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2021-22



Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship
Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
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Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship
Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
Royal Government of Bhutan

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Table Of Contents

Foreword	I
Acronyms And Abbreviations	III
Tales From Doe	1
<i>ENTREPRENEURSHIP DIARIES.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>JAPAN DIARIES</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>INTERN DIARIES.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>YOUNG JOBSEEKERS: UNEMPLOYED OR LIMITED?</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>A DAY IN DOE.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>SUPPORT TO WOMEN’S GROUP UNDER TARGETED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM</i>	<i>5</i>
Chapter One.....	6
Department Profile	6
Chapter Two	9
The Employment Service Division.....	9
<i>2.1 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM (YELP).....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>2.2 OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>2.3 EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CENTER.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>2.4. BUILD BHUTAN PROJECT.....</i>	<i>17</i>
Chapter Three	19
The Entrepreneurship Promotion Division.....	19
<i>3.1. ACTIVITY 1: START-UP ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>3.2 ACTIVITY 2 – START-UP PROMOTION EVENTS</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>3.3 ACTIVITY 3: STARTUP ACCELERATION PROGRAM.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>3.4 ACTIVITY 4: STARTUP INFRASTRUCTURE.....</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>3.5 12 FYP STATUS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT A GLANCE</i>	<i>33</i>
Chapter Four	36
The Information And Career Guidance Unit	36
<i>EMPLOYMENT RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM (ERS)</i>	<i>37</i>
Chapter Five.....	39
Regional Offices.....	39

5.1 GELEPHU..... 39
5.2 PHUENTSHOLING 40
..... 41
5.3 SAMDRUP JONGKHAR 42
5.4 TRASHIGANG 43
Information Corner 45

List of Tables

Table 1 Engagement for FY 2021-22	9
Table 2 Sector wise engagement.....	10
Table 3 Programs under the OEP.....	12
Table 4 Placement details as per country	12
Table 5 Placement details as per agent.....	13
Table 6 Placement details as per sector	14
Table 7 Placement details as per qualification	14
Table 8 Number of jobseekers placed and referred monthly.....	16
Table 9: Consolidated ERS data update as of June 2022.....	38
Table 10: YELP placement for the dzongkhags under Gelephu Region.....	39
Table 11 YELP Placement for FY 2021-22 by Phuentsholing Regional Office.....	41
Table 12 YELP placement for the Dzongkhags/Drungkhags under Samdrup Jongkhar Region.....	42
Table 13 Sector wise YELP placement under Trashigang Region.....	43

List of Figures

Figure 1 Beneficiaries of the Targeted Employment Program	5
Figure 2 Glimpse from BBP monitoring.....	18
Figure 3 Outputs of startup ecosystem.....	19
Figure 4 Certification ceremony graced by Director General, DoEE, MoLHR	21
Figure 5 Participants of online freelancing awareness program	23
Figure 6 Top three winners	24
Figure 7: Winner- Sweet Green (left), Runners up- Dr. Electric (right).....	25
Figure 8: Winner- Keptang Choskhan, Runners up- Gari lubrication.....	25
Figure 9 Glimpse from Druk Tsongrig Gatoen	28
Figure 10: 1st Prize Winners: Jeewan Baral with business idea Mugwort Solution (left), and Trashy Yangzom with business idea KDY Drinks.....	29
Figure 11: Second Prize Winners- Jangchub Dorji (left) and Tshewang Thinley (right) for their business idea Potato Fingerling and Bhutan Instant Survey.....	30
Figure 12: Third Prize Winners- GIN Earth (left) and Mobile gaming community (right).....	30
Figure 13 Launch of Salon Club at Shaba Higher Secondary Schools	33
Figure 14 Glimpse from the 5th GOWA.....	37
Figure 15 YELP candidates	39

Figure 16 YELP monitoring.....41

Figure 17 Glimpse of the first GOWA at Samdrup Jongkhar..... 43

Foreword



I am very pleased to release our Department's publication of the Annual Report 2021-22. The Department saw one of the biggest challenges posed to its services to the public brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges, the Department made significant strides in its delivery of public service through strategic responses.

The Department's services are broadly grouped under four categories: Employment Service Division (ESD); Employment Promotion Division (EPD); Information and Career Guidance Unit (ICGU); Regional Offices (ROs). Each of these categories chronicles the activities that were carried out to meet the objectives of Department.

The traditional unemployment figure was compounded by the job losses in various economic sectors as well as Bhutanese who returned from overseas forced by the pandemic. As a result, the youth unemployment is also on the rise. The disruption of labour market by the pandemic called for innovative strategies to adapt to the changing employment scenarios in the new normal conditions.

While the Department's core services have been in facilitating the matching of job and talent in the labour market, overseas employment and entrepreneurship promotion are equally important responses to generate gainful employment for all our Bhutanese people. These activities are backed by evidence-based data and information that are being constantly generated from the labour market. The Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP) is one of the major active labour market programs we offer today followed by Build Bhutan Project (BBP) which has been active till June, 2022. The Regional Offices serving as the functional arm of the Ministry has been actively carrying out the initiatives of the Department, taking it to far-flung places of the country. The newly established ICGU has played a critical role in taking up

initiatives related to career guidance and information. This year's publication has a special segment "*Tales from DoEE*", brining stories from our youth, and DoEE family

The success of our department's services is also because of the invaluable support we receive from our donors and stakeholders. Much of the activities of the Department demands working in close collaboration with these supporters because employment is an economic process rather than the doings of a single government Ministry. I look forward to an

optimistic future as we all work together to bring gainful employment to all the Bhutanese.



Kunzang Lhamu
Director General, DoEE

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AEC	Advanced Entrepreneurship Course
BBP	Build Bhutan Project
BEC	Basic Entrepreneurship Course
BIC	Business Incubation Centre
BNVC	Bhutan New Venture Challenge
BOWs	Bhutanese Overseas Workers
CEFE	Competency-based Economies, Formation of Enterprise
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DoEE	Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship
DTG	Druk Tshongrig Gatoen
EDO	Economic Development Officers
EPD	Entrepreneurship Promotion Division
ERS	Employment Responsibility System
ESC	Employment Service Center
ESD	Employment Service Division
FYP	Five Year Plan
GCIT	Gyelpozhing College of Information Technology
GEW	Global Entrepreneurship Week
ICGU	Information and Career Guidance Unit
IZC	Institute of Zorig Chusum
JNEC	Jigme Namgyal Engineering College
MIS	Management Information System
MoLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
NBC	New Business Creation

NEP	National Employment Policy
NKRA	National Key Result Areas
NLCS	National Land Commission Secretariat
NSOE	National Strategy on Overseas Employment
OEP	Overseas Employment Program
OPD	Organizations working for Persons with Disabilities
PPD	Policy and Planning Division
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RBOEAs	Registered Bhutanese Overseas Employment Agents
RRCO	Regional Revenue and Customs Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDP	Skills Development Program
SF	Specialized Firm
TTTP	Technical Intern Training Program
TOT	Training of Trainers
TPD	TVET Promotion Division
TTI	Technical Training Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
YELP	Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program

Tales from DoEE

The Work from Home Blessing!

I was almost on the verge of quitting my decade old job as a civil servant. The joy of having my third bundle of joy soon came to an end when my 6 months of maternity leave exhausted and work from home was not given as an option for me. With no one to look after my infant and work demanding my presence, I was literally left with no option other than to quit the government job. I tried adjusting keeping my baby at my sister in-law's place, but it only disturbed me more when I got called back even before I hit my office. My infant would be crying intolerably in a new place and nothing else other than my presence would soothe her. I would have to run back to a shriveled dried-up voice but still crying baby of mine. Nothing really mattered and I decided to quit. I was experiencing a whole new level of stress than ever before. A crying baby seeking my attention on one hand and my demanding job on the other.

That's when Aum Kunzang Lhamu, the Director General of the Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship (DoEE) stepped into my rescue. She immediately empathized my plight and straightaway granted me the flexibility to work from home. This I believe came at the cost of having to justify to the institution for breaking away from the traditional 9-5 work culture and the mandatory physical attendance which is sought in our system.

Working from home, of course, did not come as seamlessly as I thought it would, with a whining baby by the side, but it certainly eased me from so many other matters. It gave me the flexibility to work any time in the comfort presence of my baby. My schedule shifted from the regular 9AM-5PM roster to work in between my baby's nap and after 9 PM when she was put to sleep. It wasn't easy but it was manageable. I had no worries of having to leave my baby behind and I was freed from the burden of having to look for a babysitter.

