



# World TVET Database Bhutan

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Country profiles are compiled from a variety of national and international sources and have been informed and validated by UNEVOC Centres in the country or other TVET national authorities.

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## Abbreviations

BQF	Bhutan Qualifications Framework
BVQF	Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework
EEFE	Employee Education and Training Funds
IT	Information technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
NCS	National Competences Standards
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OSS	Occupational Skills Standards
PPP	Public-private partnerships
TVET-MIS	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Management Information System

## TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

<a href="#">Apprenticeship</a>	<a href="#">Non-formal education</a>
<a href="#">Assessment criteria</a>	<a href="#">Occupational standard</a>
<a href="#">Curriculum</a>	<a href="#">Qualification</a>
<a href="#">Employability</a>	<a href="#">Quality</a>
<a href="#">Employment</a>	<a href="#">Quality Assurance</a>
<a href="#">General education</a>	<a href="#">Sustainable development</a>
<a href="#">Informal Learning</a>	<a href="#">Teacher</a>
<a href="#">Job</a>	<a href="#">Teacher In VET</a>
<a href="#">Labour market</a>	<a href="#">Trainer</a>
<a href="#">Lifelong Learning</a>	<a href="#">TVET</a>
<a href="#">National Qualifications Framework</a>	<a href="#">Unemployed person</a>
<a href="#">Apprenticeship</a>	<a href="#">Non-formal education</a>
<a href="#">Assessment criteria</a>	<a href="#">Occupational standard</a>
<a href="#">Curriculum</a>	<a href="#">Qualification</a>
<a href="#">Employability</a>	<a href="#">Quality</a>

# Bhutan

Population:	775,000 (2015)
Youth population <sup>1</sup> :	152,000 (2015)
Median population age:	26.7 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010-2015) <sup>2</sup> :	1.46%



Data © OpenStreetMap Design © Mapbox

## 1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

### TVET mission

The mission of TVET in the Kingdom of Bhutan is to contribute to enhancing the skills and productivity of the workforce and to economic development.

### TVET strategy

TVET strategies are supported by a number of documents, including:

(1) The Eleventh Five year Plan 2013-2018 emphasizes the importance of the education sector towards achieving the socio-economic development goals and in enhancing the social, economic, cultural, environmental and political capabilities of the Bhutanese population. In this light the Plan sets a number of TVET related objectives including:

- To improve the quality and relevance of the TVET system by; (1) enhancing the competency-based curriculum in TVET; (2) improving teacher and instructor quality; (3) incorporating environment friendly practices in the curriculum; (4) and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of TVET delivery in public services by, for example, improving the average performance rating system and developing a National Anticorruption Strategy;
- To focus on developing skills and knowledge, with an emphasis on addressing the shortage of skilled professionals such as doctors, teachers, engineers, architects and ICT specialists; and
- To align TVET programmes to the needs of the construction industry by offering apprenticeships and on-the-job training. TVET graduates will also be encouraged to setup their own construction firms and the government will provide necessary support in this regard.

(2) The National Employment Policy (2013) addresses the employment challenges faced by Bhutan. As well as prioritising training in order to redevelop the skills and competencies of unemployed Bhutanese, the Policy sets a number of TVET related objectives including to:

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<sup>1</sup> Population aged 14-25

<sup>2</sup> All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/>)

- Encourage firms to institute Employee Education and Training Funds (EEFE) to provide TVET and continuing training to their employees;
- Foster collaboration between Technical Training Institutes and the economic sector to make TVET programmes more relevant to the needs of the labour market; and
- Promote skills development to allow people with disabilities to run and own their own business or be employed and participate productively in the workforce.

(3) The National Youth Policy (2011) which focuses on, amongst other things, youth unemployment and is designed to address factors influencing unemployment including the mismatch between the education system and the labour market, and lack of apprenticeship training with accreditation. The policy is aimed at:

- Enabling youth to participate actively in the workforce;
- Enabling youth to attain vocational skills according to their abilities;
- Promoting entrepreneurship capacity both in and out of school;
- Supporting and assisting youth for a period of time until they are gainfully employed; and
- Encouraging students to take up farming and other forms of self-employment.

