



Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
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Compilation on Bhutan

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a compilation of information contained in reports of treaty bodies and special procedures and other relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies^{1, 2}

2. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women encouraged Bhutan to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.³ In order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's and women's rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Bhutan consider ratifying all the core human rights instruments to which it was not yet a party.⁴

3. The Committee on the Rights of the Child also recommended that Bhutan ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.⁵ The Committee further recommended that Bhutan ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.⁶

4. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that Bhutan ratify the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, which would provide Bhutan with a supportive legal environment for efforts to provide and ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.⁷



III. National human rights framework⁸

5. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Bhutan strengthen its efforts to disseminate information about the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Committee's general recommendations, as well as about capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors and lawyers through the Bhutan National Legal Institute, which had been established to provide continuous judicial and legal education.⁹

6. The Committee on the Rights of the Child encouraged Bhutan to establish an independent mechanism for monitoring human rights, with a specific mechanism for monitoring children's rights that was able to receive, investigate and address complaints regarding violations of the rights of the child, including those related to discrimination, and equipped to receive complaints by children in a child-sensitive and confidential manner.¹⁰

7. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the fact that the National Commission for Women and Children, the body responsible for coordinating the advancement of women, had been strengthened.¹¹ The Committee recommended that Bhutan provide information on the activities of the National Commission in monitoring gender mainstreaming activities, including gender-responsive budgeting, and that it ensure that the Commission had adequate human and financial resources to effectively discharge its expanded mandate.¹²

8. The Committee also recommended that Bhutan strengthen the legal status and visibility of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by establishing a clear time frame for the completion of the harmonization of laws, and by ensuring that the consultations on that issue being undertaken by the Women, Children and Youth Committee of the National Assembly were participatory and included a thorough gender analysis of all laws that were in conflict with other statutory laws and the Convention.¹³

IV. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

A. Cross-cutting issues

1. Equality and non-discrimination¹⁴

9. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) noted that the Penal Code of Bhutan 2004 criminalized sodomy and any other sexual conduct that was against the "order of nature". According to UNDP, there was no evidence that that provision of the Penal Code had ever been enforced; however, there also remained a serious concern about the lack of data and information on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex communities and their vulnerabilities to discrimination.¹⁵ In 2016, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) supported national Free and Equal campaigns and events in Bhutan that promoted equal rights for and fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.¹⁶

10. While noting that discrimination was prohibited by law, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Bhutan take prompt measures to end instances of discrimination in practice against girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic Nepalese origin, children of single parents and undocumented children, in particular regarding the right to a nationality and education.¹⁷

11. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Bhutan collect statistical data on the extent of the problem of sex discrimination in the workplace, including cases of sexual harassment, and conduct labour inspections aimed at enforcing compliance with labour laws and codes of conduct on sexual harassment.¹⁸

12. The Committee also recognized efforts to change stereotypical attitudes among the general public through the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Gender. It remained concerned, however, at the persistence of harmful gender stereotypes and attitudes. The Committee recommended that Bhutan expand education programmes to counter the negative impact of discriminatory stereotypes on women, with a particular focus on the impact on rural women, as well as review school curricula in order to ensure that they facilitated the elimination of gender stereotypes.¹⁹

2. Development, the environment, and business and human rights²⁰

13. In its 2018 voluntary national report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Bhutan noted that, amidst multiple developmental challenges it faced, poverty and income inequality posed significant threats to human development. Despite poverty reduction being placed at the heart of the country's development programmes, significant rural-urban disparities persisted. Bhutan also noted that the Gini coefficient had increased from 0.36 in 2012 to 0.38 in 2017, indicating that inequality was rising. Poverty in rural areas (11.9 per cent) was significantly higher than in urban areas (0.8 per cent). In addition, while multidimensional poverty had reduced significantly from 12.4 per cent in 2012 to 5.4 per cent in 2017, rural poverty (8.1 per cent) was significantly higher than urban poverty (1.2 per cent).²¹

