draktsho, Chithuen Phendey Association, and RENEW partnered the event to speak about the work of CSOs in how they meet the people's needs.

At Sherubtse College speaking to students, former Executive Director of Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative, Dasho Neten Zangmo shared her insights on the role of civil society in democracy. At Paro College of Education, BCMD, with representatives from Lhaksam, RENEW and Chithuen Phendey Association came together to observe the occasion.

During their interaction with teacher trainees, CSOs shared their experience of dealing with rising social issues like HIV, domestic violence and addiction, and many issues these organisations deal with.

CSO members also called on the government to work more closely with CSOs to ensure sustainable development and inclusive growth.

As part of the awareness programme, nine short films on "Stories for Change," were screened to showcase works of CSOs. Stories of Change are short films produced by youths, featuring the impact of CSO initiatives.



Discussions at the two colleges surrounded on the impact CSO initiatives had in the society

CSO members called on the government to work more closely with CSOs to ensure sustainable development.



CSOs discussed key issues of societal good and ways to spur positive change

Building Civil Society

2016 CSO Activities

6

CSO Oriented Activities

162

Participants

- Civil Society Seminar
- Leadership Symposium
- CSO Retreat
- CSO Quarterly meeting
- Communication for Cause
- Advocating for a Cause

During the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) Leadership Workshop, over 40 CSOs discussed and deliberated on key issues of societal good and how can these entities stir positive change. Over the span of three days from May 23-25, CSOs explored ways to build stronger civil society with clear missions to serve the needs of the society for better and brighter tomorrow.

“I have been leading for the past 16 years, and that entails doing everything - from being a peon, to a driver, a guide, a manager. But we’re here to learn together to equip ourselves to become better leaders in Civil Society,” Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators Executive Director and CSO Authority Chairperson, Sonam Dorji said. This was BCMD’s first partnership to conduct a leadership workshop with the Institute for Societal Leadership, Singapore Management University (SMU).

Stories for Change

“Stories for Change” is a project to converge young talents of youth with the need of Civil Society Organisations. Through the project, youths get to showcase their young budding journalism talent by featuring works of CSOs.

Nine participants from the 2nd round of “Stories for Change” produced films on CSOs. Their amateur works featured contributions of Youth Development Fund (YDF), Bhutan Association of Women Entrepreneurs (BAoWE), and the Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan (DPAB).

The production on BAoWE featured a story about street hawkers - mostly women. This particular story highlights how a small initiative of providing a space for a woman vendor to sell her “home-made fast food actually helped a single mother to make a better living and to sup-

port her child.

The YDF team produced two stories. One of the stories featured a person who recovered from childhood abuse. Another short film tells stories of youth suffering from substance addiction and seeking rehabilitation in Drop-In Centres.

The team of DPAB created a short story about a young man who lost his sight at an early age.

500

DVDs of Stories for Change Produced for Schools and Colleges





Students reading *The Druk Journal*, a non-partisan publication issued in the interest of healthy public discourse

The film revolves around his struggles and how he overcame his disability with a help from DPAB.

Resources for Democracy

Bhutan's democratic change is a compelling story. BCMD has been telling the Bhutanese story on democratic change – producing much needed audio-visual and print resources that are used in colleges and schools, and made available to anyone who is interested in understanding the pressing issues that the country faces today.

Bhutan, though has access to resources of democracy at global level, the country, however, still lacks resources of its own infantile democracy. BCMD's resources fill in a void by sharing Bhutan-centric publications with Bhutanese perspectives.

Libraries, schools, colleges, and various institutions including the Parliament and media receive our resources to prompt more discussions and thinking. Many of them are used for civic education in libraries and schools. Some of the resources are translated into the national language, Dzongkha, and distributed to all 20 districts of Bhutan. Check out our website - www.bcmd.org.bt



BCMD and Early Learning Centre are partnering to audio-record books on democratic values



7,169
Copies
Print Run

Mi-Khung Compendium

Mi-Khung (Citizen) reflects a focus of BCMD's move to inspire a new generation of citizens in Bhutan's democracy. The Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy has published ten issues of *Mi-Khung* since mid 2011. The newsletter is a platform for Bhutanese to share their views and opinions on how to build a strong foundation for a vibrant democracy. We now offer all issues of *Mi-khung* in a collection called the *Mi-khung* Compendium. Within its pages you will find articles tracing the development of our democracy from its beginning. It also covers - highlights of events run by BCMD and partners, and opinions and voices of youth and others on what it means to be a citizen in a young democracy.

Citizen is a special edition of a newsletter on media and democracy distributed in all public, school and college libraries. Mi-khung emphasises the role of "citizen" in an evolving democracy.







Participants from various walks of life come together to interact and express their views on pertinent policies and issues related to Bhutan

The Druk ^{འབྲུག་གི་དྲུག་དེའི།} Journal CONVERSATION

expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily of The Druk Journal. Through regular publications, an interactive website, and open discussions after each edition, we engage Bhutanese society in conversation so that all citizens can exchange - open and frank views on national policies and issues relevant to Bhutan.