My baby is now 2 and a half years old, and she is matured enough to understand that mommy must leave for work. I have resumed my regular work and submitted all my work reports carried out during the WFH period. I am proud to admit that I have productive results to show which would not have happened if I was not granted the flexibility. Words alone are not enough to thank my DG for the support she has shown towards a mother like me who otherwise would have lost her career. This article is just a token of my gratitude for the enormous role she took to help me attend to my baby and my career.

And for those leaders wondering what do a working mother need? A **supportive manager** is a good start! Labelling mothers on maternity leave under the “need improvement” category is a huge discouragement!

“Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence.” – Sheryl Sandberg (COO, Facebook)



Contributed by;

Tshering Choki

Sr. Program Officer

Entrepreneurship Diaries

Galley LED Lighting

I have always wanted to explore my potential as an entrepreneur and my aspirations were realized when I initially got the opportunity to participate in Basic Entrepreneurship Course conducted by Entrepreneurship Promotion Division under Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship of Ministry of Labour & Human Resources. After attending the course my motivation to pursue my entrepreneurial aspirations increased and having learned how to spot opportunities and plan for an enterprise my confidence only grew.

I found myself participating in Bhutan New Venture Challenge 2022 and bagging the first position with Nu. 250,000 as cash prize. Today, I am ready to launch my business “Galley LED Lighting” and have my products in the market and hopefully lighting homes soon.

I owe Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship a lot from allowing me to explore my potential to establish my own venture in the form of “Galley LED Lights”. I am looking forward to my career as an entrepreneur.

The programs of the Ministry have been beneficial to me and I am sure it will help youths like me who are willing to learn and are interested to explore one’s own potential. I have been recommending the Ministry’s programs to my friends and for all the support and guidance and for where I have reached today, I will always hold the Department in the highest of regards.



Durgay Ghalley

Founder of Galley LED Lights

Bhutan Instant Surveying

After completing his Diploma in Survey Engineering from **Jigme Namgyel Engineering College**, Tshewang worked at the National Land Commission Secretariat (NLCS) as a contract employee and at another private company for a few years.

While he gained valuable experience working for different organizations, Tshewang saw an opportunity to not only become self-employed but also create employment for the other young people. He realized that land survey is a much sought-after service, yet NLCS was the only agency providing the service.

So, when the NLCS privatized and certified few service providers, Tshewang grabbed the opportunity to set up his firm. His goal is to employ others like him because he realized that there aren't many job opportunities for people with a diploma in survey engineering.

He attended various available entrepreneurs training provided by entrepreneur-support organizations to gain knowledge and skills. He bagged the best entrepreneur award at the Basic Entrepreneurship Course (BEC) by **Ministry of Labour and Human Resources** in 2020, won another award at the Bhutan New Venture Challenge by MoLHR, first prize at **Loden Foundation's** Loden SEED training in 2020 and received interest and collateral free loan from Loden in 2021.



Based in Thimphu, his firm 'Bhutan Instant Surveying (BIS),' provides cadastral survey, land/flat transaction, engineering survey services like building foundation layout, building column layout, road profiling, levelling and topographic survey services.

***Bhutan Instant Surveying -BIS
Promoter-Tshewang Thinley***

Japan Diaries

Hello, I am Chabi Lal Ghalley from Samtse Dzongkhag. Currently, I am working under the Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) which was organized by MoLHR. I joined the TITP from 1st September, 2018. Initially, the program contract was for three years but I decided to extend it by another two years.

When I first heard about the program, I was working at the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital. Researching about Japan and TITP piqued my interest to work as a caregiver in Japan and I immediately applied to grasp the opportunity. TITP is the platform where we can earn money as well as gain new experience.

To talk about the facilities provided by my company, they had prepared housing, transportation, and a week worth of food, clothing and other necessities. We had an onboarding session where we were familiarized with the working environment and they ensured smooth transition from our culture to theirs without much problem. Everyone including the top most designated person to the lowest ranked staff were very humble, approachable and kind-hearted. On the other hand, my family constantly supported me. Currently, I am working as care provider in the Myojin Yen.

I take care of old aged patients and assist them with their day-to-day chores. Aside from the language barrier which gave me a tough time at the beginning of my stay in Japan, I did not face any difficulties. I have come to appreciate their culture and way of work. More than anything else, I have been able to support my family financially.

My future plan is to return to Bhutan and practice what I have learned from here.

Intern Diaries

Message from Kuenzang, Tandin and Poonam (Availed intern support under YELP program)

Elizabeth Berg says, “There is an incredible value in being of service to others” and today there is an overwhelming need for nurses and health workers in the health care setting such as in the national and referral hospitals. It was a proud moment for us, because we were able to give up our time for a few hours of sleep and help those patients who really need a nurse-to-patient relationship in getting them better and healthier. It was not only a contribution to the community but also helped the three of us grow professionally as well as personally.

Positive benefit from my internship journey:

- Gained confidence
- Documentation and recording skills
- Communication skills
- Assisting doctors
- Adjust with different types of people
- Rapport building
- Developed patience

Depending on the different ward where we have been posted we experienced various situations and learned to cope with it. We had a great time working with the staff and patients. We are always grateful to all the nurses, patients, doctors, and MoLHR staffs for their continued support during our internship.



Young jobseekers: Unemployed or limited?

Jobseekers today face two major challenges. One is that, technical skills and competencies are not treated as important and sought-after as '*work experience*' in the Bhutanese labour market. Jobseekers lose the race before it starts. They are limited by the requirement of needing working experience of 2, 5, 10, or 15 years, when they are barely out of school or graduated.

The second one is '*work attitude*'. While new jobseekers have lower access to the opportunities, they are further hindered by negative perceptions towards manual and labour-intensive or blue-collar jobs. The majority of the new entrants and jobseekers remain unemployed, hopeful for a job that meets their aspirations and expectations.



*An excerpt from the working research paper, 'Youth Unemployment in Bhutan: A Meta-Analysis of the Bhutanese Workforce'. Author: **Phurba Sonam Waiba, Employment Officer, Overseas Unit, DoEE.***

A Day in DoEE

The sun rays fall early on DoEE
Lifting up the spirit of the staff members
Madam Dil being the earliest bird
An effort to avoid traffic trouble
A few minutes later appears Madam Yangki
Grumpy because she didn't get enough sleep
While Madam Tshering Choki contemplates each day in DoEE
Madam Yangchen be busy attending calls
And getting all worked up
Comes to the rescue, Madam Pema
Calm and Composed
The day only gets busier
With continuous ringing of the phone
YELP interns, employees, employers
Little do we get time
To cover up for the missed breakfast and
coffee
Despite all of these
A smile of satisfaction is something you are
rewarded with
When you hear the cheerful youth say
“Madam, we have been regularized!!!”
This phrase works like a magic spell
And is a cup of motivation
To work harder than ever
For an effective and gainful employment.



By: Chimi Denka, Intern with DoEE (Nov-Dec,2022)
RIM-PGDPA, 2022

Support to Women's Group Under Targeted Employment Program

The Ministry of Labor and Human Resources under its post skilling support interventions supported unemployed youth, women, elderly, single parents and persons with disability and also encouraged them to opt for self-employment. These groups were supported through provision of equipment to help them establish and make use of their skills acquired through various training and skills development programs. One of the major hurdles for these group are lack of financial support to set up business and also high cost associated with business establishment.

The Ministry in collaboration with UNDP has been working to promote entrepreneurship through provision of equipment which has culminated into successful business ventures and also has encouraged and motivated these group to take their skills and ideas forward. During FY 2021-22, MoLHR supported 15 covid impacted female workers (Dheydhen Zhitshog Thuendrel Tshogpa tailoring Group) by providing tailoring equipment after availing skills training in tailoring under the Ministry's Skills Development Plan (SDP)



Figure 1 Beneficiaries of the Targeted Employment Program

Chapter One

Department Profile

The Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship is focused on promoting and facilitating gainful employment through the provision of effective employment and entrepreneurship. This is realized through formulating policies concerning employment promotion and employment creation working closely with the Ministry's Policy and Planning Division (PPD). The policy-making is based on the evidence and insights collected through rigorous consultation with the various stakeholders. The policies are implemented with best practice models and methods that suit our local needs and objectives.

The Department plays a critical role in the employment creation process and facilitating gainful engagement of youth in the labour market. The Department is guided by the National Employment Policy (NEP). The NEP 2013 outlines strategies that will accelerate employment growth, improve the quality of working conditions and provide equal employment opportunities, while addressing the requirement of producing an adequately skilled workforce aligned to the requirements of the job market¹.

