



Annual Report 2010



HELVETAS

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BHUTAN

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Acronyms and Glossary

CF	Community Forest	MoWHS	Ministry of Works and Human Settlement
CSO	Civil Society Organization	NGO	Non Government Organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency	PFMP	Participatory Forest Management Project
DLG	Department of Local Governance	RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
ETPG	Exclusive Thangkha Painters' Group	RDT	Rural Development Training
FYP	Five Year Plan	RLP	Rural Livelihood Project
GAO	Gewog Administrative Officer	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SBP	Suspension Bridge Programme
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission	SLG	Support for Local Governance
LCD	Leveraging Cultural Diversity	PPS	Policy and Planning Support
LG	Local Government	RLP	Rural Livelihood Project
LGSP	Local Governance Support Programme	TF	Tarayana Foundation
MoAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests	ToT	Training of Trainers
MoHCA	Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs		

Global Helvetas Vision & Mission

Vision

We want a world in which all people can live self-determined lives in dignity and safety while respecting the environment.

Mission

We help disadvantaged people and communities in developing countries to actively improve their living conditions.

Helvetas-Bhutan Goal, Objectives & Principles

Goal

To contribute towards poverty alleviation and democratic governance in rural Bhutan through promotion of innovative community and household based initiatives, promotion of environmental sustainability, capacity building and good governance principles.

Objectives

To contribute towards enhancing sustainable rural livelihoods through innovative interventions in natural resource management, income generation and support structures and services.

To facilitate direct participation of the people in the development and management of their social, economic and developmental well-being through decentralization and devolution of power and authority.

Key Principles

Participation

Equity/Inclusiveness

Innovation

Empowerment

Sustainability

Brief Country Context 2010

Political Updates:

As a new democracy, important institutions continue to be established or reinforced to consolidate the overall governance system. A Supreme Court has been established, and is seen as a significant step in strengthening the Judiciary system. It will be the highest appellate authority in the country. The Supreme Court will soon receive the first constitutional case, an appellate issue that came after the ruling government appealed against the verdict of the High Court.

The first local government elections under the new governance system has been delayed by two years, mainly because of delays in the finalization of town classifications (A, B and satellite towns) and the resulting number of satellite towns. It has now been decided that in a first phase, local government elections in the so called 'Class A' towns would begin in January 2011 followed by elections to the block and district committees.

A year after the establishment of the Civil Society Organization Authority, it has issued certificates of formal registration to 11 CSOs. It received 44 requests for registration.

A major event in the South Asia region is the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summits. Bhutan for the first time hosted this summit. Important highlights include the establishment of a regional funding mechanism whose Secretariat has been set up in Bhutan, the signing of a service trade agreement which in theory would allow member countries greater access to each others' service industry markets, and the commissioning of a regional study on climate change risks and ways to address those.

In its winter session, the Parliament ratified two conventions: the international convention against doping in sports, and the SAARC convention on cooperation on environment. Six bills await passing, among them are the anti-corruption amendment bill and the child care and protection bill.

Socio-Economic Updates:

Bhutan is on track in achieving several Millennium Development Goals, specifically on primary school enrollment and completion rate, sustainable access to improved water sources and sanitation, reducing child mortality, and improving maternal health. However, there are important areas that need attention. These include: increasing youth unemployment rate (12.9% in 2009)¹ with overall unemployment rate among females being twice as high as those for males, and rural poverty with pockets of the country experiencing food insecurity, seasonal hunger, and limited access to essential social services.

Reducing climate change induced risks and disaster preparedness have become high on the national agenda. Specifically, risks from potential Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) are seen as posing high potential threats. Recent studies have shown that there are 2,674 glacial lakes in the northern territory of Bhutan of which 25 pose high threats for GLOFs. Bhutan lies in a seismically active region. After a series of earthquakes that hit eastern Bhutan in 2009, efforts were made to build seismic data to help predict and prepare for earthquake hazards. To this end, Bhutan received specialist support from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology to start the process of earthquake hazard mapping for large earthquakes.

The real gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the remaining years of the 10th five-year plan was estimated at 6.5%, with hydropower remaining the key driver. The government plans to develop 10 hydropower stations in Bhutan by 2020, of which inter-governmental projects with India will be on a 30:70 grant and loan ratio (up from the earlier 40:60) while others could be joint ventures involving public-sector companies from both countries. External debt as a

¹ Labor Force Survey Report 2009, MoLHR. The rate was 9.9% in 2007.

percentage of GDP was estimated at 66%² of which power sector debt accounted for 36%. After hydropower, the tourism sector was identified as having the highest potential to contribute to the GDP. Tourist arrivals

² Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, Annual Report 2008/09

have almost doubled in the last five years (13,626 in 2005) to 23,480 in 2009³ with plans to attract 100,000 tourist arrivals by 1013.

