



**Civil Society Organisations' Retreat**

**March 2-3, 2016 at Tashi Namgay Resort, Paro**





## **Background**

The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) “sector” has grown rapidly since 2010 and there are, today, 47 registered CSOs in Bhutan comprising both Mutual Benefit (MBO) and Public Benefit Organisations (PBOs). As CSOs seek to garner more support and response from the government and private sector, we first need to be able to understand and articulate our own vision and our place in Bhutanese society.

CSOs have been organizing CSO monthly and then quarterly meetings for a few years now. BCMD also conducted the first ever Civil Society Dialogue in October 2014 where we questioned the presence of CS and tried to identify our challenges in Bhutan. It’s only been in the past year and a half that we are getting a grip on the gaps and challenges that civil society faces in Bhutan. BCMD proposed at the last quarterly meeting on December 18, 2015 that the next meeting could be a residential retreat to allow us to come together to get to know one another and to review some critical issues including the CSO Act and rules.

This is a particularly important period in time when new development partners are looking to supporting civil society in Bhutan, and CSOs need to come together to articulate some common aspirations. It’s also important for us to understand what issues need the attention of the state and how we can, together, build a civil society that will serve Bhutan’s needs and democracy.

## **Aims and Objectives**

**The aims and objectives of the retreat were to:**

1. To network and strengthen the CSO fraternity
2. To envision a future direction for civil society
3. To review the CSO Act and Rules
4. To follow up on designing a capacity building plan

## **The 2-day Programme**

The 2 –day CSO retreat held on March 2-3, 2016 provided an opportunity for representatives of CSOs to interact and get to know one another as a first step to building a fraternity. It enabled the participants to collectively dream of a vision for the civil society sector.

## **Day 1:**



Before the participants arrived, members from the Core Committee met early to discuss the meeting. Please look at Annexe I: Minutes of the Core Committee Meeting.

The morning session of the retreat welcomed the participants, explained the objectives of the retreat, and enabled the group to get to know each other and what they expected from the retreat. The participants shared their common expectations from the retreat which included the following:

- Have good networking for good collaborations/partnerships in the future
- Get familiarized with the CSO Act and be able to contribute points towards the amendment of the Act
- Enhance understanding of the civil society community; know where we are, understand the challenges we face, find a way to use each other's expertise, etc.
- Be able to think of ourselves as a family after this retreat and achieve common voice as a sector more prominently
- See a clear way forward for the civil society sector

Representatives from organisations outside Thimphu including the Lhomon Society, Ugyencholing Foundation, and Association of Bhutanese Industries joined us for the retreat and were given time to share and talk about their organisations and their mandates.

The group also reviewed the follow up on the actions that came up from the last CSO quarterly meeting.

**Sethi's Report:** CSOs are encouraged to, in clusters, identify training needs as well as training institutions and speak to the institutions as a group. For example, the cluster of caregivers CSOs can identify their training needs ( such as social work) and talk to an institution after they have identified which institute. It was pointed out to the group that the more we do things on our own, the better it is. At the moment, we tend to look to CSOA for everything from training to sustainability issues, etc. CSOA is a regulator and it is best to leave it to do its job. Sethi's report is just a recommendation, and members of the civil society can accept the recommendations they deem worthy. All were encouraged to read Sethi's recommendations, a copy of which has also been shared with the CSO Authority.



**Review of the CSO Act/Rules and Regulations:** In the last quarterly forum, Bhutan Transparency Initiative volunteered to look at the CSO Act and to collate comments made by CSOs at other meetings and make recommendations where it needs amendment. BTI Director, Aum Pema lead discussions on day 2.

**CSOA Board Meeting:** The CSOA Board has not been able to meet since the required quorum is not there. In the last quarterly meeting, it was recommended that CSOA will come up with a consolidated report on all the CSO activities annually. This was parked until the CSOA board meeting is held. The eminent members will report on this after the board meeting.

**New Chairman of the CSOA Board:** A representative from the Finance Minister, Yonten Namgyel, is appointed to the CSOA Board. Tshewang Tobgyel has left CSOA but Thinley Norbu is officiating as the member secretary. Now that there is a full quorum, the CSOA Board meeting will take place soon and elect a Chair from amongst the members. BCMD Director, eminent member on the CSOA Board, has gotten in touch with the Finance representative and has asked for a board meeting soon. It is a good idea for those who know the new representative to call him to talk to him to familiarise him with CSOs. It is also good if we can get him to come to the next quarterly meeting. The CSOs also think its good to have 3 representatives from the CSOs instead of just 2. This also leads to another need to amend the Act. Another question was whether to make a presentation to the new chair of the CSOA. Participants also said that the Chair should have clear ToR and some civil society background in the future to be able to guide the civil society sector.