Based on the policy mandates, the Department is focused on delivering effective services towards facilitating the demand and supply of human resources in the labour market. This entails providing high quality job and talent matching services based on data and information obtained through our labour market information system. The Department aims to assist fresh jobseekers increase their employability and gain experience through engagement programs. The Department is also leveraging on promoting entrepreneurship as an alternative measure to creating employment.

The Department offers a myriad of other services apart from facilitating job-talent matching service. It supports private employment agencies as complementary service providers for recruitment employment facilitation services. Career guidance and employment counselling are also rendered to the job seekers.

The Department is comprised of two divisions, a newly established Information and Career Guidance Unit (ICGU), and the Regional Offices which work closely to realize the overall objectives of the Department.

¹ The National Employment Policy, Ministry Labour and Human Resources

The **Employment Services Division (ESD)** focuses on matching job and talent in the national labour market as well as placing job seekers overseas. To meet this objective the Division has adopted strategies that employ both in person and online service delivery systems. The in-person services are rendered through its Employment Service Centers (ESC) located strategically around the country, with an emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. The ESC services are extensively marketed to both employers and job seekers around the country to create effective platforms for these actors to find what they are looking for in the labour market. The online services are delivered through the MoLHR-Management Information System (MoLHR-MIS). The Division's service delivery is guided by values such as equality, equity, diversity and inclusiveness and its special purpose programs cater towards bringing employment to differently-abled persons, developing work experience, and targeted measures to address youth unemployment. Guiding school drop-outs towards finding a decent career entail providing service with empathy. The Division works closely with schools and teachers to guide students towards a career-oriented future. The Division also strives to link people with jobs and training opportunities through its online and self-help information services.

The **Entrepreneurship Promotion Division (EPD)** focuses on self-employment and business start-up through entrepreneurship support and development activities. Entrepreneurship is the catalyst for economic development in any country. Entrepreneurship is viewed as one of the key solutions in tackling unemployment issues through self-employment and import substitution through formation of ventures concerned with production of goods and services. The division collaborates with other similar agencies and different financial institutions to facilitate self-employment and entrepreneurship. The Entrepreneurship Promotion Division focuses on promoting the culture of entrepreneurship through capacity building, entrepreneurship education, various events and infrastructure support such as Fablabs and incubation centers to enhance the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

The **Information and Career Guidance Unit (ICGU)** which is a newly established unit under the DoEE focusing on career guidance, job-search assistance, and job placement. The Organizational Development Report 2019 indicated a lack of career counseling services in the Ministry. The report recommended the creation of a pool of occupational psychologists and career counseling professionals. International research has also shown that proper career guidance improves labour market outcomes of job seekers reducing mismatch in supply and demand of labour, ensures lifelong learning; and helps

achieve social equity and social inclusion. With the establishment of ICGU, rigorous advocacies related to career and labour market have been carried out. The ICGU spearheads the GOWA, an information dissemination program including on-the-spot recruitment.

The **Regional Offices** serve as the functional arm of the Ministry. The Regional Offices discharge its roles and responsibilities to ensure that all the activities, initiatives and programs of the Ministry reaches a wider audience across Bhutan. The Regional Offices are located at Gelephu, Phuentsholing, Samdrup Jongkhar, and Trashigang. The Regional offices have played a critical role in connecting labour market information, and other critical initiatives of the Ministry to the nooks and corners of the country.

Chapter Two

The Employment Service Division

2.1 Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP)

Background

In keeping with the mandate of providing gainful employment, the Ministry developed many strategies and programs to engage youth meaningfully. In the course of implementing the programs, emphasis has been on engaging youth to encourage them to be productive instead of doling out unemployment benefits that tend to promote idleness and discourage working. The Government also recognized the need to prioritize sectors of engagement such as agriculture and construction for better use of limited resources and impacts. Therefore, the Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP) was launched.

YELP

The Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP) is one of the key support programs of the Department to enhance the employability of jobseekers in transition from different schools and institutions. YELP has been designed to benefit both employers and jobseekers. Monthly allowance of Nu. 5000 is provided to jobseekers engaged with different employers. The support duration ranges from 3 to 12 months. YELP provides wage subsidy support for the engagement of jobseekers in the non-civil service sectors and an avenue for jobseekers to gain on-the-job skills and work experience required to enhance their employability while also supporting their livelihood. The Program was reviewed in July 2020 and a second revision was made on July 2021 to accommodate COVID-19 affected individuals and laid off employees from affected sectors. In order to support those affected by the pandemic, the age bracket and qualification ceilings were waived off.

Table 1 Engagement for FY 2021-22

Engagement for FY 2021-22			
Qualification	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Below Class X	49	48	97
Below Class XII	3	8	11

Certificate/TTI/IZC	25	21	46
Class X	56	134	190
Class XII	124	266	390
Diploma	13	14	27
Illiterate	7	7	14
Masters	1	2	3
SPA traineed		1	1
Technical Graduate	3	2	5
University Graduate	126	180	306
Total	407	683	1090

Table 2 Sector wise engagement

Sector	Female	Male	Total
Accommodation and food service activities	83	27	110
Activities of extraterritorial organization and bodies	1	0	1
Administrative and support service activities	26	10	36
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	32	31	63
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3	9	12
Construction	4	7	11
Cottage & Small Industries	17	18	35
Education	62	19	81
Financial and insurance activities	2	5	7
Human health and social work activities	25	20	45
Information and communication	94	83	177
Manufacturing	73	58	131
Mining & Quarrying	1	2	3
Other service activities	73	27	100
Professional, scientific and technical activities	3	3	6
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	32	10	42
Transportation and storage	1	1	2

water Supply,sewerage,waste Management & Remediation Activities	1	4	5
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	150	73	223
Total	683	407	1090

2.2 Overseas Employment Program

As per the Cabinet directives (C-3/3/30 dated 21st August, 2013), the Ministry was instructed to explore overseas employment. The Overseas Employment Program (OEP) was initiated along with other employment facilitation programs in 2013 and approved by the Cabinet (letter C-3/7/80 dated 26th September 2013).

The overseas placement was kept on hold since 5th March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it resumed from November 2021.

OEP was identified as a program that would be able to meaningfully engage youth in terms of developing their skills while providing them opportunity to earn and explore.

Modality of the Program

The placement of job seekers overseas for employment is carried out either directly through the MoLHR or through the registered Bhutanese overseas employment agencies (RBOEAs). The MoLHR has collaboration with some government agencies (public–public partnership) for implementation of certain programs while it also facilitates placements directly with the potential overseas companies (public-private partnership). Similarly, the RBOEAs collaborate either directly with the potential overseas companies or with recruitment agents of the destination country (private-private partnership).

Table 3 Programs under the OEP

MoLHR in collaboration with Overseas Government Agencies/ Companies	Through Registered Overseas Employment Agents (RBOEAs)
Employment Program in Middle East Countries	Employment Program in Middle East Countries
Technical Intern Training Program in Japan	Learn and Earn Program in Japan, Australia and Malaysia (Concluded)
Employment Program (teachers) in Thailand	Technical Intern in Japan (before initiation of Technical Intern Training Program through the Ministry)
Employment Program in Singapore	
Guaranteed Overseas Employment through Training (GOET) Program in India (Concluded)	
TIJ Learn and Earn Program (Concluded)	

Placement Status

A total of 9,876 Bhutanese has been deployed abroad as overseas workers since the launch of the program in 2013 (placement started from 2014), engaging in various sectors such as retail, education, tourism and hospitality, agriculture, wellness, IT, finance and accounts, geo-fitness, and skills development. Bhutanese youth are deployed across twelve different countries through different RBOEAs.

