

CONCEPT NOTE FOR FUNDS FROM THE CSO FUND FACILITY

SJI Zero Waste Project

1. Purpose for which funds are being requested

In Bhutan, as in most parts of the world, waste is becoming an increasing problem in urban, rural, and even remote areas, posing an escalating threat to environmental and human wellbeing. The aim of the Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative (SJI) Zero Waste Project is to contribute to fostering ecologically friendly development efforts and support the environmental preservation pillar of GNH through design and implementation of Zero Waste strategies in Samdrup Jongkhar dzongkhag. More specifically, the aim is to initiate responsible and sustainable waste management practices that help preserve the environment and, at the same time, create economic opportunities in the region, thereby also contributing to the GNH pillar of promoting sustainable and equitable socio-economic development. On a practical level the intention is that waste, in particular the use of plastics, should be minimized, and that segregation of waste should be implemented both at the household and institutional level in Samdrup Jongkhar dzongkhag, leading to the development of new small-scale recycling, re-use and up-cycling businesses for non-biodegradable waste, and effective use of bio-degradable waste for composting and future bio-gas generation. Like all other SJI activities, the SJI Zero Waste Project is consistently carried out in close collaboration with key stakeholders in order to ensure local ownership and relevance. The design and implementation of the SJI Zero Waste Project is, in practice, also strongly linked with SJI's other areas of work (organic agriculture, appropriate technology and youth engagement). The SJI Zero Waste project will initially start with small-scale and low-cost model actions in select villages. Dewathang has been selected as the pilot urban village, and Wooling as the pilot rural village. The idea is to use these pilots as testing grounds to establish model villages for replication and scaling up of Zero Waste activities in other urban and rural villages in the dzongkhag, in order for Samdrup Jongkhar to become a model Zero Waste region from which other dzongkhags can learn, and which the nation can emulate in order to help realize GNH in practice. Main activities during the first project year will be:

1. ***Institutional and human capacity development*** for promoting and facilitating responsible and sustainable management of waste through:

1.1 Setting up Zero Waste Committees in Dewathang and Wooling responsible for implementation and monitoring of Zero Waste strategies decided by the villagers.

1.2 Trainings of Zero Waste Trainers in the pilot villages, who will be responsible for giving workshops on sustainable waste management practices and create awareness of waste-related issues to schools and other institutions.

2. ***Developing awareness*** among the villagers on waste minimization and segregation through:

2.1 Zero Waste Festivals in Dewathang and Wooling.

2.2 Recycled art/craft workshops with youth in Dewathang.

2.3 Workshops by Zero Waste Trainers at schools and other institutions in the pilot villages.

3. ***Developing economic diversification opportunities*** through:

3.1 Promoting scrap dealer's organizations and small scale re-use and recyclables collection businesses in Dewathang and Wooling.

3.2 Establishing self-help groups engaged in up-cycling activities such as eco-friendly handicraft in the pilot villages.

3.3 Setting up a "Zero Waste Café" in Dewathang run by a self-help group consisting of local youth.

During the second project year, the above activities will be scaled up and deepened, with a particular focus on economic diversification and integration of new technologies for waste management e.g. introduction of bio-gas plants. If the model tested out in Dewathang and Wooling villages prove successful, work will also start on replicating the model in other appropriately selected villages in Samdrup Jongkhar dzongkhag.

Like all other SJI activities, the SJI Zero Waste Project will consistently be carried out in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure local ownership and relevance. In practice, the SJI Zero Waste Project will be designed, implemented and monitored by the Zero Waste Committees set up in the Dewathang and Wooling pilot villages. Previous work in Samdrup Jongkhar dzongkhag pertaining to waste management has mainly been carried out by the Samdrup Jongkhar municipality. So far the municipality has mostly worked on waste collection in Samdrup Jongkhar town, where the main landfill of the dzongkhag is also situated. New landfills are planned for 2012 in Samdrup Jongkhar town and another close to Dewathang, which will allow for proper waste segregation at source. SJI will work in close collaboration with the municipality and dzongdag on developing awareness and identifying best practices for waste minimization and segregation in the dzongkhag. In Samdrup Jongkhar, some private scrap dealers have also set up recycling businesses. In Dewathang, a group at Jigme Namgyel Polytechnic, the JNP Waste Disposal Club, has initiated waste collection and recycling activities primarily covering the campus area. In Wooling, bio-degradable waste is separated from non-bio degradable. Apart from these initiatives, awareness is low and activities are few in the dzongkhag. Beer bottles are basically the only waste items being recycled, whereas the main practice is to dump or burn waste in the open. The SJI Zero Waste Project will try to build on and strengthen the above mentioned already existing initiatives, while at the same time encouraging and supporting new.

2. Information about the CSO conducting the project

The Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative is a project under the umbrella of the Lhomon Society (LMS), which was registered as a CSO on 7th February 2012. LMS is Bhutan's first major civil society-based development project designed to foster GNH-based development in harmony with government goals. Initiated by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche in March 2010 as a potential model for the country, its purpose is to raise living standards in Samdrup Jongkhar district and beyond in an ecologically friendly way, and to establish food security and self-sufficiency, while fully protecting and enhancing the natural environment, strengthening communities, promoting Bhutan's unique culture, stemming the rural-urban migration tide, and fostering a cooperative, productive, entrepreneurial, and self-reliant spirit.

Initially, SJI is focussing on the following four areas of work to achieve this aim: i) Organic Agriculture, ii) Zero Waste, iii) Appropriate Technology, and v) Youth Engagement. In the future, the intention is to expand the SJI agenda to focus more on economic diversification and new possibilities for sustainable income generating activities identified by the local communities in Samdrup Jongkhar and the Government of Bhutan. The underpinning objective of all the above is to strengthen the system of democratic governance.

Currently SJI is run by 4 full time staff members: Mr. Tshewang Dendup, Executive Director and Youth Engagement Coordinator, Ms. Pia Lindström, Zero Waste Coordinator, Mr. Cheku Dorji, Office Administrator, and Mr. Sherab Dorji, Agriculture Liaison. Although being a small team, the level of professionalism and dedication to fulfilling the aim of the SJI project is high. The SJI project has also been assisted by several visiting international researchers, and many volunteers have offered their services to SJI over the past two years. The SJI Zero Waste Project will accommodate its first intern during July-September 2012. SJI currently has a field office at the Shedra in Dewathang, equipped with basic office hardware and materials. The research dimension of the initiative has been funded by the International Development Research Centre in Canada and coordinated by GPI Atlantic, a Canadian non-profit research organization with a long history of research, indicator, and measurement work in Bhutan, but SJI is now aiming for broadening its activities and diversifying its donor base.

The budget for the first year activities of the SJI Zero Waste project is expected to amount to in total Nu. 806,400 and the anticipated duration is one year (1st July 2012 – 30th June 2013).

3. Information of the contact person of the CSO

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