The Druk Journal is a journal of thought and ideas. It is a non-partisan publication aimed at serving Bhutan's national interest by creating serious conversation around policy issues.

Distribution: The Journal is available in the National Library, the Parliamentary Libraries (National Council and National Assembly) and libraries of all Middle and High Schools, and the 11 Colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan. Copies are also shared with our members of parliament of both houses, journalists and news organisations, political parties, constitutional agencies and other prioritised individuals

Planned and edited by some of Bhutan's prominent scholars and journalists, The Druk Journal is intended to be a contribution to knowledge and stimulation to thought. The views

Active Citizen's Guide Book

Dzongkha
2,000
Copies Printed

Distributed to local leaders, Non-formal Education women learners, women aspirants for Local Government, teachers and students.

English
5,000
Copies Printed

Distributed to elected local leaders, government and corporate officials, political parties, colleges, schools, non-formal education system, aspiring women candidates for Local Government, participants of trainings, among others.



Community Mapping at Paro, Trongsa and Samdrup Jongkhar to build communities



Multimedia Training of Trainers Trainings.



Youth Summit to give platform for youths to come together to discuss issues and solutions and find their role in democracy.



Societal Leadership Summit to help CSOs partner with government and within the civil society.



Piloting News and Media Literacy Guidebook in schools.



YI Camp to train youths and teachers in audio, films, images, and texts to enable them in telling untold stories effectively.



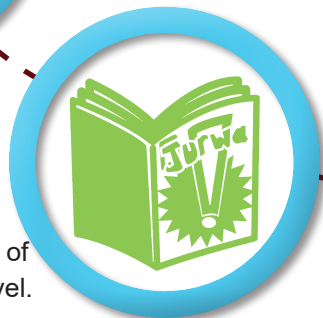
The Druk Journal on "Towards A Sustainable Development" and "Civil Society Organisations in Bhutan".



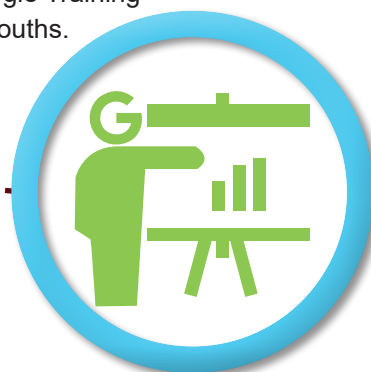
Youth Speaks on National Television on unemployment and overseas employment.



CSO Fair to showcase their quest to bring positive change in the society and garner support.



Publish and Launch of JURWA Graphic Novel.



Google Training for youths.

LOOKING AHEAD 2017

Funding and Financial Overview

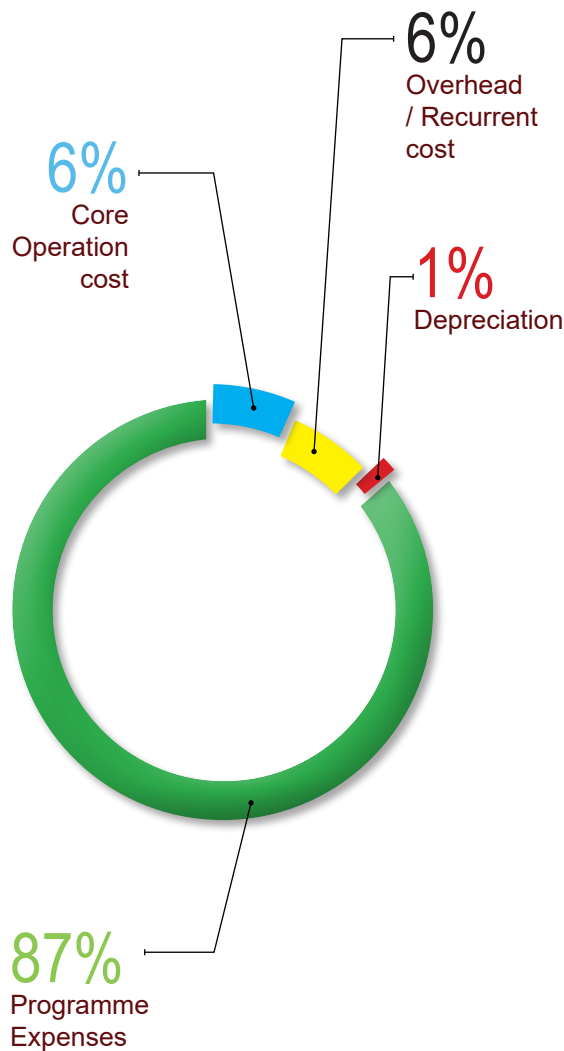
The Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy has been able to undertake many activities with a broad impact on individuals and institutions in 2015. We thank the institutions and individuals who supported our work. Your support enables us to reach an increasing number of Bhutanese youth, local leaders and people in decision making with civic education and to hone their skills of citizenship.

Programming expenses represent 87 percent of the expenditures and the remaining 13 percent represent core operational, overheads and depreciation of the organisation in 2015.

