

**A Strategic Plan for the Child Protection and Care Services (CPCS)  
for Youth Development Fund (YDF): 2014**



**REPORT**

**Youth Development Fund Secretariat**

**Post Box 255**

**Thimphu: BHUTAN**

**Submitted by:**



**Dated: June 27, 2014**

**A Strategic Plan for the Child Protection and Care Services (CPCS)  
for Youth Development Fund (YDF): 2014**

**REPORT**

**Youth Development Fund Secretariat**

**Post Box 255**

**Thimphu: BHUTAN**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

YDF would like to express our appreciation to the following governmental and non-governmental agencies for their valuable contributions and feedback in the development of this strategic paper.

1. Office of the Attorney General (OAG),
2. National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC),
3. Bhutan Narcotics Control Agency (BNCA),
4. Woman and Child Protection Division (WCPD) (RBP),
5. Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW),
6. Bhutan Nuns Foundation (BNF),
7. Dratshang CPU,
8. Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI),
9. Ministry Labour and Human Resources (MoHLR),
10. Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) MoE,
11. Special Education Unit (MoE),
12. Ability Bhutan Society (ABS),
13. One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC),
14. Save Children Bhutan (SC),
15. UNICEF Bhutan, and
16. Youth development Fund (YDF).

**Copyright © by Youth Development Fund Secretariat 2014**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	3
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	4
<b>ACRONYMS</b>	5
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	7
<b>1. Introduction</b>	8
<b>2. Rationale</b>	8
<b>3. Child Protection in Bhutan</b>	8
3.1 Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011	9
3.2 Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report and National Plan of Action for Child Protection, NCWC 2012	12
<b>4. Youth Development Fund</b>	20
4.1 Vision	20
4.2 Mission	20
4.3 Service Provider	20
4.4 Objectives	20
4.5 Programs	21
<b>5. Child Protection in YDF</b>	21
<b>6. Contribution of Various Agencies</b>	21
<b>7. Recommendations</b>	22
7.1 Recommendation 1	23
7.2 Recommendation 2	23
7.3 Recommendation 3	24
7.4 Recommendation 4	24
7.5 Recommendation 5	25
<b>8. Plan of Action</b>	25
<b>9. Conclusion</b>	27

## ACRONYMS

ABS	Ability Bhutan Society
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AHF	American Himalayan Foundation
BBSTV	Bhutan Broadcasting Service Television
BNCA	Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency
BNF	Bhutan Nuns Foundation
BNLI	Bhutan National Legal Institute
CBSS	Community Based Support System
CCPA	Child Care and Protection Act
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CELI	Canada Fund For Local Initiatives
CPCS	Child Protection and Care Services
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSOA	Civil Society Organization Authority
DAISAN	Druk Adolescents' Initiative on Sexual Awareness Network
DRA	Drug Regulatory Authority
DYS	Department of Youth and Sports
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ELDS	Early Learning and Development Standards
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission
GOI	Government of India
GVW	Gender Based Violence
HISC	Health Information and Service Centres
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
JDWNRH	Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHCA	Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs
MoLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
NCB	Narcotics Control Board
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children
NDPSSA	Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substance and Substance Abuse
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OSCC	One Stop Crisis Centre
PLWIV	People Living With HIV
RBP	Royal Bhutan Police
REC	Royal Education Council
RENEW	Respect Educate Nurture and Empower Women
RGOB	Royal Government of Bhutan
RUB	Royal University of Bhutan
SC	Save the Children

SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRHR	Sexual and Reproduction Health and Rights
TCB	Tobacco Control Board
ToT	Training of the Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UWC	United World College
VAW	Violence Against Women
WCPD	Women and Child Protection Division
WFP	World Food Programme
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
YDF	Youth Development Fund
YDRC	Youth Development and Rehabilitation Centre

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents the strategic plan for the Child Protection and Care Services (CPCS) for Youth Development Fund (YDF) based on the documents, Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011, findings of the Mapping and Assessment Report, National Plan of Action for Child Protection (NCWC) and outcome of wide ranging consultations with the relevant stakeholders and internal interviews with the programs of YDF. It proposes a list of recommendations, strategies, activities and the plan of action for the next ten years.

Bhutan signed the United Nations Convention on Rights of Children (CRC) on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1990 and ratified it on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1990. In line with the CRC, the Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan (CCPA) were enacted on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011 by the RGoB so that policies and programs are in line with the CRC. The CCPA 2011 mandates that the non-governmental organizations play an active role in contributing effectively to meet the needs of the children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law. Therefore, it has become crucial that YDF being the first NGO working to meet the needs of all children and youth also act proactively to address the issue of children and youth.

YDF currently works in five main areas and focuses on addressing the needs of:

- Youth from low income families.
- Youth with special needs.
- Youth abusing drugs and alcohol.
- Unemployed Youth
- Children in conflict with the law.

While existing programs of YDF already have relevance to Child protection, this strategic plan is expected to strengthen the Child Protection and Care Services program and strengthen collaboration and ties with in the existing programs and other stakeholders.