Table 4 Placement details as per country

Country	FY 2021-2022			Consolidated since inception till June 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Kuwait	341	647	988	1727	2403	4130
India	19	33	52	484	1784	2268
UAE	24	45	69	382	757	1139
Qatar	80	159	239	386	458	844
Japan	1	1	2	405	403	808

Thailand	4	10	14	103	142	245
Bahrain	1	2	3	96	103	199
Malaysia	3	0	3	55	31	86
Israel	0	2	2	26	6	32
Australia	2	2	4	9	13	22
Oman	0	6	6	6	11	17
Singapore	3	2	5	5	3	8

Table 5 Placement details as per agent

Name of Agent	FY 2021-2022			Consolidated since inception will June 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
MoLHR	136	281	417	1513	3458	4971
EmployBhutan Overseas Employment Agent	19	21	40	266	324	590
RUMI Overseas Employment Agent	127	227	354	676	818	1494
Bhutan Jinzai Overseas	0	0	0	38	17	55
Wangchuk Overseas Employment Agent	140	237	377	386	506	892
Global Recruitment	0	1	1	43	25	68
Tusk Overseas Employment Agent	0	0	0	0	5	5
Tenzu Overseas Employment Agent	0	0	0	10	3	13
Lama Overseas Employment Agent	0	3	3	8	3	11
Bhutan Employment Overseas	1	0	1	357	375	732
Ied Jobs	0	4	4	43	94	137
Yarphel Overseas Employment Agent	2	5	7	181	185	366
Total	500	965	1465	3706	6170	9876

** The blue shaded agents are no more valid

Table 6 Placement details as per sector

Sector	FY 2021-2022			Consolidated since inception till June 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Tourism and Hospitality	301	654	955	1757	3696	5453
Retail and Sales	171	277	448	1139	1781	2920
Construction	0	0	0	21	0	21
Education/Skills Development	2	10	12	535	589	1124
Agriculture	0	0	0	26	4	30
IT	0	0	0	109	48	157
Contact Center (Call Center)	0	0	0	1	1	2
Geo-Fitness	0	0	0	58	14	72
Finance and Accounts	1	1	2	18	5	23
General	25	23	48	42	32	74
Total	500	965	1465	3706	6170	9876

Table 7 Placement details as per qualification

Qualification	FY 2021-2022			Consolidated since inception will June 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
PhD	2	0	2	2	0	2
Masters	7	4	11	7	4	11
University Degree	82	131	213	1164	1714	2878
Diploma	7	13	20	7	13	20
Class XII	263	567	830	1976	2938	4914
Class X	96	221	317	455	1347	1802
Below Class X	3	1	4	3	1	4
NA	40	28	68	92	153	245
Total	500	965	1465	3706	6170	9876

Status Update

There are only four valid RBOEAs at present: EmployBhutan Overseas Employment Agent, RUMI Overseas Employment Agent, Jinzai Overseas and Wangchuk Overseas Employment Agent.

The Department in collaboration with Labour Market Information and Research Division (LMIRD) conducted overseas employment survey from 9th March to 15th April, 2022. A total of 3686 job seekers who applied for overseas vacancies and the overseas returnees who were currently in Bhutan were considered for the study. A structured questionnaire was designed to gather information from the participants. The participants were interviewed through phone calls and sharing of the survey link, while those Bhutanese Overseas Workers (BOWs) currently working overseas were provided survey links. A total of about 2942 job seekers, 2561 currently in Bhutan and 381 currently overseas participated in the survey.

In April 2022, the Department started working on the situational analysis on overseas employment and the development of a draft National Strategy for Overseas Employment (NSOE). The Strategy aims to bring out the best practices in delivering efficient services that would ensure decent, safe, and satisfying overseas employment while at the same time strengthening and institutionalizing a robust coordination mechanism among all the relevant stakeholders and providing a meaningful reintegration of Bhutanese returnees from overseas job markets.

2.3 Employment Service Center

The Employment Service Center is an important communication link which acts as the bridge between the job seeker and employer and is fully responsible in facilitating the job placement and referrals of registered job seekers for the jobs available in the market. The facilitation services include referring the interested job seekers and assisting them to apply for any vacancies in Private Sector/YELP/Build Bhutan Project/Entrepreneurship training/skills training programs if found to be relevant. The Centre also provides information on employment opportunities in various sectors.

In the fiscal year (July 2021 to June 2022) a total of 12,682 youth registered in the job portal, from which 1,621 were placed while 2,120 were referred in different agencies/companies and government sectors.

Table 8 Number of jobseekers placed and referred monthly

Month	No of Job Seekers Placed			No of Job Seekers Referral		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
July, 2021	52	12	64	0	0	0
August, 2021	131	100	231	31	28	59
September, 2021	32	25	57	6	3	9
October, 2021	113	133	246	0	4	4
November, 2021	118	87	205	12	48	60
December, 2021	65	72	137	88	153	241
January, 2022	23	30	53	468	559	1027
February, 2022	9	7	16	254	222	476
March, 2022	12	6	18	10	15	25
April, 2022	87	97	184	68	71	139
May, 2022	21	13	34	14	14	28
June, 2022	170	206	376	29	23	52
Total	833	788	1621	980	1140	2120

Some of the services provided by the Centre are as follows:

A. The services provided for employers

- Online registration on Job portal system
- Facilitate recruitment process
- Filter job application
- Provide interview venue for free

The services provided for job seekers

B. Job Seeker Registration

- Guidance on applying for different programs of the MoLHR
- Online registration on job portal system
- Provision of Desktops and Laptops and support on their use where necessary
- Scanning, photocopy/Printing services
- Help create CVs/resumes

- Provide updated labour market information
- Conducive space for youth/jobseekers to use
- Orientation, sensitization and training on employment related issues

2.4. Build Bhutan Project

Background

The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted on various sectors of the economy in the country. The construction sector was severely affected by the pandemic and a huge employment gap was created. Therefore, as an immediate intervention to this concern, the Build Bhutan Project was initiated and implemented by the MoLHR over a period of two years to address unemployment by filling the gap in the construction sector. The Build Bhutan Project was launched on 1st July 2020 and was implemented till June 2022.

However, the project also intended to address the longer-term goals of the construction industry which are to:

1. Mobilize, create and manage a pool of skilled workforce,
2. Promote the sector as an attractive avenue for employment, and
3. Design/develop attractive incentives to attract and retain workforce in the sector.

The project had three components: Providing skilling, reskilling and upskilling opportunities leading to national certification in construction trades (Department of Technical Education); engagement support to individuals in the construction sector (DoEE); and the formation of Specialized Firms in construction occupations and provided support such as tools and equipment, wage top-up, outsourcing work and also facilitated creation of a conducive policy environment (DoEE).

Status as of date

There are 54 established Specialized Firms (SF) under the Build Bhutan Project. Over the past one year, the specialized firms, Hydropower sector and private construction firms have engaged 356 individuals. Although, the Project ended on 30th June, 2022, support for the candidates will continue till they complete the one-year contract.



Figure 2 Glimpse from BBP monitoring

Chapter Three

The Entrepreneurship Promotion Division

Entrepreneurship Promotion Division (EPD) works toward promoting the culture of entrepreneurship in Bhutan. To achieve this the Division focuses on changing the mindsets and attitudes leading to self-employment through entrepreneurship development training, organizing events and supporting new infrastructure in collaboration with the relevant agencies.

In the 12th Plan, the government identified Start up and CSI as one of the Flagship programs and brought all the key players under one umbrella to expedite and propel CSI in the country. The government believes that focusing on promoting innovative and vibrant Startups could contribute to three National Key Results Areas (NKRAs) of 12th FYP such as:

- a) NKRA 2: Economic diversity and productivity enhanced
- b) NKRA 3: Poverty Eradicated & In-equality reduced
- c) NKRA 11: Productive & Gainful Employment created

Four major outputs have been identified towards achieving the outcome of creating a vibrant Startup ecosystem to nurture creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship for gainful self-employment and economic development. The four outputs are:



Figure 3 Outputs of startup ecosystem

3.1. Activity 1: Start-up Entrepreneurship Program

3.1.1 Entrepreneurship Courses

Entrepreneurship courses are provided to potential and aspiring entrepreneurs to stimulate innovative thinking and facilitate them to pursue entrepreneurial aspirations through appropriate interventions. The course uses CEFE methodology which CEFE stands for *Competency-based Economies, Formation of Enterprise*. The intensive course includes business games, role-plays, simulations, field visit, business plan preparation and presentation among others as part of the action learning methodology. The top 4 participants from each course are provided a cash prize of Nu. 50, 000 and receive facilitation and support services while pursuing their entrepreneurial aspirations. Entrepreneurship courses include Basic Entrepreneurship Course (BEC) a 15-day course for aspiring entrepreneurs with educational qualification equivalent or lower than 12th standard and Advanced Entrepreneurship Course (AEC) a 21-day course for aspiring entrepreneurs with educational qualification equivalent to higher than a bachelor's degree.

In the Fiscal Year 2021-2022, entrepreneurship course was provided for in 8 dzongkhags (Thimphu, Mongar, Trashigang, Zhemgang, Chukha, Dagana, Trashigang, Bumthang, Gasa) in which a total of 713 aspiring entrepreneurs (326 males and 387 females) participated. The entrepreneurship courses produced 62 start-ups.