14. The United Nations, in the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework for Bhutan for 2019–2023, underscored that climate-induced and other disasters were threatening poverty reduction and actions to eradicate poverty in the country, and that preventing people from falling back into poverty would depend on how Bhutan managed the relation between its people and land.²² With poverty being largely a rural phenomenon, and more than 60 per cent of the population still dependent on agriculture, climate-induced disaster coupled with natural disaster could reverse income gains, making the economy more fragile.²³

15. UNDP recommended that Bhutan conduct a comprehensive analysis from a vulnerability perspective of the multiple ongoing efforts of the Government and other stakeholders to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change and other natural hazards on people's lives.²⁴

B. Civil and political rights

1. Right to life, liberty and security of person²⁵

16. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) noted that a common form of physical violence experienced by children was corporal punishment. In a study on violence against children in Bhutan²⁶ in which 3,272 children and young people were interviewed, UNICEF found that the most common form of physical violence against children was corporal punishment by teachers in schools. More than 1 in 10 children had experienced at least one incident of sexual violence in their lifetime (12.8 per cent), with a slightly larger proportion of girls (13.5 per cent) than boys (11.9 per cent). In the study UNICEF also noted that commercial sexual exploitation had emerged as an issue in the focus groups discussions and interviews only in the southern and south-eastern regions of the country. In those regions, girls were understood to experience sexual violence and harassment more than boys.

17. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Bhutan review its legislation to prohibit unequivocally corporal punishment of children, including the Penal Code of 2004, in particular article 109, to prohibit fully the use of corporal punishment in all settings, including the home, alternative care, monasteries, day care and schools; the Child Care and Protection Act of 2011; the Child Adoption Act of 2012; and the Domestic Violence Prevention Act of 2013. It also recommended that Bhutan finalize promptly the initiative of the *Dratshang Lhentshög* (Commission for Monastic Affairs) to provide for alternative forms of discipline, and take all measures necessary to enforce it in practice; and that it ensure that investigations and administrative and legal proceedings were initiated promptly and systematically in relation to cases of the corporal punishment of children.²⁷

2. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law²⁸

18. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention noted that there had been significant and commendable achievements in safeguarding the right to liberty in Bhutan. Those included the presentation of arrested individuals before a judge within 24 hours, taking into account time spent in custody when sentencing and expeditious trials. At the same time, the Working Group emphasized that the authorities needed to step up their efforts in a number of areas to improve the observance of due process rights. Ensuring effective access to professional legal representation and legal aid for everyone, and especially those in vulnerable situations such as children, had to be a priority.²⁹

19. The Working Group expressed serious concern at the large number of people in civil cases who were being held in detention. It also highlighted that there were no dedicated adult pretrial detention facilities in Bhutan and those on remand were therefore held in police stations. Pretrial detainees spent entire days inside their cells in police stations without any purposeful activities or opportunities for outdoor exercise. While remand periods generally were not excessive, police stations simply could not accommodate people for longer than a couple of days, which undermined the presumption of innocence.³⁰

20. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Bhutan ensure that women had effective access to justice in all parts of the country, including by establishing well-resourced and accessible specialized courts for women and children.³¹

21. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Bhutan explicitly define and criminalize as the sale of children, the offering, delivering or accepting, by whatever means, of a child for the purpose of the sexual exploitation of the child, the transfer of organs of the child for profit and the engagement of the child in forced labour.³² The Committee also recommended that child victims be provided with adequate and explicit protection in the criminal justice system to ensure that they were not considered or treated as offenders and always had access to adequate legal assistance.³³

22. The Committee recommended that Bhutan review the Penal Code to give discretion to judges, in cases where deprivation of liberty of a minor was unavoidable, to consider imposing less than half the sentence of an adult and ensure that deprivation of liberty was only used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest time possible; promote community service as an alternative measure to trial or detention, wherever possible; in cases where detention was unavoidable, ensure that detention conditions were compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health services; and ensure the provision of qualified and independent legal aid to children in conflict with the law at an early stage of the procedure and throughout the legal proceedings.³⁴ UNDP also recommended that Bhutan conduct a further review of existing laws relating to the trial of persons under 18 years of age accused of carrying or consuming banned substances.³⁵

3. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life³⁶

23. UNESCO noted that defamation and libel were criminal offences under articles 317 and 320 of the Penal Code. Under articles 319 and 321, those offences carried a punishment of fines and a maximum of three years of imprisonment. The National Security Act (1992) also forbade criticism of the king and the political system.³⁷ In that regard, UNESCO encouraged Bhutan to decriminalize defamation and place it in the civil code, in line with international standards.³⁸

24. The United Nations, in the Sustainable Development Partnership Framework for Bhutan, noted the need to enhance participation of civil society and community-based organizations and academia in reducing vulnerabilities. Furthermore, it highlighted the need to strengthen experience and capacities related to various levels of governance and forms of democratic engagement, including strengthening civic engagement of women and young people.³⁹

4. Prohibition of all forms of slavery⁴⁰

25. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the adoption of the Child Care and Protection Act in 2011, which contained provisions on combating trafficking in children. It was concerned, however, that Bhutan remained a source and destination country for trafficking in women and girls, mainly for forced labour and sexual exploitation. The Committee recommended that Bhutan intensify efforts aimed at bilateral, regional and international cooperation to prevent trafficking, including by exchanging information and harmonizing legal procedures to prosecute traffickers, in particular with neighbouring States and other South Asian countries. It also recommended that Bhutan collect data on the extent and forms of trafficking in women and girls, disaggregated by, inter alia, age and region. The Committee expressed concern about the lack of adequate shelters for women and girls who were victims of trafficking. In that regard, it recommended that Bhutan intensify efforts to address the root causes of trafficking in women and girls, and ensure the rehabilitation and social integration of victims, including by providing them with access to shelters and legal, medical and psychosocial assistance.⁴¹

26. The Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern about insufficient efforts to address child trafficking. It recommended that Bhutan review article 154 of the Penal Code (Amendment) of 2011 to harmonize it with article 224 of the Child Care and Protection Act of 2011, and in particular to specify the exploitative nature of the act and define it as organized crime, in accordance with international standards; carry out training and capacity-building of law enforcement officials, including police, border police, prosecutors and judges, to ensure effective investigation of cases of trafficking of children and the prosecution and sanctioning of the perpetrators, paying particular attention to cases involving children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking; develop and implement standard operating procedures for the adequate identification and referral of child victims of trafficking; strengthen its efforts through relevant government agencies and officials to collect data on trafficking in children, identify and address the root causes and government responses and report on the situation of child trafficking; and ensure that child victims of trafficking were provided with adequate assistance and protection, including the provision of temporary safe housing and gender-sensitive and psychological recovery.⁴²

5. Right to privacy and family life⁴³

27. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Bhutan amend its legislation to ensure that child custody decisions were made on the basis of the principle of the best interests of the child. It also recommended that Bhutan undertake a study aimed at understanding how the various practices with regard to inheritance law, both formal and informal, discriminated against women and girls.⁴⁴

C. Economic, social and cultural rights

1. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work⁴⁵

28. The Committee recommended that Bhutan intensify efforts to fully implement the existing laws and regulations on gender equality in employment and reduce unemployment among women by promoting the entry of women into the formal economy through, among other measures, the provision of vocational and technical training. It also recommended that Bhutan strengthen efforts aimed at eliminating structural inequalities and occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical, including by introducing a more progressive policy on child-rearing so that responsibilities were shared by men and women and by improving the provision of childcare facilities.⁴⁶

2. Right to social security⁴⁷

29. The Committee expressed concern at the lack of information on existing social protection programmes. It recommended that Bhutan provide information in its next periodic report on the existing social protection programmes targeting older women, women with disabilities and female-headed households and the impact that they had had in eradicating poverty. It also recommended that Bhutan adopt the draft national social protection policy.⁴⁸

30. UNDP, acknowledging that all elderly people were vulnerable to some extent, noted the need to design a dedicated geriatric programme to account for changing demographic trends, as the ageing population would be increasing in the coming years.⁴⁹

3. Right to an adequate standard of living⁵⁰

31. Drawing attention to target 6.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals on providing access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Bhutan strengthen its efforts to provide nationwide access to adequate sanitation facilities, in particular in rural and poor urban areas. It also urged Bhutan to take measures to ensure an adequate standard of living for children from economically disadvantaged families.⁵¹