The recommendations made in this document suggest a wholesome approach that involves working with as many as 8 other organisations and internal collaboration within YDF.

Based on the CCPA and the Mapping and Assessment report, strategies are provided on a long term, medium term and short term basis. Short term strategies include strengthening partnerships, creation of awareness while the longer term strategies recommend development of facilities.

The report provides five recommendations under which four strategies and seventeen activities can be implemented in the short term of one to five years, and three strategies and seven activities can be implemented in the long term of six to ten years.

# **A Strategic Plan for the Child Protection and Care Services (CPCS) for Youth Development Fund (YDF): 2014**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This paper presents the strategic plan for the Child protection and Care Services (CPCS) for Youth Development Fund (YDF) based on Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011<sup>1</sup>, findings of the Mapping and Assessment Report, National Plan of Action for Child Protection (NCWC) 2012<sup>2</sup> and outcome of wide ranging consultations with the relevant stakeholders and internal interview with YDF program staffs. It proposes a list of recommendations, strategies, activities and the plan of action for the next ten years.

## **2. RATIONALE**

The National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) was established in 2004 mainly to fulfil the obligations of the Royal Government towards the Convention on Rights of Children.

In line with the CRC, the Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan (CCPA) were enacted on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011, clearly outlining the roles of the NGOs in addressing the issues of children under difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law. As an organisation mandated to work for youth and children from all walks of life, it has become crucial that YDF plays an active role in contributing effectively to meet the needs of the children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law.

The following articles within the CCPA outline the role of the CSOs:

The CCPA, 2011 (Chapter 3, Section 34, p. 10) mentions:

*Volunteers, voluntary or civil society organizations, social institutions and other community resources may be called upon to contribute effectively to the rehabilitation of children in difficult circumstances and in conflict with law.*

As an organisation that has the mandate for the entire youth of Bhutan, YDF has a very important role in ensuring that we contribute effectively to the rehabilitation of children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law.

## **3. CHILD PROTECTION IN BHUTAN**

The literature review was conducted on all child protection literature available in Bhutan with particular reference to Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011 (CCPA 2011) and findings of the Mapping and Assessment Report, National Plan of Action for Child Protection, NCWC.

---

<sup>1</sup> National Assembly of Bhutan The Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011

<sup>2</sup> National Commission for Women and Children. Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report & National Plan of Action for Child Protection 2012



### **3.1 Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan 2011**

The Act came into force on July 5, 2011. To support the Act, YDF aspires to meet the needs of children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law, to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children through provision of services provided in the form of rehabilitation and reintegration into the society along with prevention services to protect children at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation and to address the welfare of the entire children and youth of Bhutan. Relevant sections from the Act summarized below helped in drawing up comprehensive strategies and activities

#### ***Chapter 2, Section 6, p.3***

The child justice system is essential to uphold the rights of children keeping them safe and promoting their physical and mental well-being.

#### ***Chapter 3, Section 24, p. 8***

The Central and Local Government shall disseminate and create awareness on the rights and responsibilities of the child and relevant child law.

#### ***Chapter 3, Section 25, p. 8***

The Central and Local Government through concerned agencies or institutions shall provide community based services responding to special needs, problems, interests and concerns of children including appropriate counselling and guidance to the children, guardians and families.

#### ***Chapter 3, Section 26, p. 9***

Education institution shall care for and protect the child through, among others, the following measures:

- (a) Work with families and communities to promote understanding about children;
- (b) Enhance the academic and social image of children;
- (c) Rehabilitate children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law;
- (d) Provide continuing education to children who have dropped out of schools, children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law; and
- (e) Equip children with information and skills to deal with personal safety.

#### ***Chapter 3, Section 27, p. 9***

The mass media shall assist in the promotion of child rights and responsibilities and prevention of offences committed by children through positive publication.

#### ***Chapter 3, Section 31, p. 10***

The community may provide or strengthen a wide range of community based support measures for children, including community development centre, recreational facilities and other services to respond to the needs of children.

#### ***Chapter 3, Section 34, p. 10***

Volunteers, voluntary or civil society organizations, social institutions and other community resources may be called upon to contribute effectively to the rehabilitation of children in difficult circumstances and in conflict with law.

***Chapter 3, Section 35, 11***

The government shall endeavour to take measures and develop programs to provide families with the opportunity to learn about parental roles and obligations with regard to child development and child care, promoting positive parent-child relationships, sensitizing parents about the problems of children and encouraging their involvement and promote community based activities.

***Chapter 3, Section 37, p. 11***

The government shall emphasize on preventive policies facilitating the socialization and integration of a child in conflict with law, through family, community, schools, vocational training, and voluntary and civil society organizations.

***Chapter 4, Section 47, p. 13***

The Government shall endeavour to establish and maintain as many child homes as may be necessary for:

1. Giving assistance and protection to children in difficult circumstances;
2. Providing accommodation, maintenance and facilities to children in difficult circumstances for the development of the child's character and abilities and give necessary education and training for protection against moral danger and exploitation; or
3. Performing such other functions as may be prescribed in the rules and regulations made under this Act for the children in difficult circumstances to ensure all round growth and development of the child's personality.