(4) The National Human Resource Development Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan (2010) is designed to help Bhutan develop human resources to meet the challenges of global economy and to build a knowledge based society. The policy's objectives are to:

- Link TVET programmes to the needs of the labour market;
- Strengthen existing Technical Training Institutes in terms of physical infrastructure, equipment and faculty resources;
- Foster public-private partnerships (PPP) to offer vocational training, on-the-job training and to introduce life skill modules and lifelong learning in Technical Institutes;
- Promote TVET programmes in the field of tourism, arts and crafts, agriculture and health;
- Strengthen mechanisms for in-service training and entrepreneurship.

## TVET legislation

- The New Constitution (2008) guarantees the right of citizens to free basic education and provides for technical and vocational programmes at the higher secondary education level.
- The Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan (2007) delineates the function of Ministry of Labour and Human Resources and states that the labour administration shall provide policies and programmes in the area of technical and vocational education.

### *Sources:*

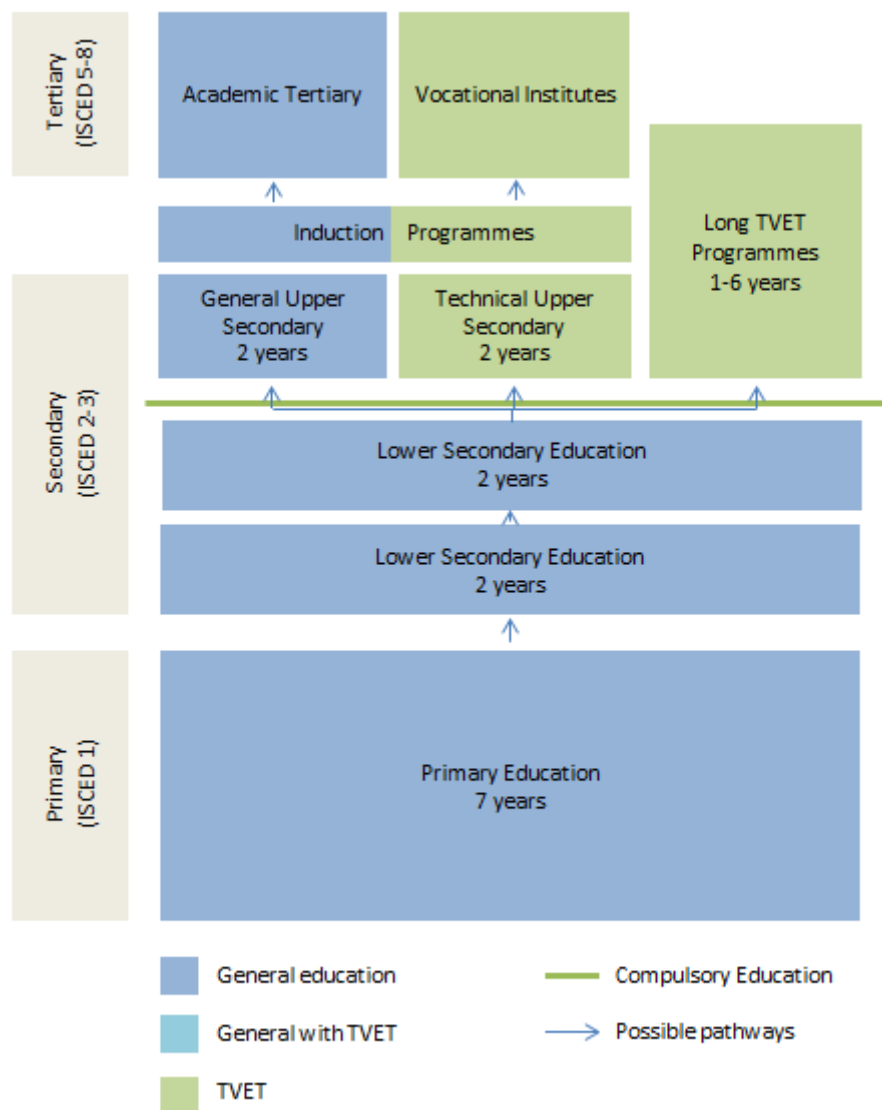
Gross National Happiness Commission (2013). Eleventh Five Year Plan 2013-2018. Accessed: 04 August 2015.

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Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (2013). National Employment Policy. Accessed: 16 September 2014.  
UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education VII Ed. 2010/11. Bhutan. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

## 2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC from Royal Education Council (2012). National Education Framework (NEF): Shaping Bhutan's Future.