**Action 1:** Hold a full-quorum CSOA Board Meeting.

**Core Committee:** CSOs were briefed about the core committee, which was formed at the September 18, 2015 quarterly meeting. The ToR for the Core Committee was shared with the CSOs and also presented to the CSOs present at the retreat.

The participants were told that the Royal Audit Authority has apparently written to the Ministry of Finance to request financial support to audit the CSOs. Aum Pek from BCMD has found out that Parliament has to approve the proposed finances and not the MoF. CSO members were asked to talk to relevant MPs to familiarize them about our audit issues. If the budget comes from MoF, it will only be in the second half of 2016.



**Action 1:** Members of the Core Committee will write a letter to the CSOA to give us a letter to explain the delay in our auditing. The letter will also request CSOA to put the balance from the CSOFF funding into supporting the audit of CSOs. For this CSOs are requested to share their audit status.

**Action 2:** After the CSOA has a full board; the Board is requested to write a letter to Royal Audit Authority to inform the RAA about the audit issues of CSOs. The list of CSOs and their audit status is as below.

### CSO AUDIT DETAILS

SL NO	ORGANISATION	No. Of Staffs (Core and Contract)	AUDITED TILL DATE	REMARKS
1	BCMD	7	2012	CSOFF Audited
2	Tarayana Foundation	75	2013	Audited by RAA and Private Auditor
3	BAOWE	5	2014	Audited by RAA
4	Bhutan Kidney Foundation	3	2012-2013	Audited by RAA and CSOFF
5	Handicraft Association of Bhutan		2015	Private Auditor
6	Association of Bhutanese Industries	4	2015	Private Auditor
7	Disabled person's Association of Bhutan	4	2015	Audited by RAA
8	Ability Bhutan Society	10	2014	Audited by RAA
9	Clean Bhutan	5	2015	Private Auditor
10	Lhomon Society	8	2014	Audited by RAA
11	Bhutan Cancer Society	4	-----	No Audit till date
12	GNH Centre	11	2013 and 2016	Audited by RAA and CSOFF
13	Bhutan Transparency Initiative	4	2014	SDC Consultant - Audit
14	Draktsho	19	2013	No Audit till date



15	SABAH Bhutan	10	2014 and 2015	Audited by RAA and SDF Auditor
16	Royal Textile Academy	17	2014	Audited by RAA
17	Lhaksam	9	2015	Audited by RAA
18	Bhutan Film Association	3	2014	Audited by RAA
19	Loden Foundation	10	2014	Audited by RAA
20	Bhutan Youth Development	68	2012	Audited by RAA
21	RENEW	18	2014	Audited by RAA
22	Orgyen Choling		-----	No audit till date
23	BMF	5	2011 - 2015	Audited by RAA
24	Journalist Association of Bhutan - JAB	3	2014-2015	SDC Consultant - Audit
25	ABTO	5	2012	Audited by RAA
26	Guide Association of Bhutan - GAB	5	2014-2015	Private Auditor

**Audit Issue:** RAA is empaneling auditors. It should be equitable and open so that if auditors want to audit CSOs as part of their company's CSR, that should be allowed. RAA has also never written to the Authority or the CSOs about their decision to outsource audit and the date wherein it will take effect. The CSOs feel that the rule cannot be retroactive as none have set aside funds for auditing in the past years.