***Chapter 4, Section 49, p. 14***

The Government shall endeavour to establish and maintain as many remand homes as may be necessary for:

1. The temporary care of the child during the period of any inquiry or adjudication;
2. Providing accommodation, maintenance and facilities for medical examination and treatment; or
3. Performing such other functions as may be prescribed in the rules and regulations made under this Act.

***Chapter 4, Section 50, p. 14***

The Government shall endeavour to establish and maintain as many special homes as may be necessary for:

- (a) The care of the child in conflict with law;
- (b) Providing accommodation, maintenance and facilities for development of the child's character, abilities, education, training, and provide rehabilitation for protection against moral danger and exploitation; or
- (c) Performing such other functions as may be prescribed in the rules and regulations made under this Act.

***Chapter 4, Section 51, p. 15***

The Government shall endeavour to establish and maintain as many closed facilities as may be necessary for:

- (a) The care of the child in conflict with law involving an offence of third degree and above;
- (b) Providing accommodation, maintenance and facilities for development of the child's character, abilities, education, training, and provide rehabilitation for protection against moral danger and exploitation; or

- (c) Performing such other functions as may be prescribed in the rules and regulations made under this Act.

***Chapter 4, Section 52, p. 15***

The Government shall endeavour to establish and maintain as many Aftercare Homes as may be necessary to facilitate social reintegration by providing for:

1. The temporary care of a child released from the home and who requires further care and assistance;
2. Ensuring a smooth transition from detention to life outside the home;
3. Assisting a child in finding suitable and gainful employment, foster homes or processing for adoption; and
4. Monitoring the child and collection of feedback on their performance from the Organization where a rehabilitated young person works and maintaining a record of the child released from a home on a monthly basis for a period of one year from the date of release.

***Chapter 5, Section 59, p. 18***

A child in difficult circumstances is a child who:

- (a) Is found without having any home or settled place of abode and without any ostensible means of subsistence and is a destitute;
- (b) Has a parent or guardian who is unfit or incapacitated to take care of or exercise control over the child;
- (c) Is found to associate with any person who leads an immoral, drunken or depraved life;
- (d) Is being or likely to be abused or exploited for immoral or illegal purposes; or
- (e) Is a frequent victim at the hands of individuals, families or the community.

***Chapter 13, Section 204, p. 56***

The Government shall by rules made under this Act establish homes for rehabilitating the children who are in conflict with the law, reintegrating them into the society and to their families, and as a productive member of the communities.

***Chapter 13, Section 211, p. 57***

Inter-ministerial and inter-departmental co-operation shall be fostered for the purpose of providing adequate academic or as appropriate, vocational training to the institutionalized child.

<b>Chapter 14: Offence against children</b>		
<b>Section</b>	<b>Legislation related to</b>	<b>Offence</b>
212	Assault of a child	A violation
213	Cruelty to a child	A petty misdemeanour
214	Harsh or degrading correction or punishment	A violation
215	Child battery	A petty misdemeanour or a misdemeanour
216	Employment of a child for begging	A misdemeanour
217	Serving alcoholic beverages to a child	A petty misdemeanour
218	Providing Narcotic drug Psychotropic or chemical substance to a child	A felony of the fourth degree.
219	Invasion of a child's privacy	A petty misdemeanour
220	Engagement of child for commission of crime	one degree higher than the punishment for the offence committed
221	Sale of a Child	Felony of the third degree
222	Child prostitution	Felony of the third degree
223	Child pornography	Felony of the third degree
224	Trafficking of a child	Felony of the third degree

***Chapter 14, Section 232, p.62***

The authorities of the closed facilities or any authorities shall arrange for counselling on health, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, life skills and behavioural education, and other related topics.

***Chapter 14, Section 238, p. 63***

In order to facilitate expeditious processing of offences against and to safe guard the best interest of the child, the government shall establish a one stop crisis centre in every major government hospital staffed by a police official, psychiatrist, social worker and a legal counsel.

**3.2 Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report and National Plan of Action for Child Protection, NCWC 2012** provides a comprehensive review of policies, plans and programs carried out in Bhutan by various agencies governmental as well as non-governmental. The report covers introduction, six priority areas, overall child protection system strategy and recommendations and National Plan for Action on Child Protection. Various sections of the report highlighting key areas of focus and gaps are summarized below which helped in drawing up comprehensive strategies and activities.

## **Introduction**

The introduction covers diagnosis, country overview, child protection system, strategy and methodology.

### **Priority areas:**

Six priority areas taken up from 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan document identify several gaps and matters needing attention which are summarised below.