4. Right to health⁵²

32. The Committee recommended that Bhutan adopt a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescent girls and boys, with special attention on preventing early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections; and develop a comprehensive national policy on child mental health ensuring that mental health promotion and child-friendly mental health services were available in primary health care, schools and communities.⁵³

33. The Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Bhutan legalize the termination of pregnancy, including in the case of risk to the health of the woman and of severe impairment of the fetus, and decriminalize it in all other cases, and ensure that medically safe modern methods of abortion were available and accessible.⁵⁴ Both Committees also recommended that Bhutan take measures to address the prevalence of suicide among women and children.⁵⁵

5. Right to education⁵⁶

34. UNESCO expressed concern that access to secondary and tertiary education remained limited. Although participation in secondary education had increased, the gross enrolment ratio was only 50 per cent in 2012. Adult literacy remained a big challenge, with an adult literacy rate of 57 per cent in 2014. Dropout and repetition rates in primary and secondary school also remained high.⁵⁷

35. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern about the high dropout rate between the primary and secondary levels of education and the high illiteracy rate among women and girls. The Committee also expressed concern about the low number of female teachers in schools.⁵⁸

36. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) also highlighted the low number of girls enrolled in science in higher secondary schools and university and the shortage of female teachers in mathematics and science.⁵⁹

D. Rights of specific persons or groups

1. Women⁶⁰

37. According to UNDP, the 2017 female human development index value for Bhutan was 0.576, as compared with 0.645 for males, resulting in a gender-adjusted human development index value of 0.893. Bhutan had a gender inequality index value of 0.476, ranking it 117 out of 160 countries in 2017. UNDP noted the weak political participation of women: only 8.3 per cent of parliamentary seats were held by women. Furthermore, 6 per cent of adult women had reached at least a secondary level of education as compared with 13.7 per cent of men, and female participation in the labour market was 58 per cent compared with 74.3 per cent for men.⁶¹

38. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed further efforts to collect disaggregated data and ensure that the draft national gender equality

policy avoided gender-neutral language and facilitated the collection and dissemination of such data.⁶²

39. According to UNDP, women working in urban *Drayang*s (entertainment centres) were vulnerable to exploitation, stigma and discrimination. UNDP drew attention to the gaps in the monitoring and implementation of provisions and guidelines on operating *Drayang*s, and took note of reports of sexual and physical violence against *Drayang* workers, including *Drayang*s employing adolescent girls.⁶³ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Bhutan collect data on women in prostitution and on exploitation of prostitution, especially in *Drayang*s, and ensure that the planned study of women in prostitution analysed the gender aspects of the recruitment and exploitation of women and girls.⁶⁴

40. The Committee commended Bhutan for formulating a national plan of action to promote gender equality in elected office, but remained concerned at the low level of representation of women. The Committee noted that women occupied only 8 per cent of seats in the National Assembly and 10 per cent in local governments, and that they continued to remain underrepresented in decision-making positions, in particular as ministers, judges and diplomats and at the higher levels of authority in the civil service. The Committee recommended that Bhutan introduce temporary special measures including a gender parity system for appointments and accelerated recruitment of women in senior positions in order to accelerate the full and equal participation of women in elected and appointed bodies.⁶⁵

2. Children⁶⁶

41. With regard to violence, neglect and abuse experienced by children, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Bhutan reinforce mechanisms for monitoring the number of cases and the extent of violence, including mental violence, abuse, neglect or maltreatment of children within the family, in schools and monasteries and workplaces; strengthen support for child victims of violence, abuse, neglect and maltreatment and ensure their access to adequate services for recovery, counselling and other forms of reintegration; formulate a comprehensive strategy for preventing and combating violence, including mental violence, abuse and neglect of children, focusing on community-based programmes; and carry out awareness-raising and education programmes, including campaigns, with the involvement of children.⁶⁷

42. The Committee also recommended that Bhutan integrate into its children's rights and protection programmes and initiatives actions specifically aimed at preventing offences under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, including through public policy measures to address the root causes triggering children's vulnerabilities to those offences, in particular in the child protection system, and in the work of the organization Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women, the Druk Adolescent Initiative on Sexual Awareness Network and the Youth Development Fund.⁶⁸

