



# Food and Nutrition Security Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2014

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# *Food and Nutrition Security Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2014*

## **1. Preamble**

**Cognizant** of the fundamental right of all people living in Bhutan to have access to affordable and adequate, safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food;

**Realizing** that maintaining food and nutrition security corresponds to national security for a small and landlocked country vulnerable to geo-economic conditions;

**Understanding** that food and nutrition security refers to availability of, accessibility to and proper utilization of food as well as maintaining stable conditions for these dimensions and that it is achieved when " all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to food of sufficient quantity and quality in-terms of variety, diversity, nutrient content and safety to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health, education and care.";

**Recognizing** that addressing food and nutrition security requires a multi sector and coordinated approach;

**Knowing** inadequacy of exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate infant and young child feeding practices limits survival and growth of infants and young children, leading to chronic diseases later in life which is detrimental to sustainable human and socioeconomic development;

**Reaffirming** our commitment to regional and international obligations concerning food and nutrition security as well as poverty alleviation;

**Adjusting** with regional and global development scenarios, expanding opportunities and new competitive pressure; and

**Ensuring** that food and nutrition security is adequately prioritized and mainstreamed in all development plans;

**Do hereby promulgate** this policy aimed at enabling conducive environment for a healthy population through physical, economic and social access to safe and adequate nutritious food to the population at all times enhancing Gross National Happiness (GNH).

## **2. Food and nutrition security situation in Bhutan**

Since 1960s, Bhutan implemented a broad spectrum of programs for improving food security and poverty alleviation through concerted efforts to increasing domestic food production, improving social services and infrastructure in all the five year development plans. Substantial progress has been made in terms of overcoming transient food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty.

The Poverty Assessment and Analysis Report, 2004 estimated 31.7% of the Bhutanese population to be under the national poverty line of Nu. 740.36 per person per month. In 2012, the population under poverty was reduced to 12% with a national poverty line of Nu. 1704.84 per person per month. However, about 3% of the population lives below the food poverty line of Nu. 1154.74 per person per month (PAR, 2012).

Available information on food consumption, incomes and nutritional status confirms that food and nutrition security needs to be addressed. Hunger and malnutrition imply human suffering which reduces Gross National Happiness and undermines Bhutan's ability to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger, malnutrition and poverty by 2015.

The Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), 2005 attributes food insecurity as one of the causes for poverty in Bhutan and identifies lack of productive assets as causal agent of food insecurity. Therefore, it recommends creating access to agricultural land or productive assets as interventions for poverty reduction and addressing food insecurity.

"Malnutrition is the most serious consequence of food insecurity. Adult malnutrition results in lower productivity on farms and in the labor market. In women, it also results in fetal malnutrition and low birth weights. Fetal and infant under-nutrition leads to lower cognitive development and schooling performance. For school-age children, nutritional deficiencies are responsible in part for poor school enrollment, early dropout, and poor classroom performance with consequent losses in productivity during adulthood (ACC/SCN 1999)."

### **2.1 Food Availability**

Availability of food in general is ensured through domestic production and distribution of imported food through markets. A National Food Security Reserve (NFSR) is currently being maintained through the Food Corporation of Bhutan (FCB) comprising of rice, oil and sugar. The NFSR has a total of 1,658 MT of food distributed and marketed through 20 regional and local depots of FCB. In addition to NFSR two separate reserves are also maintained by FCB, i.e the SAARC Food Security Reserve and the SAARC Food Bank both of which comprise of 180 MT of rice.

In some areas, community grain silos are maintained to store food grains. At household level, storage of food is mostly based on traditional practices.

The diversity of food items of the Bhutanese is also enhanced by a wide variety of wild vegetables, medicinal plants and NWFPs collected from the nature. Besides acting as a source of supplementary income, these wild foods also supplement availability of cultivated food products in times of food shortages.

#### *Availability of cereals*

The domestic production of total cereals is able to meet about 60% of the total cereal demand. It ranged from 61% in 2008 to 59% in 2009, in 2010 it reached 66% and in 2011 it was about 69% (Bhutan RNR Statistics, 2012). Within the cereals buckwheat and maize demands are all met through domestic production. In 2011, the self sufficiency ratio of paddy was about 53% (Bhutan RNR Statistics, 2012).