³ Kuensel, February 2010

Helvetas-Bhutan Program General Events

Towards the end of 2010, it was decided by the board of directors to extend Helvetas' engagement in Bhutan till 2018, which corresponds to the 11th five year plan of Bhutan. The present agreement between Helvetas and the government of Bhutan goes till 2012.

A comprehensive Helvetas-Bhutan program and political conditions review was done in early 2010. The review results were to provide a basis to discuss the future of Helvetas engagement in Bhutan. On the political conditions, the main conclusions were: the overall political transition were consolidated to a high degree; on the socio-economic front, a series of challenges were listed, especially fiscal decentralization, the development of the private sector and civil society. On the programme, the main conclusions were: it was likely that the Helvetas-Bhutan programme would meet the objectives and outcomes in its strategy 2008-2012 largely because of 2 factors - affinity with Bhutan's overall development objectives and strategies, and focusing on decentralized community work. The main recommendations derived from these conclusions were: the political and socio-economic framework was conducive for implementing a programme in line with the principles and strategies of Helvetas, that there were strong arguments for a continued engagement in Bhutan, and that sustained emphasis on community-based development would be relevant for Bhutan's political and socio-economic challenges. Apart from the

overall programme review, two external project appraisals took place simultaneously – evaluation of the Rural Livelihood Project (RLP) Phase II, and mid-term evaluation of the Participatory Forest Management Project (PFMP) Phase II. Both appraisals provided important recommendations for the projects (more details under project highlights).

The new joint EuropeAid and Helvetas project on leveraging cultural diversity (LCD) has started. This has provided opportunities for Helvetas to establish partnerships with local communities in areas it has not reached in the past, and to strengthen engagement with the Department of Culture, the Tourism Council of Bhutan, and Tarayana Foundation. A Project Manager was recruited and joined office from 1st of June 2010.

There were concerted efforts made to institutionalize gender mainstreaming. A gender mainstreaming strategy has been finalized, and a mutual gender peer review was conducted between Helvetas-Nepal and Helvetas-Bhutan. These were part of the process of looking at the implementation of the global Helvetas gender strategy in the different country programme and to provide inputs into the revised gender strategy which is expected to come into effect in 2012.

The "Expansion of Colleges of Education Paro/Samtse" project ended in 2009. The handing over of the buildings, equipment, and final reports on the project were completed in 2010. The project has contributed towards doubling the student intake capacities in the Colleges of Education, providing adequate working spaces for faculties, and improving IT and library facilities for students, teachers and distance learners.

Initiatives were taken by SDC to entrust Helvetas Bhutan with a mandate to facilitate the monitoring of the SDC supported governance programme in Bhutan. This new mandate has yet to be finalized.

Potential for a new partnership with the Society for Promotion of Education and

Training in Germany is currently being finalized for construction of an IT building cum library resource service center and an auditorium at the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Royal University of Bhutan.

Swiss-Bhutan Highlights

The Prime Minister of Bhutan visited Switzerland, his first visit after being elected as the Prime Minister under the system of Parliamentary Democracy. The Prime Minister thanked Switzerland for the long and meaningful assistance to Bhutan, and expressed his government's desire for continued support, guidance and partnership in consolidating democracy in Bhutan.

The "Dragon's Gift" was an exhibition of some of Bhutan's rare and sacred religious artifacts. The exhibition was held in six museums in the US and Europe, and concluded at the Reitberg museum in Zurich, Switzerland.

Lyonchhoen thanks Switzerland

Expresses his hope that longstanding relationship continues



Lyonchhoen Jigmi Y Thinley with President Doris Leuthard of the Swiss confederation

Helvetas-Bhutan launched its own calendar for the first time.



1. Cultural diversity project site, Samtse
2. Drapham excavation, Bumthang
3. Local governance support, Zhemgang
4. Tarayana paper making, Samtse
5. Rural development trainees, Zhemgang
6. Fishery livelihood support, Zhemagng
7. Cableway crossing, Zhemgang
8. Community forestry group, Tsirang
9. Suspension bridge crossing, Punakha
10. Support for rural schools, Samtse
11. Dairy technology support, Wangdue
12. Culture and innovations, Thimphu

Consultants and visitors to Bhutan:

