**CHAPTER 3: EDUCATION**

# **INTRODUCTION**

The development of a comprehensive education system in Bhutan was initiated in 1961.Prior to that time there were virtually no modern education facilities inside Bhutan, apart from the traditional education given in the monasteries. Today there is an extensive network of Schools and other educational institutions spread throughout the country. The present formal educational structure consists of one-year pre-primary (PP) six years primary, four years secondary (comprising of two years junior college and three years of degree programme).

Entry into the formal education system starts at the age of six when the children are admitted into pre\_primary classes.The medium of instruction in the schools is both Bhutan's National language 'Dzongkha' and English. School curricula also include training in traditional arts, crafts, and agriculture. Besides then modern education system, there is large number of traditional institution offering education to children in monasteries, Drupdas and Shedras, for which data are not maintained by the Education Department. Non-formal education first began in 1992, although that existed in disorganized traditional forms earlier. The division of education maintains as extensive range of data on students, schools and teaching personnel and the summary data are presented in this chapter.

The gross Primary enrolment rate in 2000 was estimated at 72 %. There were 126500 students enrolled in 574 schools, Institute and 146 Non-formal education centers. Out of 571 schools and institute only 7 were privately run while rests were government run. In 2000, there were 164 community schools catering to small and far flung communities, a community school is the basic level in primary school system, which caters to a specific community, a village or a cluster of defined villages. Number of Non Formal Education centers expanded from 6 in 1992 and 300 learners to 146 centers within 7,488 learners in 2001. The NFE centers provide only basic literacy courses of reading and writing.

The size of enrolment was higest in Thimphu Dzongkhag followed by students is Thimphu followed by Trashigang, Chukha, Samdrupjongkhar and Mongar. Many schools provide boarding facilities for student living in areas far from the nearest school. Children from communities who do not have their own schools enroll in the more distant school either as day scholar or as a boarder. This is made possible largely through the provision of meals through world Food Programme (WFP). At present, 8 community schools and 73 primary schools benefit from the (WFP) programme. A total of 12443 children study as boarders in 2001.