# CHAPTER 3 EDUCATION

The introduction of comprehensive education system in Bhutan came along with the economic development initiated in 1961. Prior to that time there were virtually no modern education facilities in Bhutan. However, the monastic form of education existed and continued to exist even today. Now there is an extensive network of Schools and other educational institutions spread throughout the country.

The present formal educational refers to the hierarchically structured and chronologically graded learning’s, which requires certification for the learner to progress through the grades to go to higher levels. The formal education consists of one year pre-primary (PP), six years primary, two years Lower Secondary School (LSS), two years Middle Secondary School (MSS), two years Higher Secondary School (HSS) and three years of tertiary (or college) education.

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 Dzongkha-‘the national language’ and English. School curricula also include training in traditional arts, crafts, and agriculture. Besides the modern education system, there is large number of traditional institutions offering education to children in monasteries, Drupdas and Shedras, for which the Ministry of Education does not maintain any data.

Non-Formal Education (NFE), which is meant for those individuals who are unable to avail the facilities of the formal education, was first established formally in 1992. Basic literacy skills, reading, writing and numeric skills are likewise strengthened through this system. The Ministry of Education maintains an extensive range of statistics on students, schools and teaching personnel.

The summaries of the data are presented through this chapter. For the academic session 2007, there were 171,842 students enrolled in 521 schools/institutes and 777 NFE centers. Of 521 schools and institutes, 30 are privately run while the government runs the rest.

In 2007, there were 249 Community Primary Schools (CPS) catering to small and far- flung remote areas. CPS is the basic level for the primary school system, which caters to the specific community, a village or a cluster of defined villages.

Number of NFE centers expanded from 6 in 1992 with 300 learners to 777 centers with 14,694 learners in 2007. The NFE centers provide only basic literacy courses of reading and writing.

The size of enrolment till Higher Secondary Schools was highest in Thimphu Dzongkhag with 23,991 students followed by Chukha with 15,398 & Trashigang with 12,493, and least was Gasa with 524.

Many schools provide boarding facilities for students living in areas far from the school. Children from communities who do not have their own schools enroll in the more distant school either as day scholar or as boarders. This is made possible largely through the provision of meals through the World Food Programme (WFP).