#### ***a) Laws, policies, standards and regulations<sup>3</sup>***

Bhutan has so far ratified and signed nine conventions (NCWC 2012, p. 12) and promulgated eleven legislations (UNICEF, p.13) relating to child protection. However, the following areas are highlighted as requiring further attention:

- *Integration of children's concerns into legislations and policies,*
- *A comprehensive rules and regulations to enact Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan, 2011 (CCPA 2011),*
- *Requirement of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to provide children with Birth and civil registration,*
- *Labour and Employment Act 2007 to consider monitoring of child labour in informal settings,*
- *Marriage Act 1980 to address the child marriage scenario in the country.*
- *Specific regulations to protect discrimination of children against race, sex, language, religion etc.,*
- *Lack of data on abuse and neglect of children in Bhutan,*
- *Lack of understanding of kinship care in urban centres and monastic schools,*
- *No specific directives or guides related to child trafficking and mobility,*
- *More understanding required on the child sexual exploitation in Bhutan,*
- *There are very few support services available to facilitate children's access to justice,*
- *The Disaster Management Bill makes no reference to child protection during emergencies.*

#### ***b) Services and service delivery mechanisms across a continuum of care***

There are lots of initiatives taken on this area. The services and service delivery mechanisms targeted to child protection in Bhutan against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation are currently spearheaded by lead agencies such as Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (MoHCA) and Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (MoLHR), but carried out jointly with other agencies such as National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Health (MoH), Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) and other Civil

---

<sup>3</sup> Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report & National Plan of Action for Child Protection, 2012, National Commission for Women and Children, Thimphu, Bhutan; p.

Society Organisations (CSOs). However, the following areas are highlighted as requiring further attention:

- *Most of the services are corrective in nature rather than preventive,*
- *Health Information and Service Centres (HISC) of the MoH are located in large urban centres,*
- *Respect Educate Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW) initiated family counselling for at-risk household is available in Thimphu only,*
- *There is no comprehensive support system for children with disabilities,*
- *Need large scale child awareness programs on child rights and support services,*
- *There is a need to establish a parent organization to spearhead and lead strategies targeting child protection in Bhutan,*
- *Child courts and judges are needed to cater to the child justice system,*
- *The local government leaders such as Gups, Mangiaps/Mangmis should be knowledgeable about the child protection issues,*
- *Alternative care services such as adoption requires monitoring and support mechanisms to ascertain the quality of care provided,*
- *Needs assessment for the People Living With HIV (PLWIV) especially children could strengthen social support for them.*

**c) Capacity and resources (human, financial & infrastructural)<sup>4</sup>**

Child protection system requires adequate and appropriate human resource capacity. This seems to be currently lacking in all the agencies involved in child protection in the country. The following areas are highlighted as requiring further attention:

- *Social workers need to be appointed,*
- *Probation officers need to be appointed as per the CCPA 2011,*
- *Judges require training in Child Justice System,*
- *Health workers require training on Child rights and protection during emergencies,*
- *Labour inspectors require training on child labour and trafficking,*
- *School curriculum requires integration of child protection information,*
- *Staff of Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency (BNCA), Department of Youth and Sports (DYS) and HISC should be knowledgeable about child protection, Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) and CCPA 2011,*
- *Lhak-sam, Tarayana and Youth Development Fund (YDF) also require additional human resource capacity,*

---

<sup>4</sup> Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report & National Plan of Action for Child Protection, 2012, National Commission for Women and Children, Thimphu, Bhutan; p.

- *Though 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan addresses child care and protection, but the government agencies require financial resources to support the programs and for the non-governmental organizations there is a need to mobilize resources from various other sources.*

**d) *Coordination, collaboration and accountability***<sup>5</sup>

Coordination, collaboration and accountability are keys to success for any program in rolling out across the board especially when the proper approach is bilateral and multilateral. In case of child protection in Bhutan currently the situation seems to be complicated and at the initial stages. The following areas are highlighted as requiring further attention:

- *Coordination mechanisms are required at the sub-national level,*
- *Coordination among stakeholders is lacking,*
- *Child Labour Task Force requires a child representation,*
- *National Emergency Action Plan and child protection system do not address child protection issues,*
- *There is no medium through which children can seek help in need and a special mechanism to be established to report child rights violations.*

**e) *Communication and advocacy***<sup>6</sup>

It appears that currently society at large tends to think that child protection issues are internal matters of homes. Looking at several layers of child protection issues, this is a myth. The following areas emerge as matters needing attention:

- *Civil Society Organization Authority (CSOA) should regulate and support Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to play advocacy role within their mandate,*
- *Media should play much stronger role in advocacy for the general public specially communities,*
- *Print and audio-visual media could cover wide ranging child protection issues,*
- *A communication strategy could be targeted to Police, Army, Dhe-sungs on emergencies,*
- *Implementing agencies require capacity to develop advocacy and communication strategies.*

---

<sup>5</sup> Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report & National Plan of Action for Child Protection, 2012, National Commission for Women and Children, Thimphu, Bhutan; p. 33

<sup>6</sup> Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report & National Plan of Action for Child Protection, 2012, National Commission for Women and Children, Thimphu, Bhutan; p. 36



#### *f) Knowledge management<sup>7</sup>*

During the last fifteen years, there were about seven research studies conducted in Bhutan related to child protection (NCWC 2012 p. 38). Government agencies seem to have better capacity than the other agencies. Some of the points to be noted on this area are:

- *There is a dearth of data on child protection in Bhutan,*
- *Most of the agencies lack experience and expertise and evidences are very difficult to trace currently,*
- *The data available are in bits and pieces lying with various agencies without any link with each other,*
- *There is no data available on prevalence of violence against children,*
- *There is great scope of doing research studies on child protection in Bhutan,*
- *There is a need to develop Information Management System for child protection.*

Base on the inputs received from both CCPA 2011, Mapping and Assessment Report and National Plan of Action for Child Protection, NCWC 2012 a comprehensive list of strategies and activities drawn are presented below.