In total, primary and lower and middle secondary education completes twelve years of basic education.

## Formal TVET system

TVET is offered at the secondary education level. At the middle secondary education level, students are able to take pre-vocational subjects provided according to local needs and the availability of equipment, local traditions, indigenous knowledge and skills. Students are required to pass an examination to attend general upper secondary or vocational and technical education. The duration of TVET programmes varies from six months to two years and the subjects are linked to the needs of the Bhutanese labour market and economy. Specifically elective courses focus on providing skills for the development of the following key industries:

- Infrastructure: hydrogenation, power transmission and distribution, construction;
- Services: tourism, healthcare, education, information technology (IT), financial services;
- Manufacturing: cement, herbal products; and
- Royal Civil Service Commission (government).

In addition to TVET programmes offered at the upper secondary education level, the Institute of Zorigchusum Thimphu and Institute of Zorigchusum Tashiyangste vocational training institutes also offer long TVET programmes lasting up to six years, in wood carving, painting and tailoring.

TVET at the tertiary level is offered through institutions accredited to the Royal University of Bhutan and providers registered with the Department of Occupational Standards. TVET programmes can be part-time or full-time and are conducted in a number of colleges and vocational institutes. Most TVET programmes last four years and focus on engineering, technology, business administration, and education. Medicine programmes last five years.

## Non-formal and informal TVET systems

Non-formal, or alternative modes of TVET in Bhutan includes the following:

- Apprentice training programmes are provided through a contract between an apprentice and an employer. Training periods normally last six to nine months, and in some cases one year, and aim to provide students with appropriate skills and competencies for the world of work. The apprentice training programme covers all sectors, but mostly concentrates on the service and hospitality sector;
- Special skills development programmes are geared towards the training of armed forces and special needs groups in vocational skills. Some examples of organizations providing such programmes are the Dratshang Lhentshog, the Royal Bhutan Police, Draktsho, RENEW and the Royal Bhutan Army;
- Village skills development programmes provide skills training for villagers and aim to enhance the quality of life in the rural community, enhance community participation, and promote lifelong learning and sustainable development in the rural community. Instructors, tools and training materials are sent to villages and the training is conducted in the villages and communities themselves; and



- Skills training programmes aim to address the immediate human resource requirements in the labour market through skills training. Some of the skills training programme initiatives include the Youth Employment Skills, Graduate Skills Programme, and the Skills for Employment and Entrepreneur Development programmes.

Currently there is no information on informal TVET in the Kingdom of Bhutan.

### *Sources:*

Gross National Happiness Commission (2013). Eleventh Five Year Plan 2013–2018. Accessed: 04 August 2015.

Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (2013). Apprenticeship Training Contract Agreement. Accessed: 16 September 2014.

Royal Education Council (2012). National Education Framework (NEF): Shaping Bhutan's Future. Accessed: 15 September 2014.

UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education VII Ed. 2010/11. Bhutan. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

## 3. Governance and financing

### Governance

The Ministry of Labour and Human Resource (MOLHR) is responsible for the provision of vocational education in Bhutan. The MOLHR is composed of a number of departments. The Department of Employment develops programmes to promote employment, while the Department of Human Resources is responsible for the provision of TVET programmes and is composed of a number of divisions:

- The Vocational Education and Training Division administers vocational education institutes and technical training institutes; (2) coordinates and implements apprenticeship programmes; (3) develops TVET policies; and (4) encourages public-private partnerships (PPP) in the provision of TVET programmes.
- The Training and Professional Services Division is responsible for the quality of instructors and teachers in public and private education institutions; and
- The Human Resources Development Division is responsible for research on labour market needs, and facilitates and coordinates the implementation of MOLHR policies.

In total there are over 90 public, private and NGO-registered training institutes which can provide TVET in Bhutan.

The Department of Occupation Standards – under the MOLHR – is responsible for developing and implementing: (1) national skills standards and qualifications linked to the needs of the country; (2) maintaining the Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework (BVQF); and (3) a quality assurance system to maintain the quality of training programmes provided in TVET institutions.

Other actors involved in the governance of TVET include:

- The Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for the basic education system, and particularly is responsible for prevocational programmes offered at the middle secondary education level.