#### *Availability of Vegetables*

Vegetable production in the country has been increasing and domestic production of vegetables in 2011 has been able to meet 89% of the total vegetable demand. The major vegetable imports pertain to tomato, onions and chilli. While much lesser proportion of the total demand for all other vegetables are imported, domestic production of potatoes and tomatoes are able to meet the domestic requirements. During the summer, Bhutan is about 118% self sufficient in vegetables and huge quantities of vegetables such as cole crops (cabbage, cauliflower, radish), peas and beans are exported.

#### *Availability of animal products*

Animal products such as milk, beef, pork, mutton, chicken, egg and fish through domestic production has increased from meeting 35% of total demand in 2009 to meeting about 85% in 2011. However 97% of fish, 81% of beef, 73% of pork and 60% of chicken demand is still met from imports. Much lesser proportion of other items are imported. There is no surplus production in animal products for export (Bhutan RNR Statistics, 2012).

#### *Availability of Fruits and nuts*

Availability of fruits and nuts through domestic production has remained from meeting 95% of total demand in 2008 to meeting almost 100% of demand in 2011. Fruit items such as apples and oranges are exported. Most of the demand for mangoes and nuts are met from imports.

#### *Oils and fats*

Domestic production of oils and fats is negligible and more than 90% of oils and fats are met through imports. Import of oils and fats has increased from 1580 MT in 2009 to 9772

MT in 2011 (Bhutan RNR Statistics, 2012). More than 70% of oils and fats imports comprises of refined vegetable oils (Sun flower and soya-bean) and hydrogenated palm oil (dalda) in 2011. More than 90% of the hydrogenated palm oil (dalda) is used for religious purpose.

## **2.2 Access to Food**

Physical access to food is promoted mostly through commercial groceries that import and distribute food items across the country. The Food Corporation of Bhutan maintains food stocks in strategic locations. Vegetable, fruits and meat animal products are marketed mostly through weekend markets. Facilities for weekend markets are established by the Government in most urban areas.

Road networks across the country comprising of national highways, Dzongkhag roads and farm roads serve as the channel of food distribution across the country. Almost all Geogs in the country are now connected by farm roads.

Traditional social safety network play a significant role in the caring for the old, young, unemployed and sick in the Bhutanese society both in urban and rural areas. These social safety networks enable access to food by the vulnerable groups. In rural areas, remittances from urban relatives, borrowings in cash and kind as well as exchange of labour for food are other mechanisms that enable social access to food. However, in urban areas such practices are noticeably declining.

On the economic access to food, income generating activities, particularly focusing on fruit crops, vegetable and livestock production are promoted through program support from the Government, to supplement meeting food requirements from own production at household levels. Non-farm income generating avenues such as arts and crafts and tourism are some of the opportunities that are promoted. The collection and value addition from NWFPs also contribute significantly to income of rural populace enhancing their access to food through improved purchasing power. In terms of urban scenario, the employment in government and business sectors provides source of income which is mostly used for purchasing food.

However, food prices have been increasing consistently and is a cause of concern. Food price inflation has reached 10.2 in 2011 from 5.74 in 2005. In 2012, it had increased to 13.9. In the first two quarters of 2013 the food price inflation reduced to 5.3 (Statistical Year Book of Bhutan, 2013).

Most food commodities are imported from India and changes in import scenario from India would have significant impact on access to food by the Bhutanese.

## **2.3 Utilization of Food**

Although the national average energy consumption exceeds 2500 Kcal/person/day, in the worst-off areas this figure does not reach 1900, or only 85-90% of the 2124 set as the

minimum required. Average consumption of protein, vitamins, and minerals is even further below that is needed for good health.

Nutritional status of the under fives have improved a lot with stunting rate of 56% in 1988 to 37% in 2008 (*National Nutrition and IYCF survey 2008*) with higher concentration in the east. Apart from insufficient dietary intake for a long period of time, inappropriate infant and young child feeding practices is one of the major contributing factors to stunting status of the children. Anemia is still a major public health problem with over 80% of 6-36 months children anemic, over 50% in women and adolescent girls, and over 28% in men (*National Anemia Survey 2002*).

Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) has been a major public health problem in the early 60s with the prevalence of Total Goiter Rate (TGR) over 64%. Several Nationwide studies have been carried out and based on the studies lot of interventions has been taken up through multi-sectoral collaborations/approaches. These periodic studies, evaluation and interventions indicated that Bhutan has made a dramatic progress in the control of iodine deficiency disorders. It also demonstrates that the IDD control program has made a considerable impact, which led to the declaration of elimination of IDD as no more a public health problem (2003) with TGR at 5% and iodized salt coverage at 95%. The biggest challenge is the sustenance of the elimination status which calls for even more collaboration between stakeholders like MoAF, MoH, BAFRA, Customs, FCB, Bhutan Salt Enterprise (BSE). Therefore, awareness on the need to buy and consume iodized salt by general population is an all time requirement.

Vitamin A is another important micronutrient that needs to be addressed, however in Bhutan Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) is not a public health problem with only sub-clinical prevalence rate at 2.6% (*National VAD study 2000*). Therefore, regular supplementation of vitamin A to the school children and under fives are appropriate enough to meet the requirement.

Infant and Young child feeding practices are not optimal among the mothers and caregivers which leads to malnutrition, and contributes to the growing Non Communicable Diseases in the later part of their life. There are a lot of cultural and traditional barriers which need to be addressed so as to promote optimal breastfeeding.

#### **2.4 Stability dimensions of FNS**

Climate change is likely to have a serious effect on food production in many ways. Slow onset and changes in mean temperatures and precipitation patterns are expected to affect yields. Added to this will be crop losses resulting from more frequent and intense extreme weather events.

In 2004, flashfloods in six eastern Dzongkhags claimed lives of 9 people, washed away 29 houses, damaged 107 houses and destroyed 664 acres of farm lands (NDRMF, 2006).

In 2009, cyclone Aila brought about very high level of rainfall causing flooding along many natural drainage systems. It claimed lives of 12 people and caused severe damage to agriculture, transport facilities, schools and hydro projects.

In 2010, landslides and flashfloods damaged more than 2000 acres of agriculture land affecting 4165 households, damage of irrigation channels and farm roads affected 529 households. It washed away 40 acres of pastureland (DoA, MoAF, 2011 & DoL, MoAF)

In spring 2011, successive windstorms occurred in 16 dzongkhags (districts) causing damage to 2424 rural homes, 81 religious structures, 57 schools, 21 health centers and 13 government institutional facilities.

Global financial crisis, rising food and fuel prices and other market conditions have seriously affected food prices and therefore access to food.

### **3. Policy and Legal Environment**

**The Constitution** of the Kingdom of Bhutan requires the State to promote circumstances that would enable the citizens to secure an adequate livelihood. It requires the Government to secure ecologically balanced sustainable development while promoting justifiable economic and social development and to ensure a safe and healthy environment. It also calls for granting land *Kidu* to citizens by the Monarch.

**Vision 2020** was formulated with the overarching goal to ensure the future independence, security and sovereignty of the Kingdom. Maximization of Gross National Happiness (GNH) is set as the guiding principles for future development. Horticulture has been accorded priority as a means of raising the cash incomes of farmers, generating export revenues and for achieving an improvement in the nutritional status of the rural population. The effective management of watersheds for safe drinking water as well as for hydropower are considered as key components of our efforts to place the nation's development on a sustainable path.

**Land Act of Bhutan, 2007** enables commercial agriculture and enables the Government to declare any area in the country as protected agricultural areas aiming at the best use of land by seeking sustainable options and choosing those that bring about the desired economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the citizens of Bhutan. While the act protects *Chhuzhing* (paddy land), those outside protected agriculture areas can be converted to other land categories if found infeasible for paddy cultivation. Conversion of *Chhuzhing* to residential land is permitted if land owners have only inherited *Chhuzhing* and do not own a house to live in. The Act also maintains the provisions from the Land Act, 1979 that enable construction and renovation of irrigation channels and embankments as well as its right of way when passing through the property of any other person.