43. The Committee expressed concerns about the incidence of girls working in *Drayang*s and also children working in agriculture, workshops, meat shops, domestic work and in the informal sector. The Committee recommended that Bhutan review the Labour and Employment Act of 2007 and labour regulations to ensure that children were not involved in exploitative economic activities, that the labour department had the mandate to monitor informal sector activities and that light forms of work did not interfere with the child's right to education. It also recommended that Bhutan provide families facing social and economic difficulties with adequate support and welfare services to prevent their children from engaging in child labour and sexual exploitation activities.⁶⁹

44. The Committee further recommended that Bhutan revise the Marriage Act of 1980 to ensure that the minimum age of marriage for girls was the same as it was for boys, 18 years, in accordance with the Child Care and Protection Act of 2011.⁷⁰

3. Persons with disabilities⁷¹

45. The majority of respondents in a UNICEF study believed that children with disabilities in Bhutan were more likely to be the victims of bullying and were more vulnerable

to physical and sexual abuse. UNICEF also found that knowledge on disabilities among service providers and rights holders was inadequate, with the term “disability” generally defined in narrow terms to represent only those individuals who had severe physical or sensory impairments.⁷²

46. UNDP noted that the Government was in the process of formulating a policy for people with disabilities in response to the report of the second cycle of the universal periodic review that there was no Government-sponsored social welfare scheme that specifically focused on persons with disabilities.⁷³

47. UNESCO noted that Bhutan lacked a legislative and policy framework on disability, which inherently affected the provision of adequate educational services to people with special needs. Children at higher risk of disability, especially children with mental impairments, were more likely to be denied their right to education than others.⁷⁴

4. Minorities and indigenous peoples⁷⁵

48. UNESCO highlighted that the situation of children of Nepalese ethnic origin living in Bhutan remained problematic, with limited information provided to them on the enjoyment of their rights, and significant discrimination against them. The lack of adequate documentation often prevented such children from accessing education and enjoying their educational rights.⁷⁶

5. Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons⁷⁷

49. According to UNHCR, from 2007 to 2017 over 112,000 refugees from Bhutan had been resettled through a large-scale resettlement programme. It also noted that the remaining population of Bhutanese refugees awaiting resettlement was approximately 7,400 by the end of 2017.⁷⁸

50. The Committee on the Rights of the Child urged Bhutan to enhance its efforts in negotiations to find peaceful and prompt solutions for either the return or resettlement of children living in refugee camps in Nepal, with particular attention to reunification with their families; ensure the transparency of the procedure for the determination of the nationality of child refugees based on the right to a nationality and the right to leave and return to one’s country, with due consideration to the best interests of the child; and consider acceding to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.⁷⁹

51. The Committee recommended that Bhutan establish a mechanism for the comprehensive collection of data, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and ethnic origin, on children in vulnerable situations, such as asylum-seeking, refugee, migrant and unaccompanied children who entered Bhutan and might have been recruited or used in hostilities abroad.⁸⁰

6. Stateless persons

52. The Committee remained concerned about the situation of children of Nepalese ethnic origin and their citizenship. It urged Bhutan to review the Citizenship Act of 1985 to extend citizenship to children born to at least one Bhutanese parent; to identify and correct practices that might discriminate against children of ethnic Nepalese origin who lacked adequate documentation to access education and health services; to recognize the rights of children of ethnic Nepalese origin to enjoy their own culture, practise their religion and use their language; and to seek the technical assistance of UNICEF in the implementation of the foregoing recommendations.⁸¹

Notes

¹ Tables containing information on the scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies for Bhutan will be available at www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/BTIndex.aspx.