- Private sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) companies provide TVET programmes and training to students, specifically in the areas of agriculture, construction, arts, and crafts.

## Financing

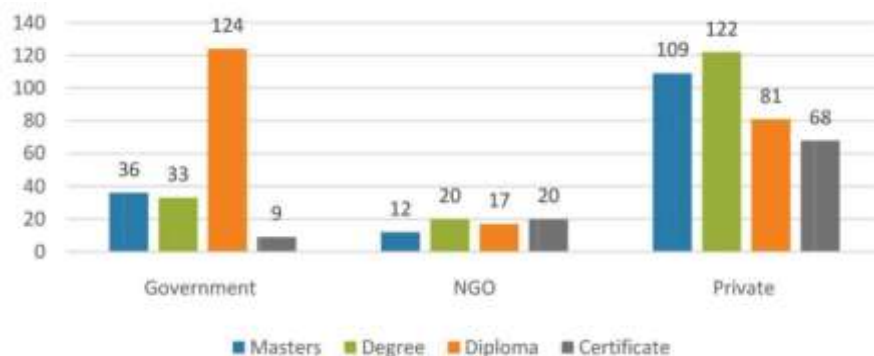
Formal TVET programmes offered by middle and upper secondary education level vocational education and technical training institutes are funded by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources. Other actors involved in financing non-formal TVET programmes include the private sector through PPP and Employee Education and Training Funds (EEFE), and other national governments.

### *Sources:*

Webpage of the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources. Accessed: 15 September 2014.  
Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (2015). Institutes Registered. Accessed: 04 August 2015.  
Royal Government of Bhutan (2010). Vocational Education. Accessed: 15 September 2014.  
UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education VII Ed. 2010/11. Bhutan. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

## 4. TVET teachers and trainers

TVET teachers and trainers are expected to be responsible for course planning, process, delivery, monitoring and evaluation, and act as career counsellor, labour market expert, mentor, project management and skills expert. In accordance with the Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework (BVQF), TVET trainers are required to have a qualification from one education level higher than the education level they will teach at. The profile of trainers by level of qualification in diverse institutions is as follows:



Scheme extracted from National HRD Advisory (2015). A Focus on TVET and Labour Market Dynamics.

### *Sources:*

National HRD Advisory (2015). A Focus on TVET and Labour Market Dynamics. Accessed: 04 August 2015.

## 5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

### Secondary vocational education

Programme	Duration	Qualification
Middle secondary education	2 years	Bhutan Certificate for Secondary Education (National Certificate 1)
Higher secondary education	2 years	Bhutan Higher Secondary Education Certificate (National Certificate 2 and 3)

### Post-secondary vocational education

Programme	Duration	Qualification
Vocational Institutes	Varies	National Diploma 1 and 2
Undergraduate	4 years	Bachelor's Degree

### National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The Bhutan Qualifications Framework (BQF) serves as a point of reference for all qualifications and contains information on qualifications for various local and international stakeholders. The BVQF has eight levels as follows:

BQF Level	School Education	Vocational Education	University Education	Monastic Education
8			Doctoral	Ehenpo
7			Master's	Genbey
6			Bachelor's	Tenchoe
5		ND1 & ND2	Diploma	Madhyamik
4	EH/EC	NCD & NCS		
3	BCSE	NCL		Cheyim
2	LCE			
1	FE			

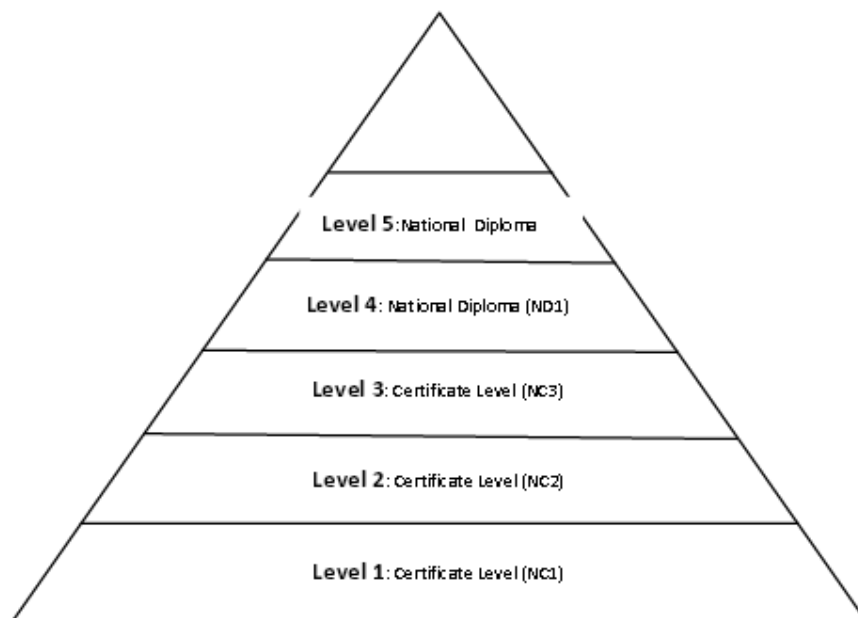
Scheme extracted from Bhutan Accreditation Council (2012). Bhutan Qualifications Framework.