#### **Strategy 1** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter3, Section 24, p. 8*)

Further strengthen the existing awareness and education programs of key beneficiaries such as parents, teachers, children and community leaders about child protection by developing guidelines which would lead to better understanding and act as a preventive measure against abuse, discrimination, exploitation and violence against children.

##### *Activities*

1. Develop guidelines for awareness programs on child protection.
2. Conduct awareness programs for teachers and children in schools, parents and community leaders.
3. Develop audio-visual materials, posters, pamphlets and distribute to schools and community centres in gewogs.

#### **Strategy 2** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 25, p. 8*)

Provision of support services for children in need in urban and rural areas will address immediate problems facing children.

##### *Activities*

1. Conduct a need assessment in the vulnerable communities.
2. Establish community based child support centres in needy communities.
3. Train and appoint community based social workers.
4. Provide counselling and guidance services.

---

<sup>7</sup> Child Protection in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report & National Plan of Action for Child Protection, 2012, National Commission for Women and Children, Thimphu, Bhutan; p. 38



**Strategy 3** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 26, p. 9*)

Education institutions especially schools can play a vital role in the protection of children against all odds in their locality. But these institutions cannot do much on their own. So there should be some provisions to support these institutions in terms of funds and expertise.

*Activities*

1. Identify focal schools to pilot community based child welfare programs.
2. Provide some funds to the school to carry out the activities such as:
  - Identifying and training teachers to work with families to promote understanding about children.
  - Rehabilitate children in difficult circumstances and conflict with law.
  - Providing continuing education to children in difficulty and who come in conflict with law and dropped out of school.
  - Providing life skills training to children on personal safety.
  - Developing mechanisms to monitor and support their activities.

**Strategy 4** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 27, p. 9*)

Advocacy through mass media imparts strong messages to the general public. The use of newspapers and television enhances information delivery and helps in reducing the communication gap.

*Activities*

1. Develop and broadcast through television short cartoon clips and serials about child right, prevention of violation, exploitation, discrimination and children in conflict with law.
2. Conduct forum discussions in TV about child protection.
3. Send messages through the radios.
4. Conduct literary completions on child protection.
5. Advertise child protection messages in the newspapers.

**Strategy 5** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 37, p. 11*)

The current practices of child protection are mostly corrective in nature. The mechanisms in place respond to needs as they occur. The system does not detect the underground realities of the occurrence for the children in difficult circumstances. So it is important to lay more emphasis on preventive measures which are currently neglected.

*Activities*

1. Develop mechanisms to integrate child in conflict with law through family, community, schools, vocational training, and voluntary and civil society organizations.
2. Develop mechanisms to monitor and support their activities.

**Strategy 6** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 4, Section 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, pp. 13-15*)

Provisions of facilities should be in place for sheltering children in conflict with law as laid down in CCPA 2011. Such facilities could be used as child homes, remand homes, special homes, closed facilities, after care homes and rehabilitation centres.

*Activities*

1. Strengthen the existing Women and Child Protection Units in Dzongkhags for children in conflict with law.

2. Appoint caretakers and other staff as required in such homes.
3. Conduct sessions for children on counseling for health, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, life skills and behavioral education, and other related topics to reintegrate them into the society and to their families.
4. Develop mechanisms to monitor and support their activities.

**Strategy 7** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 13, Section 211, p. 57*)

Once the children are institutionalized, it is important to continue further support in providing them with knowledge and skills that help them to live in the society harmoniously. It will have long lasting impact on their way of living and to make themselves beneficial for the society at large.

*Activities*

1. Identify vulnerable children in consultation with appropriate agencies.
2. Provide financial support for their continuing education.
3. Build a strong partnership with other stakeholders to provide care and support services.

**Strategy 8** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Laws, policies, standards and regulations*, pp. 11-23)

Impressive efforts have been put by government agencies such as Judiciary, MoLHR, MoHCA, MoH in promulgating laws, policies, standards and regulations. However, a lot more needs to be done to implement them in practice effectively. These organisations need to put their acts together to serve for a common goal of protecting vulnerable children in the country.

*Activities*

1. Conduct studies to collect data on abuse and neglect of children, kinship care in urban centres and monastic schools, trafficking and mobility, and sexual exploitation.

**Strategy 9** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Services and service delivery mechanisms across a continuum of care* pp. 24-29)

Government agencies, autonomous agencies, civil society organisations, armed and unarmed personnel are currently involved in providing services related to child protection in the country. But it appears that the outreach to the general child population of estimated (30% below age 15, GNHC 2013, p.51) reported to be limited. Such a limited access leads to many vulnerable children being neglected. Impressive efforts are being put despite human and financial resource constraints. However more efforts need to be put to cover the last mile.