3.1.2 Refresher orientation training on Entrepreneurship Development Program

The Entrepreneurship and Promotion Division (EPD) and TVET Promotion Division (TPD) have made a joint visit to the TTIs and IZCs in the last fiscal year (2020-2021) to conduct a pre-feasibility study to set up Business Incubation Centers in the Institutes under the Start-up/CSI Flagship Program. During the visit they also had the opportunity to meet the EDP focal trainers and discussed the implementation status of entrepreneurship courses in the Institutes. Most of the focal trainers in the institutes expressed the need to build the capacity of the trainers and also for Training materials support for effective delivery of the courses. Another key recommendation of the visits was to provide a brief orientation workshop and refresher course for the principals and EDP focal person. Although the division has already conducted TOT for the EDP Focal Trainers, Principals weren't orientated on the implementation modality of the course which is important and necessary for the successful implementation of the program in the institutes.

Therefore, the Division organized a brief orientation and a short EDP refresher course for the principals and EDP focal trainers from 9-13th August 2021 at Bumthang. The Orientation program will make them aware about entrepreneurship development process and further enhance their competencies.

The target group of orientation and EDP refresher course are the principals and EDP focal persons from TTIs, IZCs and related stakeholders.



Figure 4 Certification ceremony graced by Director General, DoEE, MoLHR

3.1.3 Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund for schools

The education system rarely exposes the students to entrepreneurship; and instead prepares them for a job. To combat the conventional thinking of simply seeking employment, in the 12th FYP under the Startup/CSI Flagship Program 2018-2023, the Ministry targets schools to promote entrepreneurship at the grassroots level.

In this effort, entrepreneurship promotion funds to promote entrepreneurial activities in the schools were provided for setting up entrepreneurship clubs. The entrepreneurship clubs have the following objectives:

- a. Promote entrepreneurship activities in the school
- b. To foster and nurture robust entrepreneurship culture in the schools
- c. To build a vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem within schools

Nu. 100,000 per school was disbursed among 56 Schools (53 Schools offering Business and Entrepreneurship subjects, 3 Middle Secondary Schools) to establish entrepreneurship clubs.

3.1.4 TOT on New Business Creation (NBC)

The Training of Trainers (TOT) Program on entrepreneurship development is one of the key activities to promote the culture of entrepreneurship in Bhutan through the capacity building of important stakeholders. In this financial year, Economic Development Officers (EDOs) who spearhead economic development activities and facilitate business opportunities in the Dzongkhag and representatives from Organizations Working for Persons with Disabilities (OPDS) were trained. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2019, Section 9: Economic Security, mandates the Ministry to create an enabling environment for PWDs to be skilled and employed. A total of 40 (Male-20, Female-20) individuals were trained under the ToT Program.

3.1.5 Entrepreneurship Education Integration and Entrepreneurship Education Capacity Development

One of the key initiatives undertaken by the Department was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Royal Education Council and Department of School Education on February 9, 2021, regarding the integration of entrepreneurship education in the school curriculum. Along with the financial assistance, 77 teachers across 75 schools (56 government schools and 19 private schools) were trained from 24th February to 12th April 2021 on the newly developed Business and Entrepreneurship curriculum for classes XI and XII.

3.1.6. Micro Work and Online Freelancing Program

As an effort to promote digital entrepreneurship and digital skills, a 3-day “Online Freelancing & Micro work awareness Program” was organized in April 2022 for final year IT students from the College of Science and Technology (CST), Jigme Namgyal Engineering College (JNEC), and Gyelpozhing College of Information Technology (GCIT). A total of 104 students (61 Male, 43 Female) participated in the 3 days awareness workshop (34 from the CST, 35 each from JNEC & GCIT).

The purpose of the workshop was to raise awareness of the concept and scope of freelancing and leverage myriad opportunities available in the digital and gig economy thereby realizing the nation’s digital goals to harness the power of ICT to transform into a smart and inclusive society.

The 30 participants (10 selected from each College) will additionally undergo the 2nd Phase of 10 days of “online training and mentoring” sessions with the experts to further enhance and sharpen their skills so that they can easily compete with the rest of the freelancers around the world in the freelance market place and

pursue online freelancing as a preferred career at a later stage when they graduate from college.



Figure 5 Participants of online freelancing awareness program

The second phase of the program was conducted from 10-20th June 2022. The outcome of the 2nd Phase of 10-day Online Mentoring and Training Session was as follows:

- a. 11 students from 2 colleges completed the training and mentoring session.
- b. Learned how to update Fivver account
- c. How to create an Upwork account.
- d. Learned WordPress for web development

3.2 Activity 2 – Start-Up Promotion Events

3.2.1 Bhutan Hackathon Challenge 2022

A hackathon (also known as a hack day, hackfest or codefest) is a design sprint-like event in which are involved in software development, graphic designers, interface designers, project managers and others often including subject matter experts, collaborate intensively on software projects. The goal of a hackathon is to create usable software or hardware to create a functioning product by the end of the event. The Bhutan Hackathon Challenge 2022 was conducted in June 2022 under the theme 'Encouraging the adoption of local digital tools for the 21st Century' with the objective of:

- Encouraging self-employment for IT unemployed youths
- Encouraging the use of technology
- Enhancing creativity and innovation in the field of IT

There were 18 teams with an average of 4 team members per team who participated under 4 broad themes: Education, Tourism, Health and Construction. The themes were broadly defined and teams identified current gaps and solutions. The top 3 winners were awarded a cash prize of Nu. 200,000 each and Nu.150,000 each for 3 Runners up.

1. Fuzzy Automation



2. Team Sowa



3. Team Hacket



Figure 6 Top three winners

3.2.2 Startup Boot Camp, Rangjung

Start-up Boot Camp is a week-long innovative idea generation, hands-on experience event where entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs work to form a company in 54 hours. Beginning with idea pitches on Sunday, attendees bring their best ideas and inspire others to join their team. The Startup Bootcamp was conducted for final year trainees of Technical Training Institute (TTI) Rangjung, Trashigang to promote entrepreneurship culture and enhance entrepreneurial competencies to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment as alternate career options banking on the vocational skills gained.

The event was conducted in 2 phases:

Phase I: Boot Camp (first 2 days of the week): During this time, the participants from the institutes were oriented on entrepreneurship concepts, an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in Bhutan, business plan development, and idea generation amongst other topics.

Phase II: Start-up Main Event: The main 3 days event was organized following the Start-up weekend modality.

The event saw 14 business ideas being pitched under two categories. The pitch was conducted in front of a panel of judges comprising relevant representatives from Renew Micro-Finance Ltd, Bhutan National Bank Ltd, Trashigang Dzongkhag Administration, and Sherubtse College.

The winners and runners-up were awarded cash prizes to encourage and facilitate start-ups. The cash prize is intended for the winning team to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations by turning their ideas into actual business enterprises. The formation of TVET enterprises will contribute to the development of TVET and the national economy.

Category A: Electrical and Computer Networking & Hardware Category:



Figure 7: Winner- Sweet Green (left), Runners up- Dr. Electric (right)

Category B: Automobile and Furniture Making category



Figure 8: Winner- Keptang Choskhan, Runners up- Gari lubrication

The award ceremony was graced by Dasho Dzongrab of the Trashigang Dzongkhag Administration who in his address encouraged the participants to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations and help contribute to the national economy. The Start-up Boot camp for the graduates of TTI Rangjung concluded on 13th April 2022

3.2.3 Bhutan New Venture Challenge

Bhutan New Venture Challenge is a business idea competition-like program that challenges aspiring entrepreneurs to materialize their business idea into a venture. The program is a good platform to showcase innovative business ideas that positively benefit the community and the nation as a whole. The program provides prize money to the winners to encourage and stimulate business ideas and enable them to follow up on their ideas to help them convert ideas into businesses.

The objectives of the Bhutan New Venture Challenge (BNVC):

- a) promote the culture of entrepreneurship in the country
- b) provide a platform for Bhutanese to showcase their innovative business ideas
- c) provide recognition to viable entrepreneurial ideas
- d) build entrepreneurial competencies of the students through establishing business units in the institution
- e) encourage and facilitate new start-ups

The BNVC has the following target groups:

- a. Student Category:
- b. General Category

Student Category

The student category is for students in educational institutions (HSS, TVET & Colleges). The students under the mentorship and guidance of their teachers prepare their proposals and winners will be able to immediately establish and operate businesses on their school premises. The business ideas submitted under this category are expected to address an existing need or a problem in the locality. The winners of this category will take their first proper steps into experiencing entrepreneurship first-hand. **“Business for a better community”**

General Category

This is an open category for the general public. The business ideas can be of agri, technology, service or a hybrid-based form of businesses. The business ideas submitted must be in line with the following theme: **“Businesses for a greener tomorrow”**.