**In the afternoon, the CSOs envisioned the state of civil society sector in 2020 by answering 2 questions:**

1. Where are we today as a civil society sector?
2. Where do we see the sector in 2020?



**Following points were collected through the presentations on the state of civil society now (2016) and where they hope it will be in 2020.**

<b>2016</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Action to get there</b>
Lost – Rules need to be streamlined	RTM – CSOs will be part of consultations at the round table meeting	
Less govt. support (e.g. visas)	Proactive govt.	
Public unaware and, therefore, no political support	Revised CSO Act/ Rules	Invite media for press coverage whenever possible. Build strong network with media
Sustainability an issue		
Willingness to work together and to improve ourselves. We have the will and can make it happen		
Urban-centric	Vibrant/active CSOs with diversity. Innovative	
Donor reliant	Self sustainable	
Less vocal/ less visibility	More visibility	
Less recognised	Recognised by govt. as the 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector in Bhutan	
Poor co-ordination (budding stage)	CSOA is pro-active	
Lack of resources	CS has a larger presence in our democratic set-up	
Fewer professionals	CS members drive and govern CS development. More CSOs on board etc...	
Limited support from CSOA	More lenient rules and regulations	
Stringent laws and rules	Greater reach across Bhutan	
group		
Struggling phase/ emerging state	Amended rules/ Act	



Human resources limited	Good relationship with govt.	
Service delivery	Dynamic CSO sector	
Weak authority without a full board	Stronger networks among CSOs	

**Action:** Sonam Pem from Tarayana and Jigme Thinley from YDF with Loden Foundation will come up with a concept note to raise funds for CSO Endowment/Development. After they have done the concept note, they will discuss with the Core Committee on taking it forward.

**Capacity Building of the civil society sector:**

While the general feedback is that the Civil Society Organisation Authority should take the lead initiative in building the capacity of CSO and fundraise to develop civil society, others felt CSOA's mandate is to moderate and should not be channelling or doling out funds. A need for a common platform to communicate, materialise the ideas, and increase civil society visibility was also expressed. The CSO forum, which will soon be turned into a vibrant website, will be the platform until such a time when we may think of other avenues.

Recently CSOs were asked to give a report on their achievements for the past two years for the Government's Mid-term Review. CSOs have never been asked that in the past. This provides an avenue for the CSOs to explore and communicate further with the concerned authorities in the government. It was difficult to come up with a 2-year report in the short time that was given. It may be time now to produce a yearly report/update to the CSOA, so they have the required document whenever needed.

Another way to increase visibility is to build network with the media. BCMD is in discussion with BBS for CSOs to go on air to talk about the civil society sector. BBS has agreed to give us the platform. BCMD will soon workout a plan to have CSOs have discussions on BBS about civil society initiatives. CSOs are also encouraged to inform media whenever a civil society initiative is taking place for the general public.





## Day 2

Day two focused on Capacity Building in the CSO Sector and reviewing the CSO Act 2007.

**Capacity Building in the CSO Sector:** The participants broke up into groups to brainstorm on a few short-term training needs/priorities from each group and suggest the methodology to go about it.

**The following table shows the immediate short-term training needs identified by the groups.**

Sl. No	Broad Training Priorities	Sub-Trainings	Methodology
1	Integrity in CSOs		This will be initiated by BTI in collaboration with ACC
2	Proposal writing x2		Loden Foundation will get in touch with the consultants who did a fundraising training last year for the CSOs.
3	Leadership and Management	Communication for advocacy	BCMD is partnerig with the Spore Management University to conduct a leadership workshop in May
		Internal management policy	External expert
		Networking skills	
		Result based management system	Results based management including proposal development (BTI offers to provide a 2-day training).
		Basic office management system	



		Financial management including fund mobilisation, internal auditing skills, financial planning	RIM would be a good organisation to come up with a long term-plan for CSOs. For fund mobilization, request UN. Learn to pitch your strength. RGOB can create awareness to the CSOs on the 5-year plan, long term objectives, etc. at the beginning of every 5-year plan. For internal auditing skills, Tarayana can request Dasho Yanki T. Wangchuk to train the CSOs.
		Human Resource Management	HR requirement, common training can be put as an annual activity with the Authority
4	Internal auditing skills		Dasho Yanki T Wangchuk through Tarayana
5	Knowledge exchange		Knowledge sharing; older csos sharing with younger csos what are the good practices. Exchange programmes would be better than older csos sharing a day with the younger ones.
6	Strategic planning		Partnerships within CSOs and govt., institutes and universities. Interoffice exchange programme.
7	M&E		EAB -Evaluation Association of Bhutan

**Long-term Capacity Building:**

- Tarayana is setting up a centre for social studies, but it will not be a certificate course (certificates will not be given).
- CSOA should work with the government to have them provide masters scholarship slots to civil society sector
- CSOs have been divided into clusters and placed under each Core Committee Member. These clusters are encouraged to work out out long-term capacity needs and talk to relevant training institutions like RIM, RUB, etc.



