

SEP Program

Partnership program Sports and Education Bhutan – The Netherlands

.... Sport is at the service of the harmonious development of mankind.... all this while encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society, concerned with the preservation of human dignity..

H.R.H. the Prince of Orange of the Netherlands, Willem Alexander 3 October 2002

Background:

Bhutan in the recent years has experienced unprecedented dynamism that has resulted in increased formal education, improved health care systems, economic growth and welfare to increasing parts of the population. A main policy for Bhutan is to balance the countries' development with care for nature, human dignity, and conservation of culture and the countries' intrinsic values that have led Bhutan through its development over the past centuries. Next to the economic and technical development (as a means for development), attention is given to people's participation, protection of the nature, cultural conservation and value orientation. In the meantime Bhutan and its leaders can not entirely avoid the side effects of development: urbanization, youth unemployment, generation gap, increased secularity and differences in income and wealth, consciousness of class, gender, regional and cultural entities, and so on. The holistic and comprehensive development policy of Bhutan therefore requires a great effort from its leaders to combine economic and technical growth, to maintain the countries' independence and sovereignty and to strive for Gross National Happiness.

Sports:

Bhutan is a sports nation. Archery is considered as the national sport. It's history goes back deep into the middle ages. Archery is seen as part of the cultural and religious heritage of Bhutan and embedded in a range of rituals. Next to archery many other forms of sport are being conducted varying from football, tae kwondo to golf and cricket. Bhutan counts 14 sports federations, involving more than 100.000 (amateur) sports practitioners. The sports federations conduct programs according to international requirements and participate in government sports programs and activities. Funding is diverse and ranges from \$250.000 annual subsidy from FIFA for the Bhutan Football Federation to an annual \$1.100 for the Bhutan Amateur Athletic Federation. A Bhutan Traditional Sports Association (including darts, discus) has recently been established.

Private initiatives demonstrate the dynamism in sports: new federations are being formed (latest: cricket); sport clubs with social objectives are being established. The Tae Kwondo federation claims to have 17.000 members, spread over more than 300 schools countrywide.

Sports that require large grounds (football, archery, golf, cricket) have difficulties in finding those in the mountainous environment of Bhutan. Sports facilities are virtually absent or require renovation. Countrywide there is a need for trainers/coaches/instructors. Sports

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activities in schools are being encouraged and conducted (school sports program 2003/2004). Sports is being promoted as element in 'wholesome education'. However, the present competitive school education system in Bhutan does not encourage students to spend much time outside the academic classes.

In July 2003 a new department for Youth, Culture & Sports was created under the Ministry of Education. This department aims to develop a holistic approach and policy for sports and social development. Recent policy papers stress the need to make use of sports as a contribution in '*...creating an active, healthy, disciplined, progressive, independent, patriotic and united society aimed towards improving national development and productivity...*' (Role of sports in the 9th plan, draft paper). It further states that sports is a 'healthy form of entertainment for all, it helps promote responsible social leadership, strong sense of nationalism, helps physical growth and coordination and helps promote socialization'.



Home Minister, his Excellency Lyonpo Jigme Y. Thinley:

'I think there are two dimensions to the world of sports; one is the opportunity it gives to individuals, to countries and to communities for social and cultural interaction. This is, I think, the far more important contribution sport can make to a society, through which it can promote peace and harmony. The other side is the side of competition. Unfortunately, success and failure have become the more important aspects of sports today'

From: 'the other final' documentary 2002

Sports Bhutan – the Netherlands

Regular contact between Bhutan and the Netherlands in the field of sports exchange exists since 2001. A delegation of the Netherlands Archery Federation (NHB) discussed the possibilities for a long-term support to the Bhutan Archery Federation. That year the objective for collaboration was to: *develop Olympic archery in Bhutan countrywide and to get Bhutan at the Olympic games of 2012 among the leading countries in Olympic Archery. (Report mission 13-23 April 2001)*

A program was started to enhance sports education in the school system and to contribute to the conservation of Traditional Archery in Bhutan. Courses for teachers to start Archery activities in three high schools started in 2003 and were ended a year later, due to lack of equipment and an overloaded academic curriculum. August 2004 a book will be published

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on traditional and modern archery in Bhutan and the Netherlands. In April 2004 a film on Bhutan Olympic Archery was made and will be screened in Germany and international channels. Bhutan+Partners participated in both activities.