Bhutan New Venture Challenge 2022's award ceremony was graced by His Excellency, the Minister of Labour and Human Resources.

3.2.4 International Business Idea Competition- Youth Co-Lab Regional Submit, Singapore

As a part of the International Business Competition, Ms. Yangchen Lhamo, founder and promoter of Yoga Yangchen participated in the Youth Co-Lab Regional Submit, Singapore from 4-7th July 2022. She competed among youths from the Asia- Pacific region in the Business Idea Pitching session. Along with the startup, representatives from the Ministry also participated in the submission.

The Youth Co: Lab Summit 2022 in Singapore, co-organized by UNDP and Citi Foundation and in partnership with National Youth Council Singapore, serves as a key milestone for the regional youth empowerment agenda by positioning young people and their innovative ideas front and centre to solve the region's most pressing challenges.

The 2022 Summit is envisioned to highlight, encourage and celebrate the role of youth in our crucial Decade of Action; Showcasing and inspiring Youth to Action especially aligning with the larger Youth Co: Lab themes ***of Youth in Climate Action and Leaving No Youth Behind.***

3.2.5. Promotion and networking through the Druk Tshongrig Gatoen

As part of promotional and networking activity, the Department supported the Loden Foundation to conduct the Druk Tshongrig Gatoen (DTG) from 9-13th November 2021 coinciding with the Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) which was held at the CSI Market. The objective of hosting the DTG is to expose young Bhutanese to entrepreneurship and provide a platform for our community to come together to share entrepreneurial endeavours and experiences, gain amazing new insights and pledge to become an invaluable part of the ever-thriving startup ecosystem in Bhutan. This edition of DTG included the National Horticulture Award, the launch of the Sibjam Website (a web app that directly connects farmers to the market and another www.biz.bt – a platform that can act

as a website for start-ups that cannot afford to build their website to assist with their digital marketing. It is also a directory for customers to find businesses.



Figure 9 Glimpse from Druk Tshongrig Gatoen

3.3 Activity 3: Startup Acceleration Program

Startup Acceleration Program is an aftercare cohort-based training, mentoring, and networking event that enrolls participants from a pre-accelerator program such as the Basic Entrepreneurship Course and Boot Camps such as Startup Innovation Tech week, Business Idea Competition which culminates into demo day where the participants pitch their ideas to a panel of judges for funding support.

The Department in collaboration with UNDP implemented a 6-month long Startup Acceleration Program through the Youth Spring Board Program with technical support of Acceleration Asia through the Youth Co. Lab initiative. As critical support to help young entrepreneurs, the Youth Co-Lab in the Bangkok Regional Hub provided an incubation and acceleration platform for young SDG entrepreneurs to turn innovative SDG solutions into sustainable businesses through the springboard programme. It is designed and co-created on the existing regional programme, understanding the needs and mindset of Bhutanese entrepreneurs.

The Target group for this springboard program were the existing entrepreneurs, who have undergone the Basic Entrepreneurship Course (BEC) supported by MoLHR and are in the early stage of the startup lifecycle.

For the springboard program, about 15 individuals were selected based on criteria or assessments and whose business ideas were new amongst the 60+

start-up list. The ideas were also selected based on the presence of some element of innovation and value addition to the existing business ideas and had the potential to scale up given adequate support from the ecosystem actors at both national and international levels. The selected participants underwent a rigorous 6 months online course that focused on upscaling their existing businesses. The course started in January and ended on 15th June 2022. The participants had to dedicate every hour to attending the course online and were given assignments in addition to the courses that they had to complete online. The course was provided by Youth Co: Lab, Bangkok in coordination with UNDP Bhutan Office.

The orientation program for springboard participants was held in November 2021 and it was graced by DG, DoEE, MoLHR along with officials from UNDP.

As part of the program the participants underwent online learning such as product-market fit, Pricing of products, team growth, identifying new customers and communicating with investors. As part of the Springboard Plus program, the Ministry in collaboration with UNDP conducted a virtual field visit to know more about the start-up and track their progress. The virtual field visit was conducted during the Pandemic and a physical field visit could not be conducted. For the final pitching round, the participants were shortlisted. Out of 15 start-ups, 11 were selected for the final pitch event which took place on 24th June 2022. The start-ups pitched ideas in front of five competent judges and the top 6 winners were awarded cash prizes to up-scale their business. The 6 start-ups were given cash prizes which are given to support up-scaling their start-ups. The



Figure 10: 1st Prize Winners: Jeewan Baral with business idea Mugwort Solution (left), and Trashi Yanggom with business idea KDY Drinks



Figure 11: Second Prize Winners- Jangchub Dorji (left) and Tshewang Thinley (right) for their business idea Potato Fingerling and Bhutan Instant Survey



Figure 12: Third Prize Winners- GIN Earth (left) and Mobile gaming community (right)

3.4 Activity 4: Startup Infrastructure

Infrastructure development is a key driver for progress and a critical enabler for productivity and sustainable economic growth. It contributes significantly to human development, poverty reduction and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)s. Under this program, two key initiatives have been undertaken, namely establishment of 5 Business Incubation Centres and 2 Fab Labs, in order to boost startups in the country.

3.4.1 Fab Lab Establishment

A standard Fab Lab is being established at Jigme Wangchuck Power Training Institute (JWPTI), and with the remaining equipment due to arrive in October 2022, 75% of the Fablab has been completed. A Bio Fab Lab is being established at the College of Natural Resources which is expected to be operational by 2023. The Fab Labs are considered to be one of the integral components of the ecosystem to enhance and promote innovation.

3.4.2 Business Incubation Manager Recruitment and Salary Support

Business incubation has been identified as a means of meeting a variety of socio-economic policy needs, which includes job creation, fostering a community's entrepreneurial climate, technology commercialization, diversifying local economies, building or accelerating growth of local industry clusters, business creation and retention, encouraging women entrepreneurship, identifying potential spin-in or spin-out business opportunities, or community revitalization.

With a view to promote innovation and entrepreneurship development as one of the themes of development and to bring about a change in the mindset and enhance the employability of graduates, the MoLHR and RUB signed an MoU on 18th October 2021. The key activity was to facilitate and support institutional mechanisms such as the Business Incubation Manager and set up Business Incubation Centers to enhance coordination of entrepreneurship activities.

Business Incubation Centres (BICs) were established in five Colleges i.e. Sherubtse College, College of Science and Technology, Jigme Namgyel Engineering College, Gedu College of Business Studies and College of Natural Resources. In line with the report produced by the World Bank and based on a study carried out on business incubation centres, MoLHR proposed dedicated staffing of the BICs to make its operation more effective. It was shared that without a dedicated staff the operation of Business Incubation Centres would not be effective. Five Business Incubation Managers were appointed in the BICs for a period of 3 years, after which an assessment would be carried out to integrate and institutionalize the recruitment in the rest of the relevant Colleges. The Ministry also assured its support in terms of funding and capacity building. Additionally, support would also be provided for the following:

- carry out a RUB-wide annual business idea competition,
- support GCBS in developing entrepreneurship related award-bearing programmes and

- also partner with RUB (mainly GCBS) to carry out any scholarly works that may contribute to policy making

Facilitate networking between colleges and relevant industry experts to have better cross cutting knowledge sharing.

3.4.3 Digital Job Challenge

To give digitally skilled young people, working or aspiring to work in the digital jobs space a boost, 21 applicants, selected for Digital Jobs Innovation Challenge fund received the awards in the form of various IT gadgets and upskilling programs. The challenge was jointly organized by the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, Gross National Happiness Commission, Thimphu TechPark Limited and UNDP Bhutan.

The digital job challenge is also one of the key activities that came out in the **Digital Jobs in Bhutan Report**. The report states that attracting global talent and investors in small and medium-sized Business Process Outsourcing (BPOs) and Information Technology Outsourcing (ITOs) is the way forward for demand creation in ICT jobs. Supporting homegrown BPO and ITOs for long-term sustainability is the next step. To build a strong homegrown ICT sector in the country, it is important that young people gain experience working in the ICT and ICT-related sectors. It is also vital to support young people with digital skills to find employment.

Within a week, the organizers received over 100 applications. The applicants were young people between the age of 18-35 years, who had digital skills and were looking to get self-employed, freelance or create digital jobs. The award, of up to USD 2,000 was given in the form of hardware, software or scholarship for upskilling through international certification programs. They bring in diverse and innovative ideas of using the digital platform to self-employ or create jobs through digital art and cryptocurrency, virtual reality and tourism, graphics designing, 3D animation and Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT).

The award recipients also, as part of the challenge, received mentoring from industry experts, both national and international. A monthly check-in will also keep the awardees updated with each other, to keep track and to share experiences.