**Food Act of Bhutan 2005** provides protection to human health through trade of food in the Kingdom of Bhutan. All food imported into Bhutan are being certified by the recognized authority in the exporting country and imports are only allowed through officially designated border points. The Act subjects all food businesses in Bhutan to standards for health and safety.

**Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan, 1995** provides legal environment for community based resource management and utilization, community forestry, transport & trade of forest produce, soil & water conservation and royalty free domestic consumption of non-wood forest products (NWFP) that are not in the list of Schedule 1 of the Act.

**The Seeds Act of Bhutan, 2000** enables promotion of seed industry in the country to enhance rural income and livelihood through regulation of quality of seeds, sale of seeds and certification.

**Plant Quarantine Act of Bhutan, 1993** prevents the introduction of pests into the country through regulation of import and export of plants and plant products.

**Livestock Act of Bhutan, 2001** provides for regulation of livestock breeding, health and production to enhance livestock productivity and prevent diseases. It aims to enable only appropriate breeds of livestock, poultry and fish of acceptable quality are introduced in the country. The Act enables privatization of production, import and export, process, and sale of animals, animal products, feeds, drugs, and other inputs necessary for enhancing livestock production.

**Cooperatives Act of Bhutan, 2001 (amended in 2009)**, provides legal framework for the formation of Co-operatives and farmer groups to enhance their economy of scale.

**Bhutan Water Policy, 2003** recognizes the role of rivers as an aquatic habitat and as a source of food. It also recognizes individual right to safe, affordable and sufficient quantity of water for personal consumption and sanitation and that the best available water sources shall be allocated for drinking purposes. The policy calls for allocation of adequate water for sustainable agriculture for achieving overall national food security and that higher efficiency for use of water should be achieved through adaptive and applied research.

**Bio-security Policy, 2008** promulgates food safety for Bhutanese people; protection of human health from zoonotic and pest-borne diseases; sustainable use of natural resources; protection of agricultural production systems from pests and diseases; and facilitation of safe and sustainable trade and tourism.

**The National Health Policy, 2011** aims to promote self-reliance and sustainability by increasing efficiency, productivity, accountability and ownership in health care interventions and service delivery. It recognizes health as a fundamental right and a

prerequisite for economic and spiritual development, poverty reduction and the road to Gross National Happiness. It calls for effective enforcement of standards and regulations to assure that foods are of good quality and safe for consumption, reduction in malnutrition of all types including micronutrient deficiency diseases, advocating breast feeding, appropriate nutrition, and Integrated Management of Neonatal and childhood diseases, providing universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities and providing holistic health education in educational institutions.

**The Economic Development Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2010** enables exemption of sales taxes and import duties on all farm machineries, sales taxes and customs duty on agricultural inputs, and income tax holiday of 10 years for commercial farming and related processing of products. Commercial farming for organic products is provided with a tax holiday of 15 years.

**National Forest Policy of Bhutan, 2011** recognizes the importance on the sustainable management of forests for sustainable production of economic and environmental goods and services for socio-economic benefits and poverty reduction. The policy also enables leasing of GRF land for commercial purposes.

#### **4. Guiding Principles**

The FNS Policy of Bhutan will be guided by the following principles;

- Secure access to sufficient food, adequate nutrition and attaining an active and healthy life is a basic human right
- Food and nutrition security programs must be sensitive to culture and traditional practices
- Sustainable use of natural resources and entitlements is crucial for food and nutrition security
- Ability to access safe and adequate food as well as its proper utilization by all members of a society is the basis for a healthy population and for Gross National Happiness
- Food and nutrition security programs must be gender sensitive and socially inclusive of the interest of poor and vulnerable communities and individuals
- Food and nutrition security has multi-sectoral and inter-generational ramifications
- Food and nutrition security initiatives have to be based on continuous research programs enabling strengthened linkage between food production and nutrition, efficient resources management and increased productivity

#### **5. Vision**

All people living in Bhutan at all times have physical, economic and social access to safe and adequate nutritious food for a healthy and active life contributing to realization of Gross National Happiness

## 6. Overarching Policy Goals and Objectives

The overarching policy goals and objectives are as presented below;