**Some vision statements (definitions of civil society) for civil society sector by the participants through a group work.** This is a preliminary discussion to be taken up for further discussion:

- CSOs in Bhutan to promote an enabling space for the development of values by ensuring vibrant, diverse, democratic and professional services for the sustainable livelihood of the people of Bhutan.
- A vibrant and diverse civil society sector, which is self-sustaining and professional guided by an enabling policy contributing to nation building
- A vibrant and diverse Civil Society committed to the democratization in Bhutan for the well-being and contentment of the people/sentient beings
- A civil society which is vibrant and diverse enabling policies and self sustaining and democratic
- A vibrant, diverse and professional civil society sector working towards the well-being and prosperity of the nation
- CSOs in Bhutan to promote an enabling space for the development of values by ensuring vibrant, diverse, democratic and professional services for the sustainable livelihood of the people of Bhutan

**Afternoon of Day 2:**

The afternoon part of the day was spent in reviewing and suggesting revisions for the CSO Act 2007 revision. All the suggested revisions are either flagged in different colours or revision proposed. Please look at Annexe I.

**Annexe I: Group work in the CSO Act**

Preamble:

“...Developing human qualities and rendering Humanitarian services” = needs to be re-worded to have a clearer and more inclusive definition. Be broader and acknowledge the need for people’s participation in a democracy through civil society organisations.

CSOs shall refer to:

3. Suggest that we review this in line with the co-ops Act. Co-ops need not just be Agricultural.

Define co-operatives and include them into CS. Fit in.



MBOs- need to be more inclusive – youth groups in rural areas, vocational centres etc. Crafts group,  
...

PBOs-- again need to be more inclusive ---- literary groups, art, social causes, think tanks,  
educational institutes.

PBOs:

( a) Protect national and public interest; or particular sections of the public

- . (d) Facilitate a constructive partnership between the Government and CSOs in order to advance the public interest; □
- . (e) Provide opportunities for people to serve public interest; ( How?)□
- . (f) ~~Benefit the public at large or particular sections of the public; □~~
- . (g) ~~Demonstrate and continue to increase CSO's value to the larger communities of which they form a part; □~~
- . (h) ~~Promote compliance by CSOs with their legal obligations to exercise effective control and management over the administration of their activities and funding; and (retained)~~
- . (i) Promote the delivery of emergency relief services and other types of public services by CSOs ( instead of PBOs), and promote the effective use of public and private financial resources by CSOs for such purposes. □
- . ( Should there be a line about promoting the effective use of public and private financial resources by MBOs?)

6. PBOs shall serve to supplement or complement the efforts made by Govt to:

6. PBOs shall serve to supplement or complement the efforts made by the Government to: re-phrase

- . (a) Protect life and health of all living beings and reduce suffering and poverty;□
- . (b) ~~Prevent and alleviate human and animal suffering and poverty; □~~
- . (c) Disseminate knowledge and advance learning; □
- (d) Contribute to the development of
  - . the Country economically, socially, culturally and democratically; □
  - . (e) Assist in the protection and promotion of national culture and heritage; □



- . (f) Protect the natural environment; and □
- . (g) Promote good governance, social harmony and Gross National □Happiness.
- . No CSO shall:
  - . (a) Do anything to impair the sovereignty, security, unity and territorial integrity of Bhutan; □
  - . (b) Engage ~~in any activities that are directly related to public elections~~; □Rephrase – be engaged in party politics, campaigning for parties in elections etc.
  - . (c) Do anything to destroy the peace, stability and well-being of the nation; □
  - . (d) Be involved in any incitement to an offence on the grounds of race, **gender**, language, religion or region; □
  - . ~~(e) Be involved in political activity; □~~
  - . Violate the spiritual heritage of Bhutan as expressed in Article 3 of the Constitution; □
  - . (g) Be involved in conducting activities or managing institutions whose primary purpose is public religious worship; □
  - . ~~(h) Compel any person to belong to another faith by providing reward or inducement for a person to belong to another faith; and □~~
  - . ~~(i) Be organized or operated exclusively for financial gain. □~~

Suggest: Abide by the provisions of the Constitution?

