

Bhutan's Voluntary National Review Report

Gross National Happiness Commission
Royal Government of Bhutan

Outline

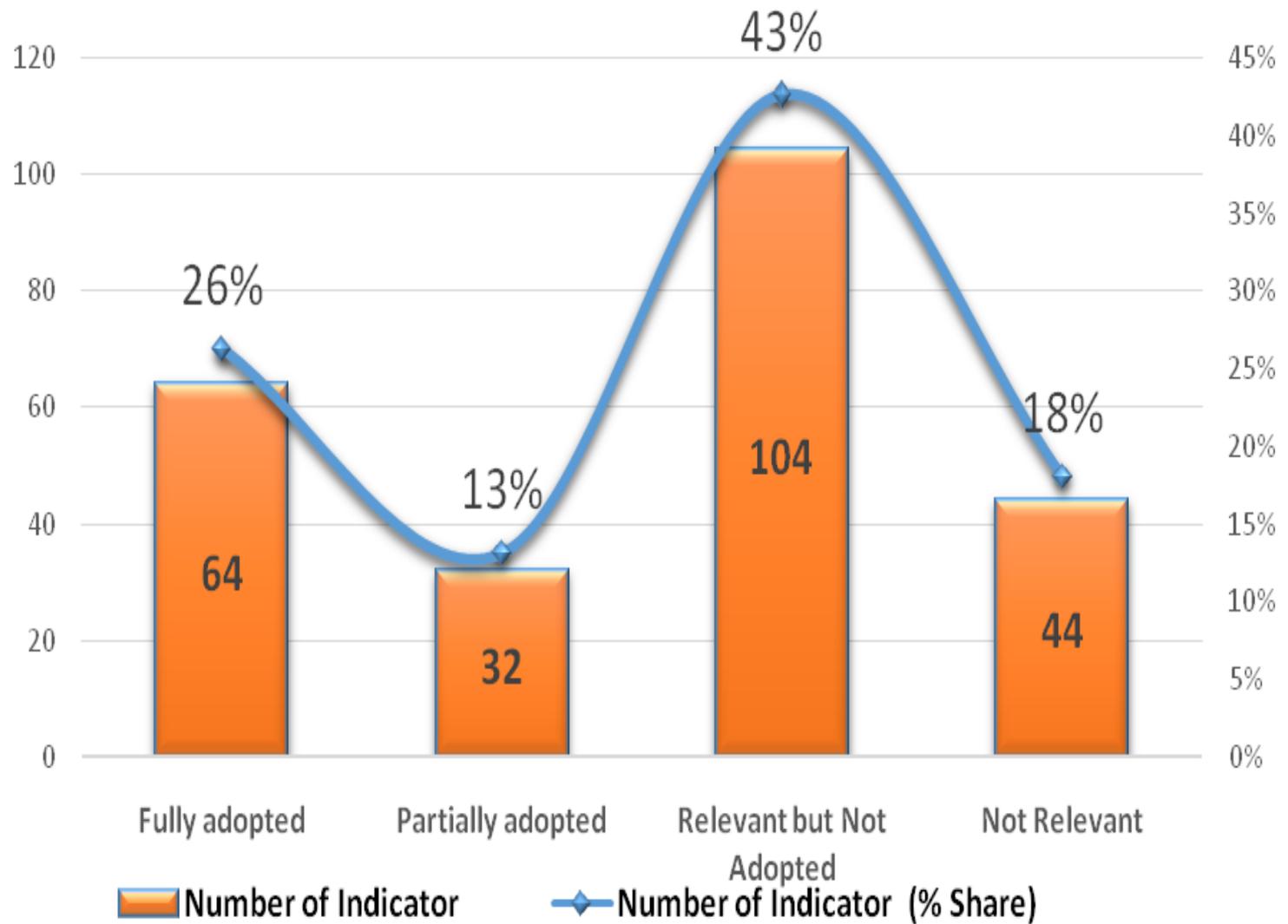
1. Methodology and Process
2. Policy and Enabling Environment
3. Means of Implementation
4. Thematic Issues to be Addressed
5. The Way Forward

Methodology and Process

1. Report prepared following the 'Voluntary Common Guidelines to support country reporting on the SDGs' presented in the annex of the UN Secretary General's report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow up and review at the global level.
2. Referred 3 guiding documents, namely the Guidelines for Preparation of 12th FYP, BLSS 2017, & PM's State of Nation Report (2016-17), in addition to numerous national and international reports.
3. Taken whole of government approach and not much of whole of society approach.
4. Several round of VNR Task Force meetings from the inception report preparation till the review & endorsement of draft report.

Classification of SDG Indicators

1. **Fully Adopted:** Indicators used in Bhutan completely matches with SDG indicator.
2. **Partially Adopted:** Indicator used in Bhutan addresses the objective of the relevant target or aggregate indicator exists but not at disaggregated level.
3. **Relevant but not Adopted:** SDG indicator is relevant to Bhutan but the indicator is not adopted/used at all.
4. **Not Relevant:** SDG indicator is not all relevant to Bhutan's context.