Policy Goals	Objectives
1. Ensure availability of safe and adequate varieties of food to meet food requirements of the population at all times	1.1. Ensure sustainable domestic food production and productivity 1.2. Strengthen sustainable management of natural resources for food production 1.3. Maintain safe and adequate food reserves at strategic locations 1.4. Facilitate safe food imports and improve access to international food distribution facilities
2. Enhance physical, economic and social access to safe, affordable and adequate food	2.1 Increase efficiency in safe food marketing, trade and distribution systems 2.2 Diversify sustainable rural and urban based livelihood options 2.3 Improve delivery of social support to poor and socio-economically vulnerable communities and individuals
3. Promote appropriate consumption practices and enable optimum utilization of food by all	3.1 Promote nutrition education and awareness for healthy food habits and dietary diversification 3.2 Promote appropriate maternal, infant and Young child feeding practices.
4. Sustain conducive and stable environment for availability, accessibility and utilization of food	4.1 Develop and implement adaptation and mitigation measures for longer term climate and environmental changes 4.2 Improve disaster preparedness capacity to respond to disasters 4.3 Ensure interventions in markets and price stability of food commodities

## 7. Policy Statements

**Goal 1: Ensure availability of safe and adequate varieties of food to meet food requirements of the population at all times**

*Objective 1.1: Ensure sustainable domestic food production and productivity*

- 1.1.1. Increase investment in agriculture, livestock and forestry program to increase food production
- 1.1.2. Encourage private sector involvement to enhance commercialization of agricultural, livestock and fishery products and efficiency in input delivery
- 1.1.3. Upscale adoption of farm mechanization and labour saving technologies to address labour shortage. Access to farm machineries by farmer organizations and groups should be prioritized over access by individuals
- 1.1.4. Encourage Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and implement strategy on human wildlife conflict management for crop protection
- 1.1.5. Enhance sustainable forest management for increased contribution of forests produce for food, fodder and fuel
- 1.1.6. Provide exemption of sales taxes and import duties on all farm machineries, spare parts, sales taxes and customs duty on agricultural inputs, and income tax holidays for commercial farming in line with the economic development policy
- 1.1.7. Promote formation of farmers group and cooperatives for enhancing production, value addition and efficient marketing of food and agriculture products
- 1.1.8. Strengthen extension service deployment based on comparative advantage and agro-ecological potentials
- 1.1.9. Promote organic farming of niche commodities in potential areas
- 1.1.10. Promote staple crops that are high in micronutrients through plant breeding and promotion of micronutrient-dense staple crop varieties
- 1.1.11. Strengthen demand driven research and development efforts for generation of appropriate technologies on agricultural, livestock, fishery and NWFP related commodities

*Objective 1.2: Strengthen sustainable management of natural resources for food production*

- 1.2.1 Improve access to adequate land, water and other natural food resources with associated rights over them
- 1.2.2 Promote environmentally sustainable production to maintain healthy natural resource base for food production
- 1.2.3 Promote sustainable utilization of agriculture land through sustainable land management practices and Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM)
- 1.2.4 Protect productive agriculture land through legal instruments accompanied by targeted incentive packages for optimum utilization
- 1.2.5 Prioritize sustainable utilization and management of water resource for food production
- 1.2.6 Develop and promote clean energy sources for food production and enable provision of energy subsidy for food production

*Objective 1.3: Maintain safe and adequate food reserves at strategic locations*

- 1.3.1 Maintain at least three months of food reserves of essential food items as National Food Security Reserve at strategic locations with adequate food safety measures
- 1.3.2 Develop and put in place post harvest storage, processing facilities and distribution systems with appropriate technologies at national, regional and local levels

*Objective 1.4: Facilitate safe food imports and improve access to international food distribution facilities.*

- 1.4.1 Create an enabling business environment for import of food commodities while ensuring food imports conform to national food and bio-safety standards
- 1.4.2 Participate actively in regional and international food security reserve initiatives

**Goal 2: Enhance physical, economic and social access to safe, affordable and adequate food**

*Objective 2.1: Increase efficiency in safe food marketing, trade and distribution systems*

