

Statistical System of Bhutan

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Main statistical agency

Main statistical agency name

National Statistical Bureau

Web address

<http://www.nsb.gov.bt/index.jsp>

Position in the government

The statistical function is part of the Department of Planning of the Ministry of Finance.

Organizational structure and finance

The National Statistics Bureau Director reports to the Prime Minister. There are five divisions under the Director, the National Accounts and Price Division, Coordination and Information Division, Socio-Economic Analysis and Research Division, Administrative and Finance Division, and Survey and Data Processing Division.

Main duties

National Accounts and Price Division

Responsibilities:

1. To bring out the annual National Accounts Statistics.
2. Prepare medium term GDP forecast.
3. To bring out the half yearly national CPI.
4. To bring out quarterly Thimphu Food Price Index (TFPI).

Survey Method and Data Processing

Responsibilities:

Survey and Data Processing Division of the NSB is responsible for conducting case studies and nationwide surveys and publish reports. Besides, the division is also responsible to extend technical support to the sectors and conduct training in the field of data collection and survey methodology.

Coordination and Information Division

Responsibilities:

1. To Develop clear line of communication and well delineated responsibilities among statistical agencies.
2. Develop and co-ordinate work plans or strategies based on the type, timing, and periodicity of data needs.
3. Co-ordinate with Dzongkhags in relation to surveys and statistical activities
4. Co-ordinate with foreign states and international agencies
5. Compile, analyse, and publish Statistical Yearbook and other regular publications
6. Verify and validate all sectoral level statistical estimates through workshops to ensure soundness of methodology and consistency with statistical procedures, and also uniformity in data thus issued.
7. Conduct workshops and training for statistical personnel from time to time in order to keep abreast of statistical techniques and other developments in the field
8. Compile and distribute Socio-economic indicators
9. Socio-economic impact assessments.

Administrative and Finance Division

Responsibilities:

The Administrative and Finance Division looks into the administrative and financial matters of NSB.

Dzongkhag Statistic Officer

Responsibilities:

1. Collect data and update them at regular intervals in the Dzongkhags and maintain a comprehensive Dzongkhag statistical database.
2. Compile and produce reports and publication of "Dzongkhag Statistical Profile".

3. In collaboration with the NSB to coordinate and control statistical activities at the Dzongkhag and Gewog levels.
4. Focal point for dissemination of Dzongkhag/Gewog level information.
5. Coordination. Collection and Compilation of primary data collection in Dzongkhags.
6. Prepare statistical work plan and budget for statistical activities in Dzongkhags and Gewogs.
7. Validate, assure sound definitions, concepts and classifications for statistical surveys and data collection.
8. Coordinate with the Dzongkhag Sector Officials in generating information.
9. Provide technical assistance to Dzongkhag Sectors and Gewogs.
10. Ensure timely collection of data at the Dzongkhag level.

Brief history and other relevant background information

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Bhutan embarked on the path to modernization and development by initiating the first socio-economic development plan in 1961. A decade later in 1971, His Majesty, the Late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck constituted the Planning Commission, an independent body, with the then Crown Prince, HRH Jigme Singye Wangchuck as the Chairman and HRH Ashi Dechen Wangmo Wangchuck as the Vice-Chairperson. The 13 member Commission constituted of the Representatives of His Majesty, Speaker of the National Assembly, Ministers of the Government, Chairman and Representatives of the Royal Advisory Council, Secretary of the Ministry of Development (member secretary) and the Government of India Advisers in the Ministries of Development and Finance as Observers.

The broad functions of the Planning Commission and its Secretariat were to formulate overall development strategies and coordinate sectoral activities, policies and programmes, and formulate Five-Year Plans and programmes. The Commission was also responsible for aid management, co-ordinating inter-ministerial development programmes, and monitoring and evaluating programmes at the macro-level. It was also the role of the Commission to ensure the timely implementation of the Plans according to specified objectives and priorities. However, in 1993 the role of aid management was transferred to the Ministry of Finance. Furthermore, in the same year the role of Dzongkhag Development Coordination was transferred from the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Planning Commission.

His Majesty, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck was the Chairman of the Planning Commission from 1971 to 1991. In 1991, His Majesty the King relinquished the Chairmanship of the Planning Commission to ensure greater decentralization in the decision-making process. The Minister of the Planning Commission Secretariat, Lyonpo Chenkyab Dorji was appointed as the new Chairman. The reconstituted Planning Commission had 15 members consisting of all the Representatives of His Majesty the King, the Chairman of the Royal Advisory Council and all ministers, deputy ministers, senior secretaries of the Government and the Chief Operations Officer of the armed forces.

Policy and Planning Divisions (PPDs) were established in the various ministries in 1991 after detailed discussions at various levels of the Government. The PPDs were set up to act as a direct professional link between the line agencies and the Planning Commission to improve the quality and efficiency of the planning process. A Technical Committee to assist and advise the Planning Commission on issues of technical and professional expertise was also established in 1991. It had 21 members comprising of heads of divisions and other technical personnel from various ministries and departments. The Committee was chaired by the members on a rotational basis and met as and when necessary.

With the dissolution of the Lhengyel Shungtshog by Royal Decree in 1998, the Planning Commission was reconstituted. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers (all elected ministers) appointed Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba, Finance Minister as the new Chairman of the Planning Commission on 10th August 1998. The Planning Commission was reconstituted with 17 members as per Government Order No.COM/02/42 issued on 27th January 1999. The members were appointed for a period of three years after which fifty percent of the membership would be changed and fifty percent would remain to retain continuity. The members were appointed based on their professional and individual capacities. The Technical Committee was dissolved in 1999, after the reconstitution of the Planning Commission.

Other producers of official statistics

Other producers of official statistics

Some line ministries and agencies have benefited from strong technical and financial assistance from bilateral or multilateral agencies to develop their own statistics services. The agencies include the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Health, Royal Monetary Authority, and National Environment Commission. Other line ministries have significantly weaker information systems, some of them recently created. Insufficient technical expertise of the staff and lack of equipment are the major constraints to their development. All ministries show a strong willingness to develop their own data management unit.

Data collection

Most recent population census

30-31 May 2005

Access to administrative data

The NSB has access to administrative data.

Data dissemination

Main publications

Statistical Yearbook

National Accounts Report

Bhutan At a Glance (includes data for the following topics Agriculture, Industries, Balance of Payment, National Accounts, Public Finance, Consumer Price Index, Population, Health, Education, Labour, Transport and Communication, Energy and Tourism)

Consumer Price Index

Poverty Analysis Report

Living Standard Report

Languages of main publications

English.

How are data disseminated (Paper, CD Rom, Website, online databases, databanks)?

Website