The Royal Netherlands Football Association (KNVB) visited Bhutan in 2002 resulting in a sports and education program including: *curriculum development in sports and sports education, including physical education for (future) teachers at the national Institute for Education in Paro and Samste. The program includes the provision of experts, materials and funds to secure the quality of the program*

The Royal Netherlands Football Federation shipped materials and commissioned two football teachers to Bhutan to conduct initial trainings for Bhutanese coaches and teachers and to support the Bhutan national Football team.

Bhutan sports development got a boost when it hosted 'the other final' (alternative world cup football match) between the two lowest FIFA ranked football clubs in the world: Montserrat and Bhutan in 2002. The match, organized and financed by KesselsKramer, Amsterdam, became a prime time news item worldwide. The documentary made of the event has been selected for numerous film festivals. Both the documentary and the book have been distributed to several countries. The event, co-organized by Bhutan+partners, resulted in an increase of sports clubs and stimulated many youngsters to practice sports activities.

Based on the experiences with sports, the current developments in Bhutan and the policies under the ninth five-year plan, the Government of Bhutan and its partners in the Netherlands decided to investigate the possibilities for a long-term Sports and Education program between the two kingdoms.

The program will enhance an inclusive and responsive society with emphasis on social development for young girls and boys vulnerable to the side effects of rapid changes in Bhutan by:

- Supporting sports and physical education in Bhutan as an element in the development of Bhutan as described in the 9th Fifth Year Plan of Bhutan (2002-2007) and under Bhutan's the Gross National Happiness concept
- Contributing, via means of sports, to the welfare, national identity and social cohesion of Bhutan
- Exploring the social meaning of sports (teamwork, dealing with winning and losing etc.)
- Supporting strengthening of Bhutan's sports organizations and sports clubs
- Promoting and conserving traditional sports activities in Bhutan as a reflection of the rich history and culture of Bhutan

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Joint Findings of the sports partners:

Policies:

- Sports is considered as a tool for wholesome education and social development that contributes to social cohesion in a fast developing environment. Sports serves mental and physical health conditions of the participants. Promotion of regional and international sports participation serves the countries' domestic interests (a unified nation) and may contribute strengthening the sovereignty of Bhutan.
- The Bhutan Government is committed to further develop and implement the Gross National Happiness concept for the well being of its population.
- Policies for sports and education are to be developed under the responsibility of the department for Youth, Culture & Sports
- Implementation of sports policies will be channeled through the education system, the national sports federation and sports clubs.

Structures and Institutional Strengthening

- The structure of the Department for Youth, Culture & Sports under the Ministry of Education is developing according to the schedules and may require strengthening and support in policy development.
- A master plan for sports is being designed with the support of Global Sports Partners and will be finalized by June 2005.
- National Sports Federations require institutional strengthening in terms of general, financial and administrative management, procedures and software for a smooth organization and capacity to respond to the requirements of the international sports federations (national, regional, international competitions) and to implement government policies. It is recommended that sports federations will be managed by a professional administrator
- The education system requires curriculum adaptation in order to respond adequately to wholesome education policies. It also is in need for capacity/materials to implement RgoB's requirements for physical and sports education.
- Sport clubs are emerging in the capital and semi urban areas in Bhutan. The clubs may play a role in implementing decentralized sports policies at district and community levels.
- Institutional guidelines regulating the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in implementing sports policies in Bhutan are required and under process

Facilities, equipment and staffing

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- Sports facilities are minimal in Bhutan: the country requires a national sports stadium, one or more regional sport development institutes (centers of excellence) and sports accommodations like playgrounds, washing rooms and canteens.
- Equipment for e.g. football, archery, basketball, and athletics are needed for proper sports education at schools and at sport clubs.
- Existing and new facilities are to be maintained and explored. A comprehensive facilitation management plan is required when new facilities are constructed.

Partners Bhutan:

Executing Agency	Ministry of Education: Department of Youth, Culture and Sports
Affiliated agencies	Bhutan Olympic Committee Bhutan Archery Federation Bhutan Football Federation

Partners the Netherlands:

Executing agency	Bhutan+Partners Foundation
Affiliated agencies	Netherlands Archery Federation Royal Netherlands Football Association NOC*NSF
Funding Agencies	Netherlands Association for Personnel Service Overseas (PSO) Olympic Solidarity