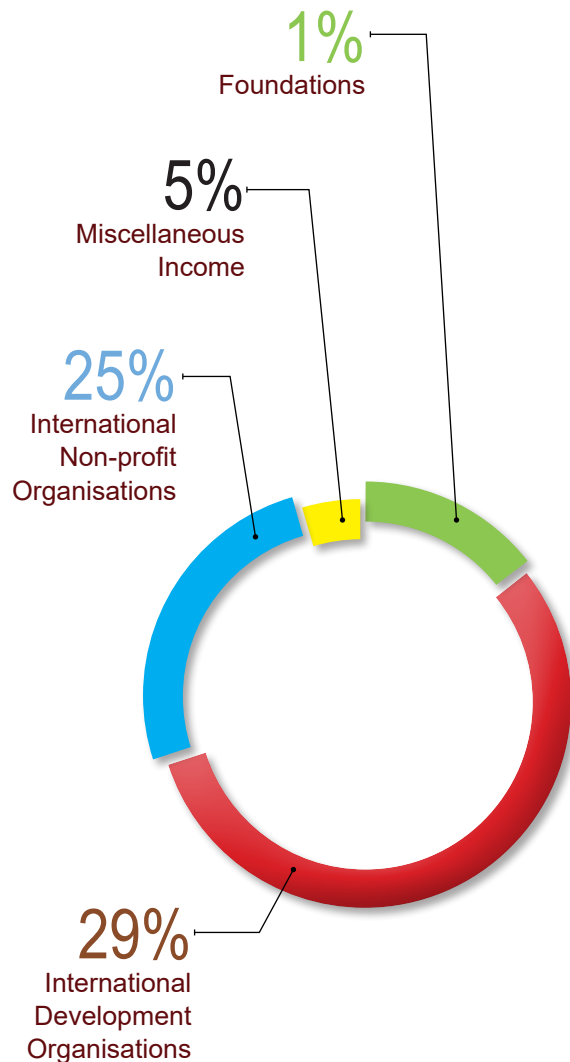
You can support BCMD's work through the following:

- Bhutan Foundation a tax exempt organisation under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code in the United States. www.bhutanfound.org/BCMD
- Global giving. www.globalgiving.org/donate/10975/the-bhutan-centre-for-media-and-demcoracy-bcmd/
- Or support us directly. Contact us on bcmd@bcmd.bt

Expenditure




Income



BCMD Income and Expenditure Statement as of December 31 2015

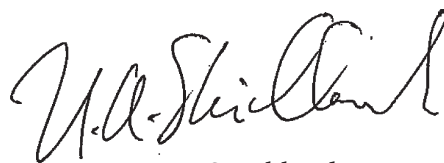
Particulars	Amount in Nu
Income	
Foundations	1,884,579.69
Individual Contributions	6,250.00
International Development Orgs	7,322,294.00
International Non profit orgs	3,289,141.56
Local Support	0.00
Mis.Income	577,265.39
Other income(CSR Donation from Bhutan Telecom)	10,000.00
Total Income	13,089,530.64
Expenditure	
Core operational cost	760,856.74
Overhead/Recurrent cost	800,168.59
Maintenance & Miscellaneous	19,421.00
Depreciation	102,717.60
BCMD Admin_Others	2,356.25
BCMD_CSR	0.00
Programme Expenses	10,851,485.07
Total Expenses	12,537,005.25
Surplus of Income over expenditure	
	552,525.39



Yeshey Choden
Admin/Finance Officer
Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy



Siok Sian Pek-Dorji
Executive Professional Director
Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy



Nancy Strickland
Chairperson
Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy

Acknowledgement

Board of Directors

- Nancy Strickland, Executive Director, Bhutan Canada Foundation
- Dr Tashi Wangchuk, CEO, Thunder Motors
- Dr Jagar Dorji, Consultant
- Dr Dorji Thinley, President, Samtse College of Education
- Tashi Choden, Independent Consultant
- Siok Sian Pek-Dorji, Executive Professional Director, BCMD

Advisors

- Howard Schneider, Stony Brook University
- James Bettinger, Stanford University
- Judy Rogers, A.I Specialist
- Judith Brown, Consultant
- Kavi Chongkittavorn, The Nation Multimedia Group, Thailand
- Mark Mancall, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University
- Martin Tan, Institute of Societal Leadership, S'pore Management University
- Sangay Khandu, National Council Member

Supporters

BCMD acknowledges the following institutions and individuals for their support.

Institutions

- Bhutan Foundation
- Canada Fund
- Civil Society in Development (CISU)
- Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD)
- Friendship Association of Denmark and Bhutan (FABD)
- Global Giving Foundation
- HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation
- Open Society Foundation (OSF)
- UNICEF
- Swiss Development Cooperation
- IDEA International
- The International Republican Institute

Partners

- Institute for Societal Leadership, Singapore Management University
- Google volunteers group (~~get the proper name~~)
- Professor Takayoshi Kusago, Kansai University

Among our many supporters, BCMD's friends from abroad and Bhutan continue to support us as resource persons, facilitators, volunteers and interns. We appreciate their involvement with our work and their contributions to making a difference.



We Value Your Continued Support
www.bcnd.bt