Consultants/visitors	Purpose
Franz Gaehwiler (Program Coordinator, Helvetas Zuerich)	Annual visit for programme monitoring, steering, meetings with partners
Wolf Linder, Pema Chopel & Kunzang Dorji (Consultants)	Review Helvetas program and political conditions for future activities
Jane Gronow & Nidup Peljor (Consultants)	PFMP mid-term-review
Annet Witteveen (Consultant)	RLP review
Markus Wild (Documentation specialist, anthropologist)	Technical assistance in photo documentation for head office and specific projects
Srijana Shrestha (Gender focal person, Helvetas Nepal)	Gender peer review
Yvonne Geraldine Whittaker (Chairperson, Elysium Foundation)	Monitor project activities, meet partners and inaugurate Kizom bridge
Francis and Isabelle Sermet (Elysium Foundation)	Review projects progress, meet partners, and explore future prospects for support
Ebehard Fischer (Secretary General, SLSA)	Monitoring, steering, meeting with partners on archaeology project
Werner Meyer & group (Archeologist team)	Final excavation, technical support for archaeology project
Kristina Bunde (Programme Manager for Bhutan, Delegation of the European Union for Bhutan in Delhi)	Monitor implementation of LCD project

Contribution towards Country Programme

Outcome	Outputs	Projects contributing to results
Objective 1: Contribute towards enhancing sustainable rural livelihoods through innovative interventions in natural resource management, income generation and support structure and services		
Enhanced access to and equitable benefits from natural resources through community based management of natural resources	Community-based organizations for NRM supported and institutionally strengthened Knowledge and skills of NRM facilitators and managers at district and block levels enhanced	PFMP, RLP, RDT, TF
Enhanced income and employment for rural people from agriculture and livestock based enterprises	Micro and small enterprises contributing to household income established	RLP, PFMP, RDT, TF, LCD
Increased access to socio-economic services, livelihood assets and basic infrastructures	Target rural communities linked with priority infrastructure	RLP, SBP, Kizom bridge, Market access
Objective 2: Facilitate direct participation of the people in the development and management of their social, economic and developmental well-being through decentralization and devolution of power and authority		
Enhanced awareness of local communities on democracy, democratic principles and rights	Implementation modalities and specific programs emphasizing on democratic principles supported	PFMP, RDT, RLP, SLG, TF
Enhanced capacity of local governments in the target gewogs to undertake participatory planning and to provide effective administrative services	Knowledge and skills of local stakeholders on participatory planning and basic financial and administrative management enhanced	SLG, RDT
Enhanced participation of women in decision making and leadership roles	Awareness on gender equality and equity enhanced in target areas	All projects

Contribution towards the core values of the FYP

Projects	Core values of 10 th Five Year Plan				Main partners	Project Manager
	Equitable & sustainable development	Preservation & promotion of cultural values	Conservation of the natural environment	Good governance		
Sector Education and culture						
Leveraging Cultural diversity	√	√			Communities , DoC, TCB, TF	Kunzang Dorji
Drapham project		√			DoC, SLSA	Nagtsho Dorji
Support to ETPG		√			Painter's group	Dasho Karma Ura
Sector Natural resource management						
PFMP	√		√	√	Community groups, MoAF	BB Chetri
RDT	√		√	√	Trainees, MoAF	Chhimi Dorji
RLP	√		√	√	Community groups, MoAF	Dorji Wangdi
MoA PPS	√		√		MoAF	
Sector Rural Infrastructure						
SBP	√			√	DUDES/ MoWHS	Tshewang Dorji
Market access Chokortoe	√				Bumthang Dzongkhag	District engineer
Kizom Bridge	√				Bumthang Dzongkhag	District engineer
Sector Civil Society and state						
Support to the TF	√		√	√	Tarayana Foundation	Roseleen Gurung
SLG	√			√	GNHC, LGs, CSOs	Sonam Yarpel
Small Actions	√	√	√	√	Diverse	

Project Highlights

Suspension Bridge Programme:

Goal phase VI, 2007-2010: Contribute towards poverty reduction by enhancing the living standards of the rural population through improved access.

Phase VI ended in December 2010. There are no further plans for intervention in this programme.

SDC and Helvetas engagement in this programme started in 1985. Priority during the last phase was given to capacity development of district engineers to prepare them for taking on more functions being decentralized to districts. There are visible improvements in the regular maintenance of the bridges by caretakers appointed. In the last phase, 8 new bridges were completed, and 43 rehabilitated (steel decking).



Working jointly by male & female for the maintenance of bridge over Kuri chu under Mongar Dzongkhag :

Participatory Forest Management Project:

Goal phase II, 2007-2012: Contribute to the improvement of rural livelihoods and their natural environment by empowering local communities and strengthen their capacity to manage forest resources on a sustainable basis.

