

## **Bhutan**

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### **Statement SNV Bhutan at 11<sup>th</sup> Round Table meeting 1 – 2 September 2011**

Mr Chairman, Co-chairman, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, I like to congratulate His Majesty the 5th king of Bhutan with his forthcoming marriage; I wish that this truly happy event may bring joy and happiness to all the Bhutanese people.

SNV Netherlands Development Organisation like to thank the Kingdom of Bhutan for the opportunity to be part of this 11<sup>th</sup> Round Table Meeting, as always.

SNV acknowledge the enormous progress the Kingdom of Bhutan has made in its social and economic development and in its pursuit for happiness through the Gross National Happiness approach.

SNV is proud to be a partner in development of Bhutan for 23 years now, supporting the Royal Government of Bhutan in the realisation of its ambitions and policies as laid down in the various 5 year plans.

Together many achievements were made, varying from practical solutions to capacity building in various fields like forestry, agriculture, and health. SNV also supported in the development of new policies and approaches for, among others, the sustainable exploitation of NTFPs and environmental friendly road construction.

As we have discussed the past 2 days, many challenges remain. SNV is committed to continue its support to the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Bhutanese people in finding approaches to deal with these challenges, while building forth on our achievements of the past.

Our focus in the coming years will remain on Capacity building; capacity building of the many national actors and partners who play a very important role in the development of Bhutan. The key to development lies with the people themselves; hence the need for increased capacities remains, to allow the people taking the lead in increasing the coverage of services and infrastructures, improve and maintain their functionality and assure their quality in a sustainable way.

SNV recognises and acknowledges the importance that the Royal Government of Bhutan attaches to climate change. In line with growing concern worldwide, SNV intends to increase attention to climate change in all the 3 sectors in which we are active, SNV will support the Bhutanese people to their climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts in these 3 sectors so as to decrease Bhutan's vulnerability to the whims of the changing climate. I mention:

- Food security: assure the role of agriculture to sufficiently feed the Bhutanese people, young and old, men and women.
- Access to clean and renewable energy
- Access to Basic services of good quality and functionality.

To do so SNV intends to continue its partnership and close collaboration with the Royal Government of Bhutan. SNV will also continue to seek and to practice partnership and collaboration with Bhutan's other partners in development: International donors and funding agencies, IDO and INGO, Bhutanese CSO as well as the Bhutanese Private sector.

Together with these partners, SNV intends to continue on-going projects and programmes, develop new ones that will support Bhutan in:

- Enhancement of marketing and improving and intensifying sustainable production of agricultural products and commodities;
- Implementation of alternative approaches for food security. We aim at adding value via local processing and manufacturing of agricultural commodities for the domestic and international market, broadening the narrow domestic economic base and creating new opportunities and jobs for youth and unemployed;
- Promotion and introduction of Renewable energy solutions; Biogas and possibly use of solar energy;
- Improvement of sanitation and hygiene practices in rural areas and small towns, where possible in relation to rural water supply services.

I wish the Royal Government of Bhutan, its agencies, and the people of Bhutan all the success and support necessary to realise the ambitions of the Tenth 5 year plan and assure you again the continuation of our support.

Thank you for your attention.