In line with the BQF, the Department of Occupational Standards – under the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (MOLHR) – manages the Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework (BVQF). The BVQF aims to recognize the competencies of skilled workers, whether they have

acquired skills through the formal, non-formal or informal system. Specifically the BVQF is intended to – in collaboration with industry – enhance the TVET system by:

- Streamlining national vocational qualifications;
- Developing a TVET system responsive to industry needs;
- Encouraging flexible learning and career mobility;
- Facilitating the recognition of prior learning; and
- Enhancing the linkage between TVET and tertiary education.

The BVQF has five levels and each level is defined by assessment criteria linked to the National Competency Standards (NCS) and the Occupational Skills Standards (OSS). The BVQF is as follows:



Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (2013). Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework.

BVQF level one to three programmes aim to upgrade an individual's competencies from semi-skilled to master craftsmen level. The programmes are mainly practical-based, with only twenty percent dedicated to trade related theory. BVQF levels four and five leads to supervisor or manager level qualifications.

## Quality assurance

The Department of Occupational Standards – under the MOLHR – is responsible for the quality of TVET programmes and institutions. The Quality Assurance Division – part of the Department of Occupational Standards – is responsible for: (1) the quality of the BVQF; (2) the registration of TVET providers; (3) developing and implementing an accreditation system for the TVET system; and (4) quality assurance and approval of training programmes developed by training providers.

The registration of TVET providers, trainers, and assessors is done through the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Management Information System (TVET-MIS).

### *Sources:*

Bhutan Accreditation Council (2012). Bhutan Qualifications Framework. Accessed: 15 September 2014.

Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (2013). Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework. Accessed : 15 September 2014.

Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (2014). Department of Occupational Standards. Accessed: 15 September 2014.

## 6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

### Current reforms and major projects

In order to enhance the TVET system in the Kingdom of Bhutan, a number of initiatives are being undertaken. For example the i-School Project implements low-cost and user-friendly information technology (IT) in schools through mobile broadband. The introduction of IT aims to foster innovation and creativity, and enhance the learning of students.

In order to encourage public-private partnerships (PPP), the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (MOLHR) has launched the Establishment Regulation for Private Training Institutes and Registration Regulation for Training Providers. Other MOLHR initiatives focus on developing occupational standards and maintaining the BVQF.

### Challenges

At the moment the TVET system faces a number of challenges in the areas of capacity, quality and employability. Specifically, TVET reforms aim at:

- Expanding the number and capacity of TVET institutions in order to address the future upskilling needs of the labour market and increase access;
- Linking TVET programmes to the needs of employers in order to decrease the unemployment rate and enhance the relevance of TVET programmes; and
- Developing a quality assurance system in order to limit the gaps in the quality of teaching and TVET programmes.

### *Sources:*

Ministry of Education (2014). I-Project. Accessed: 15 September 2014.

Royal Government of Bhutan (2010). Vocational Education. Accessed: 15 September 2014.

## 7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

### UNEVOC Centres

- [Department of Human Resources, Ministry of Labour and Human Resources \(MoLHR\)](#)

## TVET Institutions

- [Ministry of Education](#)
- [Ministry of Labour and Human Resources](#)
- [Royal Education Council](#)

## 8. References and further reading

### References

Gross National Happiness Commission (2013). [Eleventh Five Year Plan 2013–2018](#). Accessed: 04 August 2015.

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