### **Chapter 13**

#### **Accounts, Reports and Returns**

#### **Accounting and Reporting System**

92. PBOs under this Act shall establish an accounting system in accordance with the Financial Rules and Regulations of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

*PBOs under this Act shall establish an accounting system guided by the Financial Rules and Regulations of the Royal Government of Bhutan. To be guided by individual CSOs Financial Guidelines*

93. The PBOs shall make full disclosure of financial information, including sources of funding, application of funds and audited accounts.



94. The Annual Financial reports shall be submitted to the Authority.

#### **Annual Accounts**

95. The accounting records shall contain:

(a) The total sums of money received and the total expenditures made; and

(b) A record of the PBO's assets and liabilities. Civil Society Organizations Act of Bhutan 36 of 44

#### **Annual Audit**

96. The Royal Audit Authority shall conduct an annual audit of the PBOs.

*All registered CSOs shall be audited annually.*

#### **Annual Reports**

97. The members of the Board of a PBO shall prepare in respect of each financial year, an annual report enclosing:

*The PBOs shall prepare in respect of each financial year, an annual report enclosing:*

(a) A prescribed report by the trustees on the activities of the PBOs during that year; and

*A prescribed report on the activities of the PBOs during that year; and*

(b) Such other information relating to the PBOs or to its trustees or officers as may be prescribed by rules and regulations made under this Act.

98. The annual report required to be prepared under section 97, in respect of any financial year of a PBOs shall be put in the public domain in either electronic or paper form.

### **Chapter 4**

#### **Authority**

**The Civil Society Organization Authority, its composition & roles**

#### **Board**

#### **Secretariat**

#### **Authority**

8. An independent "Civil Society Organizations Authority", hereinafter referred to as "the Authority" shall be established under this Act )for the implementation of this ACT?) and it shall be the regulatory authority under this Act. (should it be just a regularity body?)



9. The Authority shall consist of: (Should it be consist or should we rephrase it as “ the Authority shall be governed by a Board of Directors?)

( The Board shall consist of members as prescribed below:

- (a) A senior official from the Ministry of Finance appointed by the Finance Minister;
- (b) An eminent lawyer with knowledge and experience of laws relating to CSOs, who is recommended by the Attorney General;
- (c) Two eminent members representing the CSOs; and
- (d) A senior official from the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, appointed by the Home Minister, who shall be the member secretary of the Authority. ( should the member secretary be a member of the Board?)

#### **Board Composition**

#### **Proposed Members:**

1. **OAG- 1**
2. **Ministry of Finance-1**
3. **CSOs-3**
4. **GNHC-1**

#### **Member Secretary**

#### **Proposed Size- Seven**

( Conduct of the Board)

10. The members of the Authority (Board) shall elect a Chairperson from among themselves.

11. The quorum for any meeting of the Authority (Board) shall be two-thirds of the total number of members of the Authority.

12. The Authority (Board) shall meet at least twice a year and additional sessions may be convened, if deemed necessary.

13. All decisions by the Authority (Board) shall be determined by a simple majority of the members present and voting.

14. The term of office of the members of Authority (Board) shall be three years and no person shall hold office for more than two terms.

#### **Functions of the Authority**

15. The Authority shall:

- (a) Prescribe the application form and application procedures for any person wishing to register a CSO under this Act;
- (b) Review and approve all applications for registration of CSOs which satisfy the requirements of this Act, within six months after such applications are submitted;
- (c) Provide written reasons for rejecting any application under this Act;



- (d) Advise the Government about the general activities and roles of CSOs;
- (e) Encourage and facilitate better internal administration of CSOs;
- (f) Monitor the activities of CSOs to ensure their compliance with this Act and with their own Articles of Association or Charters, and the purposes for which they have been established;
- (g) Approve the accreditation of foreign CSOs within the provisions of the laws of Bhutan and this Act;
- (h) Institute inquiries either generally or for particular purposes, if the activities of the CSOs are not in compliance with this Act or any other relevant laws of the Country;
- (i) Examine the books, records and activities of CSOs when required;
- (j) Keep a public register of CSOs as described in section 27 of this Act;
- (k) Add or remove any body or institution from the list of registered CSOs for violations of this Act or any other law of Bhutan or law of any other country where that CSO may be operating; and
- (l) Carry out other related powers and responsibilities prescribed in this Act.