*Activities*

1. Extend more family counselling services to other parts of the country.
2. Develop monitoring and support mechanisms to ascertain the quality of care provided to adopted children.

**Strategy 10** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Coordination, collaboration and accountability* pp. 33-35)

Effective coordination, collaboration and accountability are keys to success for any program in rolling out across the board especially when the proper approach is bilateral and multilateral. To achieve the same goal, the current scenario is as such that each agency has its own focus areas and target groups. The programs and activities seem to supplement and complement each other thereby increasing the outreach.

*Activities*

1. Establish an Advisory Board comprising of members from important stakeholders.
2. Involve children in formulating programs.
3. Establish facilities for at risk children to seek help and to report child rights violations.

**Strategy 11** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Communication and advocacy* pp. 36-37)

Communication and advocacy in the society about child protection do not simply fall under the purview of mass media such as television and newspapers. Each one of them is simply a medium through which concerned agencies can portray their information about child protection to the general population including adults and children. There are measures that can be adopted in this area.

*Activities*

1. Establish child protection information centres in each agency concerned.
2. Develop advocacy programs and materials.
3. Disseminate to targeted child population through mass media and site visits.

**Strategy 12** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Knowledge management* pp. 38-39)

In Bhutan, Child Protection agenda has erupted as an offshoot of recent development initiative during the last 15 years. There are no adequate empirical data to carry out evidence based analysis which impedes the effort to put in place any concrete programs and strategies to address child protection issues in the country. So research initiatives in this area will be extremely beneficial in the long run.

*Activities*

1. Strengthen research capacity in each agency.
2. Develop Information Management Database on child protection.
3. Conduct a global literature review on child protection.
4. Identify all possible areas of research on child protection.

The above list has been considered while selecting appropriate strategies and activities for Child Protection and Care Services Program in YDF which are presented under recommendations.

## **4. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND**

To fit in the Child Protection and Care Services as one of the core component programs in YDF, it is important to consider the entire mandate of YDF.

The Bhutan Youth Development Fund was launched in 1999 by Her Majesty Ashi Tshering Pem Wangchuck with a special focus on disadvantaged youth. The Bhutan YDF provides financial support for youth development activities like leadership skills, drug rehabilitation, basic skills and vocational training, advocacy research and education.<sup>8</sup>

### **4.1 Vision**

To ensure a better today and brighter tomorrow for the youth of Bhutan.

### **4.2 Mission**

The Bhutan Youth Development Fund is committed to making every youth a leader. An estimated 59 percent of Bhutanese are younger than age 24. As Bhutan's leading youth organization, it works to ensure that all youth have equal access to education, meaningful employment and opportunities to develop their potential. The programs build leadership skills, encourage teamwork and promote the value of service among youth. Through advocacy work and strategic partnerships, YDF encourages youth participation, raise awareness of youth issues and promote youth-oriented policy.

### **4.3 Service Provider**

YDF is a service provider. The beneficiaries include agencies of the Royal Government of Bhutan, local NGOs, schools, youth centres, youth development rehabilitation centres, district and community organizations and sport federations.

### **4.4 Objectives**

- To establish a sustainable funding mechanism within Bhutan so that youth development and empowerment activities can be undertaken, now and in the future.
- To help sustain various youth programs through the formal school curriculum and extracurricular activities in areas such as environmental conservation, health and hygiene, reproductive health, agriculture, and sports.
- To provide grant management services to national and international donors providing assistance for youth development activities, targeting all segments of the youth population in Bhutan. In particular, this will include disadvantaged youth such as the disabled, early school leavers, juvenile delinquents, unemployed youth and those from low-income families.
- To set up a few flagship projects in areas where there are no interventions either by the government or civil society that would reflect the ethos of YDF.
- To raise awareness among youth about the importance of their role as future adult citizens of the country.

---

<sup>8</sup> (<http://bhutanyouth.org>)

#### **4.5 Programs**

- Simply Bhutan Project
- 250 for YOUth
- Youth Leadership
- Scholarships
- Empowerment for Employment
- Drug Education, Prevention and Rehabilitation
- Youth Facilities
- Sponsor a Monk

#### **5. CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM IN YDF**

As the child protection program is new in YDF, this strategy paper shows way forward for the smooth implementation of activities and to clarify the role of YDF in addressing child protection issues as there are a lot of other government agencies, NGOs and CSOs who cater to children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law. It will help YDF in implementing the activities but it will also help in the coordination of the organization with the other relevant stakeholders.

#### **6. CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS AGENCIES**

Bilateral consultations were conducted with 14 stakeholders from February 28 to March 13, 2014. Responses from the stakeholders were received on the activities conducted so far, future development, focus areas, target groups, funding sources, challenges and most importantly identification of areas they can collaborate with YDF. 10 agencies responded to the questionnaire and 4 did not. Further, individual consultations were also conducted with the Deputy Executive Director and all Program Officers in YDF. It created a platform for collaboration for YDF and will facilitate in establishing the future link.