- ² For the relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.1–118.2, 118.13–118.14, 118.16, 118.58, 118.95–118.97, 118.101–118.102 and 120.1–120.29.
- ³ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 42.
- ⁴ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 50.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, paras. 46–47.
- ⁶ CRC/C/OPAC/BTN/CO/1, para. 13.
- ⁷ UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Bhutan, p. 3.
- ⁸ For the relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.5–118.12, 118.15, 118.38–118.39, 118.41, 118.61, 118.103 and 120.46.
- ⁹ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 9.
- ¹⁰ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 10.
- ¹¹ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 12.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, para. 13.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, para. 9.
- ¹⁴ For the relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 120.32, 120.34–120.35 and 120.40–120.42.
- ¹⁵ UNDP, *Bhutan Advocacy Framework: HIV, Human Rights and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* (Bangkok, 2013), p. 7.
- ¹⁶ OHCHR, “UN Free & Equal Campaign Progress Report 2016”, p. 14.
- ¹⁷ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 15 (a).
- ¹⁸ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 27.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 17.
- ²⁰ For the relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.59–118.60, 118.62–118.72, 118.93–118.94 and 118.99–118.100.
- ²¹ See *Sustainable Development and Happiness: Bhutan’s Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, report of Bhutan to the high-level political forum on sustainable development (July 2018).
- ²² United Nations, *Leaving No One Behind: United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework for Bhutan 2019–2023* (Thimphu, United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office, 2019), para. 67.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, para. 68.
- ²⁴ UNDP and the Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat of Bhutan, *Bhutan Vulnerability Baseline Assessment 2016*, p. 99.
- ²⁵ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 120.36.
- ²⁶ See National Commission of Women and Children and UNICEF, *Research on Violence against Children in Bhutan: A Report* (Thimphu, May 2016).
- ²⁷ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 22.
- ²⁸ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.37 and 120.39.
- ²⁹ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24107&LangID=E.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 11.
- ³² CRC/C/OPSC/BTN/CO/1, para. 27.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, para. 35.
- ³⁴ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 48.
- ³⁵ *Bhutan Vulnerability Baseline Assessment 2016*, p. 51.
- ³⁶ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.40, 120.44–120.45 and 120.47–120.48.
- ³⁷ UNESCO submission, p. 2.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ³⁹ *Leaving No One Behind*, paras. 57 and 61.
- ⁴⁰ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 118.35.
- ⁴¹ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, paras. 20–21.
- ⁴² CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 47.
- ⁴³ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 120.43.
- ⁴⁴ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 37.
- ⁴⁵ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.50–118.57.
- ⁴⁶ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 27.
- ⁴⁷ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 120.49.
- ⁴⁸ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, paras 30–31.
- ⁴⁹ *Bhutan Vulnerability Baseline Assessment 2016*, p. 34.
- ⁵⁰ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 118.74.
- ⁵¹ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 37.
- ⁵² For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.30, 118.73 and 118.75–118.78.
- ⁵³ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 35.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.* and CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 29.

- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.79–118.91 and 120.50.
- ⁵⁷ UNESCO submission, pp. 3–4.
- ⁵⁸ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 24.
- ⁵⁹ Sarojini Ganju Thakur and Bhumika Jhamb, *Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting in Bhutan: From Analysis to Action* (UN-Women, 2016), p. 18.
- ⁶⁰ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.17–118.23, 118.31–118.34, 118.42–118.49, 120.30, 120.33 and 120.37.
- ⁶¹ See “Briefing note for countries on the 2018 statistical update: Bhutan”.
- ⁶² CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 13.
- ⁶³ *Bhutan Vulnerability Baseline Assessment 2016*, pp. 36–38.
- ⁶⁴ CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, para. 21.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., paras. 22–23.
- ⁶⁶ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 118.3–118.4, 118.21, 118.24–118.29, 118.36, 120.31 and 120.38.
- ⁶⁷ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 24.
- ⁶⁸ CRC/C/OPSC/BTN/CO/1, para. 21.
- ⁶⁹ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-4, paras. 45–46.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., para 14; see also UNESCO submission, p. 5.
- ⁷¹ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 118.92.
- ⁷² See UNICEF and the Ministry of Education of Bhutan, *Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Study on Children with Disabilities* (Thimphu, October 2017).
- ⁷³ See *Bhutan Vulnerability Baseline Assessment 2016*.
- ⁷⁴ UNESCO submission, p. 4.
- ⁷⁵ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/27/8, para. 120.51.
- ⁷⁶ UNESCO submission, p. 4.
- ⁷⁷ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/27/8, paras. 120.52–120.60.
- ⁷⁸ *Global Report 2017*.
- ⁷⁹ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 42.
- ⁸⁰ CRC/C/OPAC/BTN/CO/1, para. 9.
- ⁸¹ CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5, para. 44.
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