#### Board's responsibilities:

- Budgeting, planning, making sure the CSOs are vibrant, diverse ,professional

#### Secretariat

Composition: Member Secretary

*Can be recruited through an open competitive basis*

**Roles:** Regulate the CSOs, facilitate and follow up on the board's directives

#### Types of CSOs

Option 1 : No need of segregations of Types ,generic definition of CSOs?to understand why CSO was categorized into PBOs & MBOs

Option 2:

For the purpose of the Act, there are two types of CSOs, distinguished by their differing objectives

- (a) PBO are CSOs, which are established in order to benefit a section or the society as a whole
- (b) MBO are CSOs which are established in order to advance shared interests of their members or supporters, such as to advance the shared interests of people working in a particular profession...
- (c)( Informal) **Voluntary Organizations** are CSOs, which are established in order to benefit society but the volunteers do not receive any salary and other benefits. -





- (d) Foreign Benefit Organizations are CSOs, which are established to spread the cause outside Bhutan for the benefit of entire humanity. –act is for the CSOs in the country
- Community Based Organizations (CBO)s to be added?

## RESPONSIBILITY OF CSOS

1. ENCOURAGE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES/VOICES
2. SUPPORT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES/CAUSES
3. EDUCATION & AWARENESS (A CULTURE OF LEARNING)/ADVOCACY
4. FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS
5. STRENGTHEN SOCIETY + SOCIAL WELFARE AND HARMONY
6. PROMOTE INCLUSIVE EQUITABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR ALL
7. UPHOLD GNH VALUES; INTEGRITY;TRANSPARENCY; ETHICS
8. FUND RAISING + RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
9. BE ACCOUNTABLE TO AUTHORITIES; BOARD; MEMBERS; DONORS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC
10. ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERISM

## Chapter 5

### Registration and Establishment of CSOs

#### Registration

22. Except otherwise exempted by this Act, all aspiring CSOs shall register with the Authority under this Act. -

The Authority shall issue a Certificate of Registration upon determining that the application meets the requirements prescribed under this Act. (repeated)

(c) His bio-data and educational qualifications (if any?);

#### Annexe II: Definition and objectives of CSOs in Bhutan

A vibrant and diverse Civil Society committed to the democratization In Bhutan for the wellbeing and contentment of the people/sentient beings

- A vibrant democratic civil society organization with diverse professional and enabling policies for self sustaining
- A civil society which is vibrant and diverse enabling policies and self sustaining and democratic
- A vibrant, diverse and professional civil society sector working towards the wellbeing and prosperity of the nation



- CSOs in Bhutan to promote an enabling space for the development of values by ensuring vibrant, diverse, democratic and professional services for the sustainable livelihood of the people of Bhutan
- A vibrant and diverse CSO sector which is self sustaining and professional guided by an enabling policy contributing to nation building

## **Annexe III: 2nd Core Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 2 and Friday, March 4, 2016**  
**Tashi Namgay Resort, Paro and BCMD Conference Hall**  
**Minutes**

### **Present:**

#### **Before the retreat in Paro.**

1. Sonam Pem, Tarayana Foundation
2. Tashi Namgay, Bhutan Kidney Foundation (BKF)
3. Dorji Dema (representing Dechen Wangmo), Bhutan Cancer Society (BCS)
4. Dorji Tashi, Loden Foundation
5. Dawa Tshering (representing Dawa Penjor), Bhutan Media Foundation
6. Siok Sian Pek-Dorji, Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD)
7. Minutes: Jigme Choden, BCMD

#### **After the retreat in Thimphu**

1. Sonam Dorji, ABTO
2. Pema Lhamo, BTI
3. Dorji Tashi, Loden Foundation
4. Siok Sian Pek-Dorji, BCMD
5. Sonam Pem, Tarayana Foundation
6. Tashi Namgay, BKF

### **Absent:**

1. Dechen Wangmo, BCS
2. Dawa Penjor, BMF

### **Meeting at Paro on 2nd March, 2016**

Aum Pek welcomed the group to the second meeting of the CSO Core Committee held in the morning of the CSO retreat in Paro.

### **Discussions:**

There was no agenda as such but just ran through some issues that would be discussed at the retreat as follows:

1. ToR of the Core Committee (CC) was revisited
2. The CC members were encouraged to form sub-committees under their own cluster of CSOs. Each committee were given clusters of CSOs under them and they could form more committees from those clusters.
3. A workplan for the CC will be developed and shared with the members.



