



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2022**



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## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

### HRH KESANG CHODREN WANGCHUCK



Her Royal Highness Gyalsem  
Kesang Chodren Wangchuck, President

The past two years have shown us that the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic is a powerful reminder of our interconnectedness and vulnerabilities. The virus had no borders and Bhutan was no exception.

The GNH Centre Bhutan as a civil society organization continued its efforts partaking in collective national relief efforts with other like minded organizations. We are deeply saddened

by the suffering faced by people around the world. We express our gratitude and support to all health workers, Desungs and agencies who were at the frontlines.

In Bhutan, the Centre focussed on working with youth and empowering them by imparting training in agricultural methods as a way of empowering them towards a sustainable livelihood. Internationally, the GNH Centre was able to successfully launch a GNH Centre in Australia virtually in 2022. We are encouraged that now more than ever it is a time for collaboration, advocating for wellbeing on a global level and promoting GNH in action. We believe that there is room for GNH not just in Bhutan but across the globe.

I commend the Centre for continuing its work in taking forward the royal vision of Gross National Happiness. The GNH Centre Bhutan and its partners remain committed to closer cooperation and enhanced coordination of our efforts to promote a meaningful life, and towards a happy society and world.

Thank you







## THE GNH FARMERS PROJECT STORY CONTINUES



July, 2022: GNH Farmers Project started its second phase with 16 young and enthusiastic students from the College of Language and Culture Studies, Takste. They are also the members of the GNH Club.

The project engaged youth to lead their own ideas, integrate entrepreneurship and education, promote local initiatives, and build a strong community through various farming ideas. The two week event included simple meditation sessions, GNH orientation, and importance of agriculture and the role

of young people in the sector. Students shared that they learnt a lot about GNH and the interactive sessions were very beneficial in understanding farming. The first week of the training saw the successful completion of theoretical and practical sessions of oyster mushroom cultivation. Various processes such as soaking, draining and steaming straw, hygienic treatment, inoculation and packing were introduced to the young GNH Farmers.

The staff and trainees were honored by a surprise visit of the Prime Minister at





Bumthang on 21st July 2022. The Prime Minister took time to interact with the youth and advised them to brainstorm on how they can do better and to be creative. The Prime Minister's visit was part of his official eastern tour. The Centre was honored to be included and to host the brief visit.

As part of the GNH Farmer's Project, the young trainees visited the Agriculture Research and Development Centre (ARDC) Bajo, Wangdue Phodrang.

The group spent 5 days on practical sessions preparing various fertilizers like rice husk biochar, bamboo wood vinegar, fermented cattle urine, open air-pit biochar, bokashi and manure. They also learnt about different fruit harvests and seed extraction processes. The sessions were organized in collaboration with ARDC, and the GNHCB is grateful for the technical support.

The youth who completed the training were awarded certificates by the GNHCB and ARDC in recognition of their hard work and efforts to promote farming. The GNH Farmers Project has to date trained 27 young people and supported the establishment of 3 farms across the country.

The project is supported by our international partners, the EcoGather Initiative and the Rekhi Foundation.







## EXPERIENCES SHARED BY SOME OF THE GNH FARMERS



Meet our  
GNH Farmer:



Rinchen Cheozom  
College of Language and Culture  
Studies, Takste.

She is a beneficiary of the  
GNH Farmers Project

"After this program, some of the lessons I learnt were how to prepare fertilizers like Bokashi, Bio-char, and other techniques used in agriculture. Everything was new and it was an opportunity for me to have hands on learning. I am eager to share my experience and knowledge with the farmers in my community."



Meet our  
GNH Farmer:



Sonam Yangchen  
College of Language and Culture  
Studies, Takste.

She is a beneficiary of the  
GNH Farmers Project

"I learned many new things from the programme, and the most exciting part was working on oyster mushroom cultivation. Through this programme, I also got the idea that Oyster mushroom farming can be used as one of the green businesses where the youths would love to work."



Meet our  
GNH Farmer:



Tshering Cheki  
College of Language and Culture  
Studies, Takste.

She is a beneficiary of the  
GNH Farmers Project

"During the GNH Farmers Project we were trained in different agricultural methods. I learned how organic fertilizers are made using kitchen wastes and I want to share this knowledge with the farmers at my village. This will help them and also control waste management at the villages."



Meet our  
GNH Farmer:



Karma Yeshey  
College of Language and Culture  
Studies, Takste.

He is a beneficiary of the  
GNH Farmers Project

"Through the GNH Farmer's Project, I learned about oyster mushroom cultivation as well as the preparation of various fertilizers like bio-char and bokashi and more. We can share this knowledge with our Bhutanese farmers and the society as a whole. For me, the program was very productive and helpful."



Meet our  
GNH Farmer:



Phuntsho Wangdi  
Jakar Higher Secondary School  
Bumthang

Currently undergoing mushroom  
cultivation training in Bumthang.  
He is a beneficiary of the  
GNH Farmers Project

"I enjoyed the practical sessions on the cultivation of oyster mushrooms. The oyster mushroom cultivation will help us generate income. I will definitely share this idea in my village which will help them support their livelihood."









## STUDENTS INSTALL FARM ON CAMPUS



After completing the second batch of the GNH Farmers Project in July, 2022, the 15 GNH Club members from College of Language and Culture Studies, Takste took up the task of setting up their mushroom cultivation in the college. They decided that mushroom cultivation would be easiest to start at their college, additionally mushrooms are not easily available in Trongsa and they were motivated to supply it as one of the vegetables to the college. This would improve the diet and nutrition of the students.