Classification of Data Availability against SDG indicator

1. **Available:** Data is available regularly with clear meta data, collection, analysis, dissemination process with clear assignment of data production responsibility agencies.
2. **Partially Available:** Data is only available as ad hoc publications but not as systematic regular publications of agencies with established process of data collection and dissemination of frequency.
3. **Not Available:** Data is not all available

Tracking Progress of Goals

Progress was tracked using three broad criteria

1. **Achieved:** All relevant targets are achieved (may not be relevant in the current stage but for future purpose).
2. **On Track:** Enabling policy and legal framework put in place, resources are available, implementation is underway and current progress is good and on a positive journey.
3. **At Risk:** No enabling policies and legal framework put in place, absence of concrete implementation, resources not available and limited or no notable progress

Policy and Enabling Environment

- 1. Creating ownership for the SDGs** – National sensitization was carried out on 30 Oct. 2015 soon after adoption of SDGs followed by a sensitization to LG in 2016. Extensive consultations and sensitization were carried out during the formulation of 12th plan.
- 2. Incorporation of SDGs in national framework** – Policy formulation uses 22 variable that are used by screening tool to assess proposed public policies aligned to the principles and goals of sustainable development. Out 143 relevant SDG targets, 134 SDG target aligned with indicators of 11 FYP. 16 NKRA and KPIs of 12 plan aligned to 17 SDGs, their targets and indicators; further integration into AKRAs & LGKRAs

Policy and Enabling Environment

3. **Institutional Mechanism** – GNHC as high level SDG committee due to indivisibility between SDG & GNH. So GNHC will overlook SDGs at the highest level.
4. GNHCS as Lead Coordination Agency to support GNHCS/High level SDG committee. GNHCS has been entrusted with the responsibility to coordinate, advise, monitor, evaluate and report progress on the implementation of SDGs in Bhutan.
5. SDG Working Committee established to ensure smooth implementation and seamless coordination

Means of Implementation

- A. **Financing** – SDGs are highly intertwined with GNH & socio-economic pursuit of Bhutan, the resources determined for the respective plans during SDG period is deemed to form the significant portion for SDG financing. (**Domestic resources, FDI, ODA**)
- B. **Statistical Capacity** – Of the 244 indicators, 64 indicators (26%) are fully adopted and 32(13%) partially adopted. About 104 (43%) of indicators are relevant but not adopted and rest 44 indicators (18%) are not relevant to Bhutan's context.
 - **In terms of data availability for SDGs**, data is available for 84 indicators (34%), partially available for 66 indicators (27%), and no data for the rest 94 (39%) indicators

Means of Implementation

- C. Partnership for Development** – Partnership with multiple stakeholders including the international community, private sector, civil society and Local Governments in achieving 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- D. Science, Technology and Development** – Science, technology and innovation is an important means of implementation of SDGs. The 12 plan places strong emphasis on enhancing productive capacity of the economy through upgrading technology, advancing research and innovation capacity.
- E. Monitoring and Evaluation** – M&E of SDGs shall be conducted in a manner that is harmonized with the M&E of plans.

Thematic Issues to be Addressed

Economic Agenda –

1. Bhutan met the criteria for graduation at the 2015 triennial review. While the country has achieved impressive gains in 2 of the parameters for graduation, namely GNI per capita and HAI, overcoming economic vulnerability continues to be a major challenge.
2. Hydropower, major driver for economy with 16% of GDP and 30% of revenue.

Thematic Issues to be Addressed

Economic Agenda –

3. Current account deficit of 31.2% of GDP which continues to be financed by aid flows and hydropower related inflows.
4. Youth unemployment rate of 11% in 2016
5. Challenges in diversifying the economic base due to inherent constraints associated with being landlocked and small population.

Thematic Issues to be Addressed

Social Agenda –

1. Percentages of people living below poverty reduced from 23.2 % in 2007 to 8.2% in 2017. While the progress is commendable, Bhutan is confronted with the last mile challenge of eradicating poverty in all its forms.
2. IMR – 60 death per 1000 live births in 2000 to 30 in 2012.
3. MMR – 255 death per 100,000 live births in 2000 to 86 in 2012
4. However, due to change in lifestyles and dietary habits, NCD have risen considerably causing 53% of all deaths.

Thematic Issues to be Addressed

Social Agenda –

5. Recent emergence of cases such as crime, suicide, substance abuse, and mental health problem among youth is a growing concern.
6. Adjusted Net Primary Enrolment Rate is 98.8% in 2017
7. Gross Enrolment Ratio for basic (PP-X) is 108.8% and
8. GER for secondary (VII-XII) is 95.7% for same year.
9. However, female employment at vocational and technical education is just 35% in 2017. Similarly, 45% for tertiary education.
10. In addition, concerns about the quality of education still persist.

Thematic Issues to be Addressed

Environmental Agenda –

1. Forest cover – 70.46 %
2. Protected area – 51.40%

Nonetheless the state of environment is changing due to population growth and economic development.

3. Water resource per capita availability – 94,500m³/capita/annum. Climate change and geographical imbalance is leading to experience of shortages in local areas.
4. Air pollution and GHG emission is on the rise.
5. Waste management is an emerging environmental issue.

The Way Forward

Policy Action 1: Enhancing Productive Capacity of the Economy – to move away from export concentration in hydropower towards more diversified exports of value added goods and services, with increased participation of vibrant, small and medium enterprises.

Policy Action 2: Rethinking Human Capital Development – Improved learning outcome and matching the demand and supply of skills, especially for youth.

Policy Action 3: Mobilizing Resources for Environmental Vulnerabilities –Exploring innovative means to financing and mobilizing domestic and external resources and international support measures are critical to manage challenges posed by environmental vulnerabilities.

The Way Forward

Operational Priority Actions:

1. Harmonization of Policies.
2. Improving Data and Statistics Management.
3. Improving Awareness on SDGs and ownership.
4. Developing Financing Strategies.
5. Improving Stakeholders Coordination.

Thank You