Various stakeholders consulted were as follows:

SI No	Agencies	Established in
1	Youth development Fund (YDF)	1999
2	Office of the Attorney General (OAG) <sup>9</sup>	14 April, 2000
3	National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) <sup>10</sup>	2004
4	Bhutan Narcotics Control Agency (BNCA) <sup>11</sup>	November 2006
5	Woman and Child Protection Division (WCPD) (RBP) <sup>12</sup>	01 May 2007
6	Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW) <sup>13</sup>	30 June 2008
7	Bhutan Nuns Foundation (BNF) <sup>14</sup>	March 2009
8	Dratshang CPU	2010
9	Bhutan National Legal Institute (BNLI) <sup>15</sup>	25th February, 2011
10	Ministry Labour and Human Resources (MoHLR) <sup>16</sup>	
11	Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) MoE <sup>17</sup>	2008-13
12	Special Education Unit (MoE)	
13	Ability Bhutan Society (ABS) <sup>18</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> April 2012
14	One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC)	2008-13
15	Save Children Bhutan (SC) <sup>19</sup>	1982
16	UNICEF Bhutan <sup>20</sup>	1974

There were great opportunities for collaboration. Eight agencies RENEW, BNLI, BNF, DRATSHANG, MoE, NCWC, ABS and OSCC-JDWRNH indicated their areas where YDF could collaborate with them.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the comprehensive list of strategies and activities drawn from CCPA 2011 and Child Protection system in Bhutan, Mapping and Assessment Report, National Plan of Action for Child Protection, NCWC 2012 most appropriate strategies and activities were picked up. Further, wide ranging stakeholders' consultations also provided several inputs. Thus, the following

<sup>9</sup> <http://oag.gov.bt/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ncwc.org.bt/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bnca.gov.bt/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.rbp.gov.bt/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.renewbhutan.org>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.bhutannuns.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.bnli.bt/content/pageContent.php?id=24>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhrsites/?page\\_id=721](http://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhrsites/?page_id=721)

<sup>17</sup> [www.education.gov.bt](http://www.education.gov.bt)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.absbhutan.org/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.6150525/k.B90D/Bhutan.htm>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/bhutan.html>

recommendations, strategies and activities and plan of action for next ten years are drawn up for YDF.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

A. The program be called Child Protection and Care Services (CPCS).

B. Main goal:

- To prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children through provision of services.

C. Objectives:

- Provide preventive services to protect children at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation.
- Provide services for rehabilitation and reintegration of children under difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law into the mainstream society.

D. Target group:

- All the children below the age of 18.

### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

Child Protection and Care Services Program in YDF could focus on four themes: prevention, intervention, integration and research in the short as well as long run. The following four strategies and activities can be taken up in the short run between one to five years time period.

#### **Strategy 1** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 24, p. 8*)

Further strengthen the existing awareness and education programs of key beneficiaries such as parents, teachers, children and community leaders about child protection as a preventive measure against abuse, discrimination, exploitation and violence against children. Advocacy through mass media imparts strong messages to the general public. The use of newspapers and television enhances information delivery and helps in reducing the communication gap (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 27, p. 9*).

#### **Activities**

1. *Develop guidelines for YDF on awareness programs on Child Rights and Child Protection.*
2. *Train volunteer social workers and parents as Focal persons*
3. *Develop advocacy programs and disseminate for out of school children, parents and community leaders.*
4. *Provide life skills training to out of school children.*
5. *Conduct innovative completions on child protection.*
6. *Establish a child protection information centre at YDF.*

#### **Strategy 2** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 4, Section 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, pp. 13-15*)

Provisions of facilities should be in place for sheltering children in conflict with law as laid down in CCPA 2011. Such facilities could be used as child homes, remand homes, special homes, closed facilities, after care homes and rehabilitation centres.

#### **Activities**

1. *In partnership with stakeholders provide facilities at Youth Centres for at risk children to seek help and to report child rights violations.*
2. *Extend more family counselling services in YDF centres.*

**Strategy 3** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 13, Section 211, p. 57*)

Once the children are institutionalized, it is important to continue further support in providing them with knowledge and skills that help them to live in the society harmoniously. It will have long lasting impact on their way of living and to make them beneficial for the society at large.

**Activities**

1. *Develop mechanisms to integrate child in conflict with law and victims of abuse through family, community, schools, and vocational training.*
2. *Provide financial support for their continuing education.*
3. *Continue vocational training at YDF centres.*

**Strategy 4** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Knowledge management* pp. 38-39)

In Bhutan, Child Protection agenda has erupted as an offshoot of recent development initiative during the last one and a half decade. There is a lack of enough empirical data to carry out evidence based analysis which impedes the effort to put in place any concrete programs and strategies to address child protection issues in the country. So research initiatives by YDF in this area will be extremely beneficial in the long run.

**Activities**

1. *Strengthen research capacity in YDF.*
2. *Ensure systematic collection and management of data on Child Protection and Care Services at YDF which can fit into the overall data management system.*
3. *Conduct a need assessment in the vulnerable communities.*

**RECOMMENDATION 3**

The following strategies and activities are suggested for the longer term implementation.