Figure 13 Launch of Salon Club at Shaba Higher Secondary Schools

3.5 12 FYP Status of Entrepreneurship Development Program at a Glance

Program title	Startup Flagship
Total budget	2021-22: Nu.48.5 million 2020-21: Nu. 58.5 million 2019-20: Nu. 69 million
Lead Agency	DoEE, MoLHR
Program Coordination Unit	Entrepreneurship Promotion Division (EPD)
Number of Startup programs	2021-22: 8 programs 2020-21: 16 programs 2019-20: 19 programs
Place target	20 Dzongkhags
Target beneficiaries	1.Youth/Jobseekers/laidoff workers/Overseas Returnees 2. Women 3. Senior citizens 4. Persons with Disabilities
Total probable Startups from trained participants	2021-22: 106 2020-21: 77 probable startups 2019-20: 40 probable startups

Total actual Startups	2021-22: 107 startups (male- 58, female-49) 2020-21: 60 startups (male-29 female-31) 2019-20: 24 startups (male-16 female-8)
Total probable employment generation from trained participants	2021-22: 16 programs 106 employment 2020-21: 16 programs 116 employment 2019-20: 19 programs 121 employment
Total participants trained in entrepreneurship training	2021-22: 621 (male- 288 female-333) 2020-21: 334 (male-152 female-182) 2019-20: 455 (Male-224, Female-231)
Total Startup flagship participants	2021-22: 370 excluding SDP graduates 2020-21: 793 participants 2019-20: 590 participants
% Of startup against total trained under Startup flagship	2021-22 5.1% 2020-21 7.5% 2019-20 4%
% Of male startup	2020-21 48% 2019-20 66%
% Of female startup	2020-21 52% 2019-20 33%
% Of male startup against total male	2020-21 19% 2019-20 8%
% Of female startup against total female	2020-21 17% 2019-20 3%
% Of activities wise achievement	2020-21 88% 2019-20 88%
% Of budget utilization	2020-21 82% 2019-20 68%

Infrastructure setup	<p>5 Business Incubation Centers (BICs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sherubtse College - Jigme Namgyel Engineering College - Gedu College of Business Studies - College of Natural Resources - College of Science and Technology <p>2 Fab Labs (Standard Engineering and Bio Fab Labs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jigme Wangchuck Power Training Institute (JWPTI) - College of Natural Resources (CNR)
Human Resources	5 dedicated Incubation Managers appointed in all the BICs
COVID-19 targeted programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Startup Acceleration Program 2. Student Business Seedling Program
Dzongkhags coverage	Thimphu, Mongar, Trashigang, Zhemgang, Chukha, Dagana, Trashi Yangtse, Bumthang, Gasa
Area of focus	Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Robot, Agriculture, Production, Service, Technology, Energy, Manufacturing, Transportation

Chapter Four

The Information and Career Guidance Unit

Background

The Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship with its mandate to provide gainful and productive employment also must ensure as its final product that the right information is disseminated to everyone to enable people and youth to make informed career choices when they enter the job market. The Organizational Development Report 2019 also indicated a lack of career counseling services in the Ministry. The report recommended the creation of a pool of occupational psychologists and career counseling professionals. The importance of such counseling service is felt more than ever owing to the growing demand of the labour market to match jobs and aspirations of the job seekers which is why the unit will add value to the current work that the department is doing. The unit is tasked with the most important job since it is the first contact point for the job seekers coming to avail services from DoEE.

Unlike the career education and guidance provided in educational institutions, which should be oriented towards making further educational choices, the ICGU under the DoEE is more directly focused on employment counselling, job-search assistance, and job placement which is why it has become an integral component under the Department of Employment & Entrepreneurship cushioning against the shocks of the labour market demands when students transition from school to work.

GOWA

GOWA- connecting talents with the labour market is an information dissemination platform followed by on-the-spot recruitment by potential employers. The GOWA forum was first piloted on 29th September, 2021. Since then, the forum has been replicated by the Regional Offices, taking it to rural communities of the country. Besides, the regular program package, the Regional Offices and the Head office has been constantly bringing creative ideas to enhance the benefit of the program. This includes taking the GOWA to the local government, parents, SDP graduates product display, on-the-spot recruitment among others.

Upcoming activities of the Unit

- The unit is currently drafting a Strategy on Career guidance

- The unit is also planning to develop a career playbook
- Update the Career and Occupation Dictionary, 2012



Figure 14 Glimpse from the 5th GOWA

Employment Responsibility System (ERS)

The Employment Responsibility System is aimed at promoting shared responsibilities in employment generation and ensure effective coordination among key agencies in facilitating gainful and productive employment the country.

It clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities for various ministries/departments and other key agencies involved in employment related activities. It also provides a platform for collaborative policy interventions planning and implementation.

Table 9: Consolidated ERS data update as of June 2022

Sectors	Year 2 (2019-20)		Year 3		Year 4		12th FYP	
	Targets	Achieved	Targets	Total	Targets	Total	Grand Total	Achieved till date
MoWHS	50	544	220	2453	250	1958	828	4955
MoIC	400	34	400	196	400	904	2000	1134
TCB	3281	3068	3609	1640	3970	233	18210	4941
MoAF	540	242	540	1579	540	234	2700	2055
MLI/MoEA	195	270	195	1170	195	735	975	2175
DHPS/MoEA	302	355	302	146	302	170	1509	671
DoT/MoEA	3000	3860	3000	4326	3000	9243	15000	17429
DGM/MoEA	50	123	50	76	50	1332	250	1531
DCSI/MoEA	2291	664	2292	635	2292	8698	11458	9997
TOTAL	10,109	9,160	10,608	12,221	10,999	23,507	52,930	44,888

Chapter Five Regional Offices

5.1 Gelephu

YELP (Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program)

Gelephu Region has 6 dzongkhags coverage and likewise YELP have been facilitated throughout the region. The dzongkhag wise placement is reflected in the table as below:

Table 10: YELP placement for the dzongkhags under Gelephu Region

Dzongkhag	Placement
Sarpang	93
Zhemgang	7
Trongsa	29
Bumthang	27
Tsirang	10
Dagana	3
Total	169



Figure 15 YELP candidates

Out of school youth Counselling

The out of School youth counseling has been the Region's yearly activity for over last many years. The participants are created awareness on the MoLHR services especially on the YELP and Build Bhutan Project (BBP). The other topics covered are on the areas below:

- I. Labour Market Information
- II. Importance of TVET
- III. Entrepreneurship
- IV. Services rendered by MoLHR

Through all these programs, directly out of school jobseekers and training seekers are made aware on the opportunities they can venture once in the labour market. The participants share about getting a lot of information through this program.

Similarly, we do conduct the program for the parents as part of Parental Counselling and schools covering MSS and HSS as part of School Counselling Program.

1st GOWA Event

The first GOWA event for Gelephu Region was conducted at RRCO conference hall on 22nd June 2022. The event was targeted for parents, out of school youth, teachers, and employers. It is basically an information dissemination forum followed by on-the-spot recruitment. Through this event we expect the participants to know about the services and support provided by MoLHR on jobs and training opportunities. It was attended by 30 employers and 120 talented youth. 150 vacancies were announced and 21 placements was done on the day.

5.2 Phuentsholing

In line with the objectives of the guideline for Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program, it provides easy and accessible engagement opportunities for jobseekers to exercise their talent and learning in their areas of interest, including self-employment.

Phuentsholing Region covers two Dzongkhags and the YELP engagement has been facilitated throughout the region. The dzongkhag wise placement in the FY 2021-2022 is reflected in the table as below:

Table 11 YELP Placement for FY 2021-22 by Phuentsholing Regional Office

Dzongkhag	Placement
Phuentsholing	78
Samtse	6
Total	84

Phuentsholing was the hardest hit district due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Owing to frequent lockdowns, most of the private sectors remained nonoperational. Thus, the number of youth availing the YELP program has drastically reduced particularly in Phuentsholing Region unlike previous years. The office carried out, monitoring of the YELP engaged youth prior to lockdown as well as post lockdown.



Figure 16 YELP monitoring

Summary report of the first GOWA in Phuentsholing Region

Event Date: June 22, 2022

Chief Guest: DASHO THROMPON, Phuentsholing Thromde

Venue: MPH of Phuentsholing MSS, Phuentsholing Thromde

Total number of representatives from companies and guest present in the event:

66

Total Number of youths attended: **106**

No. of job seekers engaged/employed on-the-spot: **4**

Number of Standby: **3**

Total number of job seeker shortlisted to be recruited on the following day: **80**

Nevertheless, it was pleasing to know that after the GOWA program (within a week) more than 29 youths were recruited by the various companies.