4. CC members will note recommendations from the retreat and take it up with relevant agencies
5. The CC members will report on the progress of the actions arising out of the retreat at the next quarterly meeting.
6. The CC will, as the core group, let GNH Commission know about the meeting between the European Union and CSOs through a letter.
7. Another letter will be sent to the relevant agencies to include CSOs in the next Round Table Meeting.
8. CC members will get back together either after the retreat or in between to discuss the audit issues after reporting to the CSOs on the audit status. (**Action:** Dorji Tashi will talk to Thinley Norbu, CSOA to organise a meeting with RAA about audit).
9. A CSO calendar will also be developed whereby all the CSOs will give their activities targeted to public. This is so we can avoid doing anything major when these events are taking place.

#### **Meeting at BCMD on 4th March, 2016**

A follow-up CC meeting was held at BCMD on the afternoon of 4th March, 2016 after the retreat in Paro. The purpose of this meeting is to take stock of the discussions at the retreat and plan a way forward to take the issues/action points arising out of the retreat to the next level.

#### **Discussions**

**Taking stock of the retreat:** Everyone agreed that the retreat was constructive and worthwhile. The retreat has given the CSOs a momentum and therefore it is important to follow-up on the action points to maintain that momentum. Some important aspects of the retreat were (i) reviewing the Act and the opportunity for everyone to understand the governance of the CSOs through the Act, (ii) networking amongst the CSOs, and (iii) a grey cloud of civil society vision is seen.

#### **CSO activities as under:**

- I. **Quarterly Meetings:** Tashi Namgay from Kidney Foundation has offered to do the next quarterly meeting in June in the conference hall of Tarayana Foundation. Tashi will draft an agenda and share it with the committee for comments and further share it with the CSOs. Decided to organize CSO meeting on 14/15 June. Tashi will write to the CSOs asking them to reserve the dates.
- II. **CSO Act, Rules and Regulations:** All the comments from the CSO retreat will be sent to BTI who will compile and share it once with the core committee meeting after which it will be proposed to the CSOA. A cover letter shall be prepared and signed by the two eminent members along with an appeal signed by all the CSOs. The compilation will be done 15 March 2016 which will then be circulated with the core committee who will then share it with their five allocated CSOs expecting their comments, if any by end of March.
- III. **Annual General Meeting for CSOs:** The two eminent members will propose for an AGM in late 2nd week of May. Issues to be raised in the AGM seems to be ready which has been compiled by BCMD in consultation with all the CSOs.



- Immigration Issues: Individual CSO will be asked to prepare a proposal on the issues such as visa that confronts them which could be raised during the AGM. A separate committee will be formed to work on the issue. Since the AGM
- Audit Issues: The issue will be tabled as an agenda and will be deliberated during the CSOA meeting.
- Round Table Meeting: Will be discussed in the CSOA board meeting asking the CSOA to propose for a separate session with development partners. CSOA will be asked to submit a letter to GNHC requesting for the same.
- Development partners: Two eminent members write request letter to the GNHC requesting them to inform CSOs when they have development partners visiting Bhutan who are interested to support CSOs.

IV. **Capacity building:** The priorities have been identified during the CSO retreat (refer to it's minutes). The training priorities may have to be categorized in to short-term and long-term capacity building programmes.

- The trainings discussed, identified during the CSO retreat will be provided by the individual organizations who offered to conduct it. Refer to the capacity building schedule from CSO retreat.
- The long-term trainings such as financial management, office management, grant proposal writing should be proposed to the CSOA to take up.
- A retired auditors (Aum Yangki) shall be requested to provide an audit orientation for the CSOs. Tarayana Foundation will follow up on this.
- BTI will communicate with the RCSC for the HR management training.
- Knowledge Exchange and Basic Office Management will be taken care by the established CSOs.
- Social Service Training: Tarayana and BKF will lead the programme and communicate further with RUB and RIM if necessary.
- M&E: Everyone will explore and put words out looking for possible training opportunities.
- Proposal writing: Loden will follow up and get back to the two eminent members.
- Internal management policy: ABTO
- Networking skills?
- Result Based Management: BTI



- Leadership training: BCMD
- Endowment Framework: Loden, Tarayana and YDF
- Basic Office Management: CSOA

**XXX**

**Annexures:**

Annexe I: Group work on CSO Act

Annexe II: Definition of CSO

Annexe III: Minutes of the Core Committee Meeting.