Lopen Tenzin Dorji, Associate Lecturer at CLCS, who is GNH Club Advisor said, "The philosophy of GNH has been put into action through the establishment of a mushroom shed at the college. Through this project, we hope to help students with entrepreneurial skills and to benefit them in the future. "

The members rolled up their sleeves, repaired and converted the old college warehouse into a mushroom shed. They then began the hard process of preparing 30 bales of mushrooms which





are expected to fruit by the mid of November, 2022. Moreover, they took it upon themselves to train and share their knowledge with other students. This would ensure the little mushroom farm would be cared for and maybe inspire others to take up small farm projects as well.

Another Club member, Rinchen, shared that, "This project has the potential to encourage students to take up farming as an alternate profession".

The GNH Centre Bhutan will continue the training as it is gaining popularity with the youth who aspire to take farming as



an occupation. To date the Centre has supported two trainings, and seen 27 number of youth sign up for the training and three number of individual farms have been set up or are in the process of establishing themselves. It is hoped that the CLCS College will be a success story and inspire other colleges to take up similar small farm initiatives.





## SPREADING GNH THROUGH MUSIC



August 2022: Forty participants aged eight to twenty from the Music for All camp led by the Music of Bhutan Research Centre (MBRC) visited GNH Centre Bhutan to learn about GNH, and the importance of culture as a primary pillar.

It was also an opportunity as a Civil Society Organization, to network and collaborate with others to demonstrate collaboration and promote local partnerships.

The children also shared their own definitions of happiness and reflected on their happiest moments in life. Four

short animated videos were screened for a better understanding of Gross National Happiness.

Through the initiative, children were able to see how GNH is present in their daily lives and a few of them shared how music is a big part of our culture. They understood the responsibility they carry in preserving traditional music and how it is directly linked to one of the pillars of the GNH. Moreover, the children also understood how they are following and contributing to the GNH domains like time use, education, psychological wellbeing and community vitality.





The hour-long session was very interactive with a question and answer session towards the end of the presentation. The participants actively shared their views and thoughts on the topics presented. One of the participants said “The program provided insightful knowledge on the Gross National Happiness and through this session I can now relate with happiness at the individual level to a national level and how much our leaders do for us. Moreover, I understood why the GNH is important to Bhutan for sustainable development.”

Mr. Sonam Dorji the Director of MBRC shared that the presentation was



informative and it was important for the children to understand their role in preserving Bhutan’s cultural heritage as future citizens.

### **About the MBRC:**

The MBRC was founded to document, preserve, and promote the traditional music of Bhutan. The MBRC aims to break new ground by professionally researching, recording and archiving the many musical traditions of the country’s diverse regional, linguistic and ethnic groups, and by documenting the finest living master musicians in performance and interviews. Such aims and activities of the MBRC directly relate to the pillar of preservation and promotion of culture whereby both the Centre’s share a common goal in promoting Bhutanese values.



## FIRST ASIAN GATHERING OF THE ECOVERSITIES ALLIANCE

The GNHCB was invited to the first Asian Gathering of the Ecoversties Alliance from 13th-16th September, 2022 in Thailand. The event saw a total of 32 participants from Bhutan, Philippines, Singapore, India, Europe and Vietnam.

The GNHCB was invited to present and share the GNH experience as a model of sustainable alternative development. The 4 day event was an opportunity to reconnect with partners from various countries for a shared learning and deepening connection within the Ecoversties Alliance. Together with the Ecoversties Alliance, the GNHCB will develop programmes to promote GNH values and practices.

The Ecoversties Alliance is a community of learning practitioners from around the world committed to re-imagining higher education as well as in locally-rooted learning spaces that are regenerating community, ecology, local economy and a sensibility of coming back home. Many of these places are connected with different grassroots, social and ecological movements, indigenous communities, and others.







## NEW GNH CENTRE PARTNERSHIP WITH AUSTRALIA

The GNH Centre Bhutan and the GNH Centre Australia signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding was designed to adopt the holistic values that GNH embraces and act as a guide in carrying out all joint activities. It is hoped that the collaboration will lead to the desired change in what we value; reconsideration of the purpose of societal and ecological development; reorientation of humanistic interdependence and interconnectedness towards human beings; and adherence to the GNH approach.

The purposes and the principles of collaboration are to understand, elaborate, nurture and uphold the values of GNH, to further enhance the growing global consensus on the need and desirability for such a holistic new model, to pursue a holistic, sustainable and inclusive development process aimed at happiness and wellbeing of all life and to share and spread the intrinsic GNH values.

The GNHCB aspires to create enabling conditions for happiness and wellbeing based on the above principles. The GNHCB hopes that not only Bhutanese citizens, but all people will understand and realize the wisdom of GNH, its practicality and desirability so that individuals, organizations, and nations might choose wisely for the future generations.



The GNHCB will coordinate, collaborate and support the development of a “GNH Centre Australia” through interactive exchange, curriculum, training, and the design and delivery of customized programs in Australia and Bhutan.

The GNH Centre Australia is responsible for establishing a central hub for collaboration on GNH in Australia to promote Bhutan and the GNH Centre Bhutan as the original creators of GNH as a concept and support the growth of the GNH Centre Bhutan through various programs. Addition to this, it is also responsible for promoting GNH values in Australia and across the region, educating individuals and organizations about the importance of a holistic approach to wellbeing and a balanced, equitable and sustainable approach to development and business.