**Strategy 5** (CCPA 2011, *Chapter 3, Section 25, p. 8*)

Provision of support services for children in need in urban and rural areas will address immediate problems facing children.

**Activities**

1. *Build the capacity at YDF to provide support services to children at risk.*
2. *Train and appoint community based volunteer social workers.*
3. *Provide counselling and guidance services to youths.*

**RECOMMENDATION 4**

There were eight agencies RENEW, BNLI, BNF, DRATSHANG, MoE, NCWC, ABS and OSCC-JDWNRH who have indicated their possible areas of collaboration with YDF. This provides avenues to tap their interest.

**Strategy 6** (Mapping and Assessment Report: *Coordination, collaboration and accountability* pp. 33-35)



Effective coordination, collaboration and accountability are keys to success for any program in rolling out across the board especially when the proper approach is bilateral and multilateral. To achieve the same goal, the current scenario is as such that each agency has its own focus areas and target groups. The programs and activities seem to supplement and complement each other thereby increasing the outreach.

### **Activities**

1. Conduct a stakeholders' consultation meeting to:
  - *Establish an Advisory Board comprising of members from important stakeholders.*
  - *Identify their specific activities needing YDF collaboration.*
2. The CPCS at YDF could consider the following activities suggested by various stakeholders:
  - *Spread Awareness about Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights(DAISAN) **RENEW***
  - *Sponsor Shedra Nun graduates for Dungscho study (**BNF**)*
  - *Study of bullying among young monks in Dratshang (**Dratshang**)*
  - *Establishment of ECCD centres (**MoE**)*
  - *Parenting Education (**MoE**)*
  - *Protection of children with disabilities: advocating on violence against children with disabilities(**ABS**)*
  - *Strengthen Documentation Process – procurement of Photographic Camera\* and Digital Microscope (**OSCC: JDWNRH**)*
  - *Procurement of Drug Screening Kits to help those with drug problems (**OSCC: JDWNRH**)*
  - *Build capacity of forensic staff through support for short term training in selected fields – child abuse, sexual assault, toxicology (**OSCC: JDWNRH**)*
  - *Joint research on topics of mutual interests (**OSCC: JDWNRH**)*
  - *Drop out children to finance by YDF for further studies and collaboration in combating child labour (**MoLHR**).*

### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

The following are the possible areas of research CCS in YDF could pursue in future in the area of child protection and care.

1. A study on child abuse in Bhutan to assess the magnitude and forms of child abuse and to find out the profile of the abused children and the social and economic circumstances leading to their abuse.
2. A study on kinship care in urban centres and monastic schools, trafficking and mobility, and sexual exploitation.
3. A study on the alternative care services such as adoption to ascertain the quality of care provided.

### **8. PLAN OF ACTION**

As recommended, the strategies and activities have been divided into short and long term action plan covering one to ten years duration.

Strategies	Activities	Details of activities	Time frame (Y=Year)											
			Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10		
<b>Strategy 1 (Prevention)</b>	1	<i>Develop guidelines for YDF on awareness programs on Child Rights and Child Protection.</i>	■											
	2	<i>Train volunteer social workers and parents as Focal persons.</i>		■										
	3	<i>Develop advocacy programs and disseminate for out of school children, parents and community leaders.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	4	<i>Provide life skills training to out of school children.</i>	■											
	5	<i>Conduct innovative completions on child protection.</i>		■										
	6	<i>Establish a child protection information centre at YDF.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Strategy 2 (Intervention)</b>	1	<i>In partnership with stakeholders provide facilities at Youth Centres for at risk children to seek help and to report child rights violations.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	2	<i>Extend more family counselling services in YDF centres.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Strategy 3 (Rehabilitation and after care)</b>	1	<i>Develop mechanisms to integrate child in conflict with law and victims of abuse through family, community, schools, and vocational training.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	2	<i>Provide financial support for their continuing education.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	3	<i>Continue vocational training in YDF centres..</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Strategy 4 Knowledge Management</b>	1	<i>Strengthen research capacity in YDF.</i>		■										
	2	<i>Ensure systematic collection and management of data on Child Protection and Care Services at YDF which can fit into the overall data management system.</i>			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	3	<i>Conduct a need assessment in the vulnerable communities.</i>				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

<b>Strategy 5 (Outreach)</b>	1	<i>Build the capacity at YDF to provide support services to children at risk.</i>	█																
	2	<i>Train and appoint community based social workers.</i>		█															
	3	<i>Provide counselling and guidance services to youths.</i>	█																
<b>Strategy 6 (Collaboration)</b>	1	Conduct a stakeholders' consultation meeting to:																	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Establish an Advisory Board comprising of members from important stakeholders.</i></li> </ul>	█																
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Identify their specific activities needing YDF collaboration.</i></li> </ul>		█															

## 5. CONCLUSION

The paper presented strategies, activities and recommendations to start the Child Protection and Care Services in YDF. Though there are several options suggested, it is advisable to start from something small at the initial stage and gradually proceed to more comprehensive tasks later.