5.3 Samdrup Jongkhar

Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP)

In keeping the effort toward rolling of the Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program, the Samdrup Jongkhar Regional office has extended the support subsidy to 106 job seekers in two Dzongkhags (Samdrup Jongkhar & Pemagatshel). The area wise placement is reflected in the table below:

Table 12 YELP placement for the Dzongkhags/Drungkhags under Samdrup Jongkhar Region

SN	Dzongkhag/Drungkhag	Job seekers by gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Samdrup Jongkhar	14	67	81
2	Samdrupcholing	5	4	9
3	Jomotshangkha	3	0	3
4	Pemagatshel	1	3	4
5	Nganglam	4	5	9
TOTAL		27	79	106

1st ever Regional GOWA Event ~*Connecting talents to the labour market*

In keeping the mandate of providing gainful employment, the MoLHR Regional Office, Samdrup Jongkhar conducted the first ever GOWA event in the region in BPC conference hall. During the event, more than 60 job seekers including 12 potential employers from various private companies and agencies has gathered to attend in the program. As part of the program, the participants were oriented on various programs offered by the Ministry.

The most interesting part of event was that job seekers were attracted by employers from various companies assuring them with employment and decent remunerations during the on-the-spot recruitment. Around five interested job

seekers were recruited on the spot by employers. The office is currently supporting them through the Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP) subsidy scheme.



Figure 17 Glimpse of the first GOWA at Samdrup Jongkhar

5.4 Trashigang

Trashigang Region administratively looks after four dzongkhags (Trashigang, Mongar, Trashiyangtse and Lhuentse) and represents all four Departments of the Ministry in the eastern part of Bhutan. YELP is the main program which helps the private sectors by sharing the cost in the form of monthly stipend. It has been facilitated in all four Dzongkhags which are under the Regional Office. The dzongkhag wise placement is as reflected in the table below:

Table 13 Sector wise YELP placement under Trashigang Region

Sector	Male	Female	Total
CSI	1	21	22
IT & enabled services	8	3	11
Tourism	14	33	47
Bhutanese traditional Arts and Crafts	8	0	8
Trading	2	5	7
Manufacturing & Production	9	14	23
Institution centres/Training providers/centres	1	3	4
Agriculture? Livestock	1	0	1

farming			
Automobile	2	1	3
Environment	3	0	3
Total	49	80	129

GOWA Event

The Regional office, conducted the 1st GOWA event at Trashigang on 27th June 2022. The event was targeted for parents, out of school youth, teachers, and employers. The event was conducted with an aim to equip job seekers with the labour market information, and to familiarize them with the various programs under the Ministry. It was attended by 11 employers and 132 talented youths. 43 job seekers were placed through the on-the-spot recruitment.

Information Corner

YELP GOT EVEN BETTER!

The only way to do great work is to learn what you want to do. If you aren't sure where to work, try **YELP**.



YELP: Youth Engagement & Livelihood Program

- With YELP you can work with almost any employer and build your career prospect.
- The government will pay you a monthly stipend of Nu 5,000. Plus, your employer might pay you additional salary.
- Both you and the employer are benefited by this program making two hands to clap.
- You can choose to work with an employer ranging from 1-12 months.
- Now, you can do internships in the government organizations for up to 3 months.
- To avail YELP benefits, both you and the employer should be registered on the online job portal hosted by the Ministry of Labour & Human Resources: www.molhr.gov.bt

WHO CAN AVAIL YELP BENEFITS? Self-employed/ Startup Entrepreneurs, people with disabilities, people who lost job due to COVID-19 pandemic, people who pursued skills training under Skills Development Plan (SDP) and Desuung Skilling Program, individuals in difficult circumstances and any job seeker actively looking for job.

YELP Eligibility: Be a Bhutanese citizen; Be a registered jobseeker on MoLHR's job portal; Be 18 years of age and above; Not be engaged in employment, education or training at the time of applying for support; Fulfill any other criteria set by the MoLHR from time to time.

For more information contact:

Employment Services Division
Department of Employment & Human Resources
Ministry of Labour & Human Resources
Telephone: +975-2-339529/ 17762189
Email: esd@molhr.gov.bt

Employment Service Centre
Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
Thimphu, BHUTAN
Tel: +975-2-334495/ 17619637
Email: esc@molhr.gov.bt

Regional Offices:

Phuentsholing Regional Office
Tel: 05-254657
05-252570

Samdrup Jongkhar Regional Office
Tel: 07-251694
07-251315

Celephu Regional Office
Tel: 06-252006
06-252010

Trashigang Regional Office
Tel: 04-521221
04-521208

Beware of fake overseas agents!

If you are planning to go overseas to work, register with those agents approved by the MoLHR.

There are many fake and unauthorized operators recruiting and advertising overseas job vacancies on social media and through personal contacts.



The Regulations on Employment of Bhutanese Overseas, 2021, requires any agent providing overseas job placement and employment services to operate with a valid license after approved by the MoLHR. The breach of this regulation will be liable for penalty. Agents operating illegally will be tried in the court of law.

To avoid fake operators and being scammed, jobseekers are advised to abide by the following instructions:

- ✓ Apply for jobs only with MoLHR's registered agents.
- ✓ Crosscheck with the Ministry on any overseas jobs advertised online.
- ✓ No payments to be made to the agents unless authorized by MoLHR.

For further information, contact **Mr. Tshering Dawa, Employment Officer at 02-330788/330787/17 246 161** or
email: tdawa@molhr.gov.bt, overseas@molhr.gov.bt
Issued in the public interest by the Office of Director General
Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CENTRE



One-Stop Shop for Job Seekers and Employers

The Employment Service Centre (ESC) works as a bridge between the job seekers and employers. We are a physical counter to help job seekers to register, apply for job vacancies, and connect with the employers. We also facilitate with the employers to connect with the job seekers to find a right match for their job openings and profile.

ESC for Job Seekers

1. We help job seekers to registers on MoLHR's online job portal.
2. We provide scanning and photocopying services for job seekers to upload their documents while applying for jobs online.
3. We guide the job seekers to navigate across various platforms (job portal, mass media, community networks) to find jobs.
4. We help job seekers write their CV/resume to cater to various job openings.
5. We help keep job seekers updated on the jobs they have applied through SMS messaging.

ESC for Employers

1. We help employers register on online job portal to effectively manage their job openings and recruitment process.
2. We liaise with employers to validate job vacancies, provide complete information about the job vacancy, and facilitate recruitment process.
3. We aggregate job vacancies from various media platforms announced by the employers and share them with the job seekers.
4. We help employers to save time by filtering the job applications on their behalf.
5. We provide job interview venue for the employers at no cost.

ESC Location	Address	Contact
Thimphu	Ground Floor, Department of Youth and Sports, Above Swimming Pool Complex	Phone: 02-334495 Email: esc@molhr.gov.bt
Phuentsholing	RICBL Office Building, Phuntsholing	Phone: 05-254657/252570 Email: phuentsholing@molhr.gov.bt
Gelephu	RRCO Building, Gelephu	Phone: 06-252006 Email: gelephu@molhr.gov.bt
Samdrup Jongkhar	First Floor, Upper Market Way to Dzongkhag Administration (Below Road), Samdrupjongkhar	Phone: 07-251694 Email: sjongkhar@molhr.gov.bt
Trashigang	Second Floor, RSTA Building Main Town, Trashigang	Phone: 04-521221 Email: trashigang@molhr.gov.bt

**Employment Service
Centers are open
from 9AM – 5PM
from Monday to
Friday.**

Finding the right one isn't hard

ESCs are operated by the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, Royal Government of Bhutan.



GOWA- CONNECTING TALENTS WITH THE LABOUR MARKET

What To Expect

1. On-the-spot Recruitment

At GOWA, valued employers looking for talented youth will be able to employ them **on-the-spot!**

2. On-the-spot training enrollment

"Be skilled, Be somebody"

At GOWA you will be able to enroll for up-coming skilling programs under Skills Development Program

3. Presentation on various plan/program(s) of the Ministry

Are you thinking **"WHAT NEXT"** In life?"

At GOWA you will be able to hear about the various initiatives of the Ministry to answer your question of **"WHAT NEXT?"**

4. Employment related programs/events

Every GOWA promises to display new and interesting events or programs for our audience

For further information please email to ddem@molhr.gov.bt or lhama@molhr.gov.bt OR call us at office hours
ESC: 02-334495



Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship
Ministry of Labour and Human Resources