- 2.1.1 Develop and implement agricultural marketing policies and strategies to provide a framework to coordinate and regulate collection, storage and distribution including retail and wholesale systems
- 2.1.2 Promote agricultural trade through support to business enterprises such as FCB and similar agencies for procurement and distribution of food
- 2.1.3 Enable marketing and trading of organic and natural food products through certification
- 2.1.4 Invest and institutionalize the management of market infrastructure (collection centers, storages, cold chains, weekend markets, city markets road and transport)

*Objective 2.2: Diversify sustainable rural and urban based livelihood options*

- 2.2.1 Promote and support agro-based and non-farm based rural enterprises for employment and income generation
- 2.2.2 Formalize National School Agriculture Program as a part of the school curriculum to create awareness on employment opportunities in the RNR sector for the youth and to supplement nutrient requirement in school feeding
- 2.2.3 Develop and promote adoption of appropriate micro-enterprise technologies
- 2.2.1 Implement microcredit programs directed at women and youth to enhance incomes

*Objective 2.3: Improve delivery of social support to poor and socio-economically vulnerable communities and individuals*

- 2.3.1 Identify appropriate livelihood options to enhance income for the vulnerable communities
- 2.3.2 Develop special employment schemes to capture particular interests and needs of vulnerable groups
- 2.3.3 Improve sustainable access to micro-credit to small-holders, in particular women and youth
- 2.3.4 Identify and develop targeted programs to improve access to food by people in abject poverty, vulnerable children (orphans), elderly, disabled and destitute

**Goal 3: Promote appropriate consumption practices and enable optimum utilization of food by all**

*Objective 3.1: Promote nutrition education and awareness on healthy food habits and dietary diversification*

- 3.1.1. Expand awareness and nutrition education programs on healthy food habits, malnutrition, obesity and consumption of junk food
- 3.1.2. Promote community based nutrition and health programs through diversified and natural backyard gardening and improved sanitation
- 3.1.3. Integrate enhancement and retaining nutritional value of food products in post harvest storage and processing technologies
- 3.1.4. Improve coordination among relevant stakeholders in order for the community to have better understanding on what, when, how and why certain varieties of food should be grown
- 3.1.5. Develop and implement national food-based dietary guideline that includes dietary recommendations for all the age groups
- 3.1.6. Promote traditional and cultural practices that improve food and nutrition security
- 3.1.7. Ensure food labeling systems comply with proper national requirements
- 3.1.8. Ensure food provided in institutions such as schools, hospitals, prisons and related institutions is safe and meets the nutritional needs of the client group
- 3.1.9. Ensure use of clean and safe drinking water and improved sanitation

*Objective 3.2: Promote appropriate Maternal, Infant and Young child feeding practices*

- 3.2.1 Encourage early initiation of breastfeeding
- 3.2.2 Encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life of the child

- 3.2.3 Promote continued breastfeeding for two years or beyond along with adequate and appropriate complementary feeding beginning after 6 months
- 3.2.4 Promote mother friendly work places in public and private sectors to ensure adequate breastfeeding

**Goal 4: Sustain conducive and stable environment for availability, accessibility and utilization of food**

*Objective 4.1: Develop and implement adaptation and mitigation measures for climate and environmental changes.*

- 4.1.1 Mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation measure in food and nutrition security programs through diversification of crops and livestock production to enhance resilience to biotic and abiotic stress
- 4.1.2 Develop and implement national action plan for land degradation and sustainable land management.
- 4.1.3 Develop and implement a strategy for biodiversity and agro-biodiversity conservation for food security.
- 4.1.4 Address constraints related to quality and viability of seed systems, seed storage and reserves including non formal seed systems.
- 4.1.5 Promote climate smart agriculture and farming practices.
- 4.1.6 Strengthen watershed protection and management

