**CHAPTER 1: POPULATION**

INTRODUCTION

The main source of statistics on population is the population census. Population Censuses are undertaken in most countries on a five to ten yearly basis aimed to provide a full count of the population according to a range of characteristics such as demography, health, education and other social aspects. Censuses are useful not only because they provide a range of current population data but also use as a benchmark for making population estimates in non census years and for population projections. Population censuses were undertaken in Bhutan in 1969 and 1980. The population figures those early years were large because of the large influx of migrants from neighboring countries, particularly labour migrants at the instant of construction coinciding with the large-scale development work on infrastructure expansion. With the development emphasis changing to human resources development the large migrants moved out and in 1996 the total population was found to be around 600,000. The next round of Census is scheduled for 2005.

The second major element of the population statistics relates to the demography characteristics of the population. The most common source of information on demography is the vital registration system (which usually covers the registration of births and deaths and sometimes marriages and divorces). In Bhutan, the vital registration system doesn't currently provide the full coverage of births and deaths and it has been necessary to undertake special sample surveys; (the first on in 1984, and the second one in 1994 and 2000) to obtain the important demographic information. Statistics presented in this chapter includes estimated current population together with data from 1984 on demography survey and 1994 and 2000 National Health Surveys. These special survey carried out at certain intervals provide the changes that are occurring in the population and its indicators. The population data presented in this chapter is an estimated population using the annual growth rates resulting from the National Health surveys. The interpretations of demographic indicators are as follows:

**Crude birth rate:** Number of live births in a year per thousand populations.

**General Fertility Rate:** Number of live births in a year per thousand women in the childbearing age (15 to 44 or 49)

**Total fertility rate:** Average number of daughters born by women during their reproductive span of life.

**Gross reproduction rate:** Measures the extent to which a cohort of newly born girls will replace their mothers under pre-determined schedules of fertility and mortality.

**Crude death rate:** Number of deaths in a year per thousand population.

**Infant mortality rate:** Number of deaths during first year of life per thousand live births.

**Maternal mortality rate:** The annual number of deaths of women from pregnancy- related causes per thousand live births.

**Rate of Natural increase:** The difference between the crude birth rate and the crude death rate.

**Dependency ratio:** Measures the number of dependants as a percentage of population aged 15 to 64. Child dependency refers to children aged 0 to 14 years, while old age dependency refers to person aged 65 and over.

**Index of aging:** It is the number of person aged 65 and over as a percentage of the number of persons aged 0 to 14