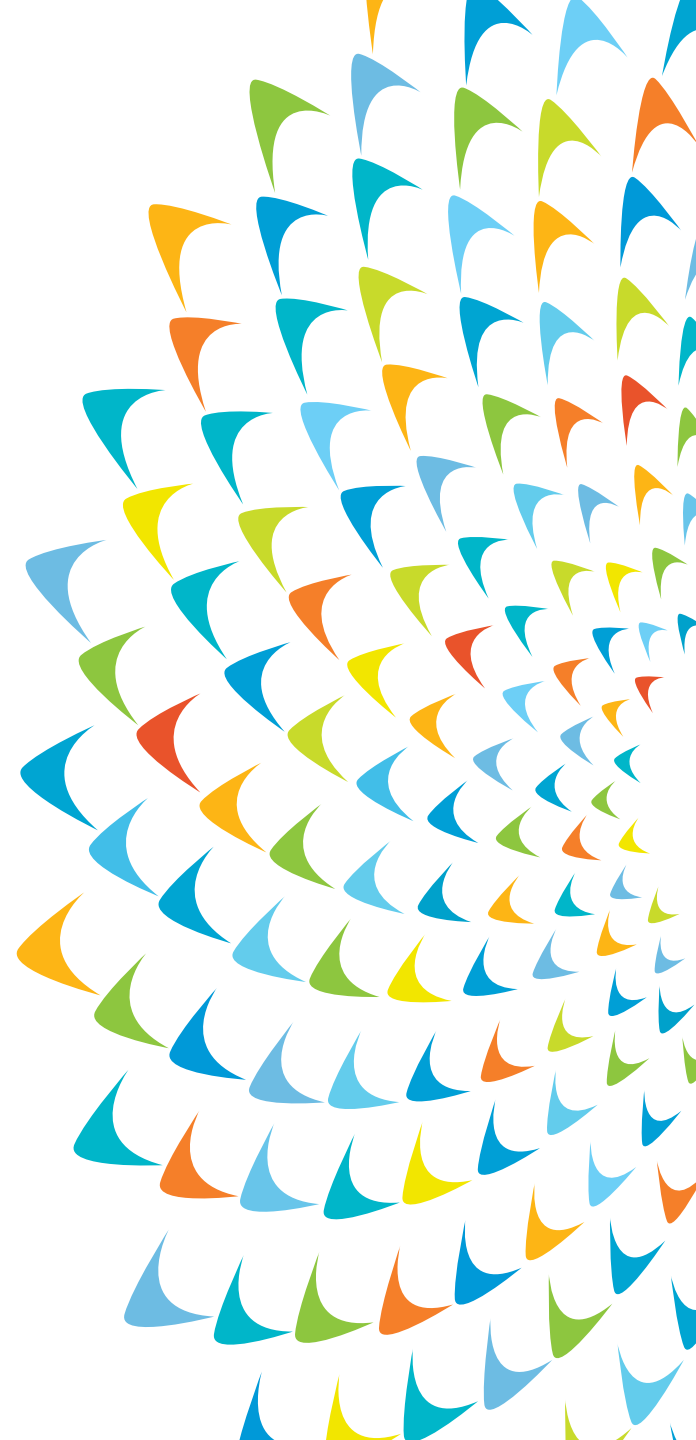


Education and Gross National Happiness

Dr. Kanokpan Lao-Araya
14 July 2020





Outline

- Gross National Happiness
- Education in Bhutan
- Effect of COVID-19 pandemic on education
- Other concerns of COVID-19
- Bhutan's 21st Century Economic Roadmap
- Enablers of 21st Century Economy and Society
- Potential application of integrated education in urban planning
- Responses to Future Education in Bhutan



Gross National Happiness

- Development philosophy since early 1970's
- Quality and holistic development (balanced development: material and spiritual)
- Incorporated in the country's Five-Year Plan
- Gross National Happiness Pillars
 - Good governance
 - Sustainable socioeconomic development
 - Preservation and promotion of culture
 - Environmental conservation



Education in Bhutan

- Universal access to education: free education up to grade 12 and thereafter based on merit
- Strengthening foundations for learning
- Development of literacy, numeracy and skills for work and lifelong learning
- Emphasizing value education and mental health, government has introduced meditation in schools since 2011
- Limited use of ICT equipment and online curriculum prior to the COVID-19 pandemic



Effect of COVID-19 on Education

- About 170,263 children are not attending school from early March till end June
- E-learning Program was launched bringing teachers to television studios to broadcast lessons on the national TV and radio broadcaster: tele-education
- A variety of online tools were used:
 - Google Classroom,
 - E-textbooks from the Royal Education Council,
 - Free access to electronic newspaper,
 - Free e-books and Self Instruction Manual,
 - Smart phone applications (WhatsApp, WeChat)
- Online education is not reliable or possible for about 16,884 school children in remote communities



Other Concerns of COVID-19

- Physical and psychological well-being of isolated children
- Adverse impact on female students (household chores, risk of not continuing school)
- Quality of education



Bhutan's 21st Century Economic Roadmap Technical Inputs

14th April 2020

Development Partners Group



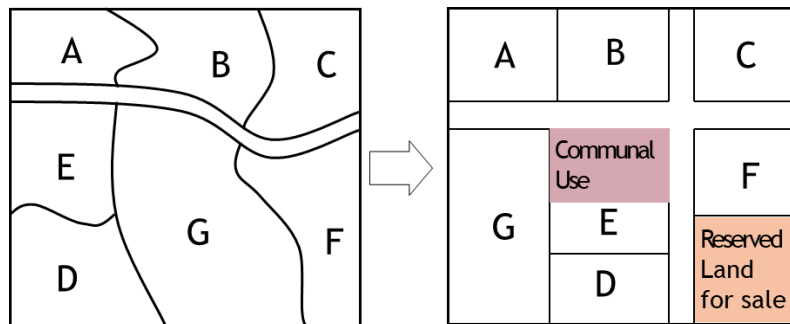


Enablers of 21st Century Economy and Society

- Digital infrastructure and transformation: Toward an ICT-enabled knowledge-based economy
- Social innovation and leveraging frontier technology to leapfrog development
- Evidence-based decision-making for effective policy
- A healthy and educated labor force for the 21st century
- Sustainable human settlements and urban centers of growth
- Resilient transportation networks and connected society
- Protecting people and communities from disaster
- A gender equal society
- Macroeconomic stability as the foundation for economic transformation



Potential application of integrated education in urban planning



- “Land pooling” scheme for a robust and efficient land management
- Balance private interests with shared benefits of improved livability and services to the local public
- Planning of Local area plans (LAPs)
- Government piloted a land pooling scheme, under the ADB financed Urban Infrastructure Development Project (UIDP) (2007–2016) where private landowners in 4 LAPs pooled about 30% of their individual parcels for the provision of serviced orderly parcels in these newly planned LAPs
- Evidence of an increase in land value associated with infrastructure development of up to 36%, indicative of landowners’ welfare gains



Responses to Future Education in Bhutan

- To enhance the e-Learning program
- To improve internet access, reliability, and affordability
- To invest in communication infrastructure and technology
- To integrate the online learning method in urban planning
 - * provision of secure wireless connectivity
 - * kiosks/learning center for free access to internet
 - * use of internet of things technology
 - * free internet hotspots in and around cities and town with access to educational materials and sites
- To modernize curriculum by enhancing the quality of education