*Objective 4.2: Improve disaster preparedness capacity to respond to disasters*

- 4.2.1 Integrate disaster management strategy for food security in the national disaster management framework
- 4.2.2 Establish a National Food Security Fund to provide relief during disaster to help maintain the national food security reserves and to support targeted food security initiatives
- 4.2.3 Develop and implement mechanisms for use of the National Food Security Reserve for supply and distribution of relief food to affected areas based on nutritional requirements during emergency
- 4.2.4 Establish a food security early warning and surveillance system to generate information on weather, crop production forecast, food supplies and demand and food prices
- 4.2.5 Institute integrated approaches to link monitoring and surveillance systems for animal and human health and for food contamination
- 4.2.6 Mobilize communities to engage in and contribute to different insurance schemes
- 4.2.7 Institute preparedness plans for combating food borne and zoonotic diseases

*Objective 4.3: Ensure interventions in markets and price stability of food commodities*

- 4.3.1 Institute food price regulatory mechanism to intervene during soaring food price situation.
- 4.3.2 Promote financial services that enable saving and provide access to loans and insurance products that protect livelihoods.
- 4.3.3 Establish a business environment to promote private, domestic and foreign investment in agriculture to stabilize food prices in the longer term through sustained food production
- 4.3.4 Diversify food trade to nullify the impacts of monopolistic control over food supply.
- 4.3.5 Develop targeted safety net schemes/programs, such schemes/programs must be designed to be a catalyst for economic growth and not merely as welfare payments

## **8. FNS Information and Communication**

### **8.1. Information Management**

Food and nutrition security information is a necessary element of the national goal of reducing food insecurity and malnutrition since it helps in decision making, policy and program interventions. To enable this, Food and Nutrition Security Information System should be developed as a platform for information collection, management and dissemination which shall be characterized by:

- 8.1.1. Strengthened institutional set-up and capacities to produce, analyze and disseminate information.
- 8.1.2. Improved technical infrastructure and skills for data collection and management and stimulate demand for information.
- 8.1.3. Capacity to provide data on production, import and reserve storage of major food groups such as cereals, vegetable, animal products, fruits and nuts, oils and fats, etc. It should also provide data on safety standards, nutritional values and price of such commodities.
- 8.1.4. Utilization of properly and accurately analyzed prevailing information for decision making by key stakeholders.
- 8.1.5. Coherent and appropriate linkages between information available at district and national levels.
- 8.1.6. Strengthened tracking and monitoring of food distribution and nutrition surveillance.
- 8.1.7. Transparent evaluation of the impact of on-going food and nutrition security programs.

## **8.2 Communication**

The main purpose of FNS communication is to enable FNS planning, program development and to educate stakeholders such as policy makers, planners and development partners. FNS communication should be done through:

- 8.2.1. Collaboration with media, civil society organizations, private sector, academic and research institutions.
- 8.2.2. Regular assessment reports that are made public.
- 8.2.3. Regular and dedicated mass media programs to educate the public about better practices and educating policy makers about important issues. These should include but not limited to:
  - The basic concepts of Food and Nutrition Security and its four dimensions – availability, access, utilization and stability.
  - Behavior change practices for better nutrition.
  - Research findings that have implications for policy making.
  - Need for better coordination among the various sectors and organizations involved in food and nutrition security.
  - The situation of FNS and its progress.

## **9. Institutional Arrangements**

Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) is multi-dimensional comprising of enabling availability of food, access to food and enabling proper utilization of food. It also entails enabling that these dimensions remain stable over time so that all people have access to quality and safe food at all times. Many sectors have a major role in one or two of the dimensions therefore, several ministries and institutions need to work together to ensure their programs relate appropriately and make contributions to the immediate and longer term food and nutrition security policy objectives. .

Since, the major mandates for Food and Nutrition Security lies with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF) and the Ministry of Health (MoH). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests will lead and coordinate the overall implementation of food security policy and strategic action plans while the Ministry of Health will lead and coordinate the implementation of nutrition security programs.

### **9.1 FNS Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The implementation of Bhutan's FNS Policy, 2014 will involve a wide range of actors operating in different sectors and at different levels. Each sector shall be responsible for monitoring their own activities as indicated in the strategic action plans. The responsible sectors shall:

- Collate existing knowledge and scientific evidence for food and nutrition security
- Carry out periodic review of implementation of the FNS policy within their own sector.
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of food and nutrition security programs
- Develop information products for FNS communication and dissemination.
- Conduct quarterly meetings to plan FNS programs, set targets and review implementation progress and identify gaps