By end of 2010, the number of community forests (CF) has reached 279 (up from 200 in the last reporting period) covering approximately 33,000 ha of forests and involving 13,281 rural households. The mid-term external review confirmed the achievements made by the project in terms of contributing towards creating an enabling environment for the further development of CF, the extent of awareness and value

attached by rural communities to CF which is apparent from the increasing demands for CFs, and the capacity enhanced among government partners. The main recommendations focused on the need to update the role that the project would now have to play – quality assurance of CFs, and the role of CFs in poverty reduction through income generation, and local governance. The project has already discussed and revised its logical framework to reflect these issues. This revision is also in line with the national CF strategy developed with inputs and support from the Project. This strategy provides the framework for the development of CF in the long term.

Leveraging Cultural Diversity:

Goal 2008-2011: Capitalize on Bhutan's cultural diversity so that it can contribute to poverty alleviation, livelihood improvement and enhanced local ownership for cultural wealth, through capacity building, intercultural dialogue and preservation measures.

The project agreement was signed in April 2010. A project steering committee was formed with representatives from the Department of Culture, Department of Local Governance, the Tourism Council of Bhutan, Tarayana Foundation, GNHC and Helvetas. The Committee met to discuss the project, potential sites, and implementation and

management modalities. Potential projects sites have been visited and four sites identified – the Rai and Lhop communities in Samtse (both in Dorokha gewog), Kheng community under Ngala gewog in Zhemgang, and the Shar chop community under Kengkhar gewog in Mongar. Documentation of culture, traditions, agriculture and foodways as well as ethnobotanic knowledge of the project sites have begun. Audio visual documentation of the local festivals in the Lhop and Kheng communities has been carried out. To have continued local presence, a community coordinator in the Lhop community has been appointed



Women and men bid farewell to the local deity at the end of the three day local Choepda celebration in Ngalatrong in Zhemgang.

Rural Development Training:

Goal phase II, 2007-2008: Establish RDT as a key-institution for training needs in rural areas.

The center introduced a module on value chain and rapid market appraisal, two areas where rural income generating activities face challenges. Twenty two extension agents and center instructors participated in the first training. The center closely worked with RLP on citrus nursery development in lower

Zhemgang. In its 2 core modules of Farm Business and Community Leaders' Training, the center trained 170 and 197 participants, respectively. In addition, the center has been involved in facilitating community mobilization training programs, and awareness-raising among school children on the scope of agriculture in the country. The center is preparing to make long term plans for its future strategic place in rural development in the country.

Rural Livelihood Project:

Goal phase II, 2008-2011: Strengthen sustainable livelihood interventions in the 4 dzongkhags of the east central region for poverty reduction.

To better focus resources, the project has scaled down activities in 2 districts and focuses on the remaining two (Sarpang and Zhemgang). An important source of income in lower Zhemgang is citrus. Therefore, the project supported citrus nursery development activities in two blocks in Zhemgang, building on the nursery skills training in RDT center. It is expected that 10,000 citrus seedlings from the 4 nurseries supported will be available for distribution. Connecting two of the remotest blocks in upper Zhemgang has received priority with

the ongoing construction of 15 kilometer farm road directly benefiting 650 households (approx. 8000 persons). Other activities included dairy, poultry and beekeeping based income generating activities, introduction of drip irrigation and formation of self-help groups (especially for credit and saving). An external review was completed to assess progress and make strategic recommendations for the remainder of the phase. It mainly recommended the need to strengthen bottom-up planning and implementation, focus resources on households below the national poverty line, and to strengthen the economic viability aspects of the various income generating activities.



A family in Zhemgang with bumper maize harvest :

Support for Local Governance project:

Goal phase I, 2008-2011: Contribute towards enhanced democratic governance at local levels through practical application of self-governance and support for participatory decision-making processes and structures.

The Project supported the training of elected local leaders in 32 gewogs in the three target districts – Sarpang, Samtse and Zhemgang. The trainings are part of a national capacity development programme and consisted of a series of training of

trainers. With the first local government elections under the system of parliamentary democracy coming up, there is a concern



over the lack of women in leadership positions (only 4%) at local levels. With this in mind and the fact that all aspiring candidates are required to get through a

functional literacy test, the project collaborated with the Liaison Office of Denmark to carry out an advocacy and functional literacy test preparation programme. 131 women participated in the programme of which 106 got through the literacy test and are eligible to participate in the local government elections. The Project contributed to the "CSO Fund Facility", a competitive mechanism put in place to support CSOs. CSOs that compete and get support from this mechanism will receive financial and technical assistance for their programmes and institution building.

Drapham Dzong Excavation Project:

Goal phase I, 2008-2010: Contribute to strengthening and institutionalization of archaeology in Bhutan.

The project received tremendous publicity through the visit of His Majesty the King, the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. The exhibition of the project as part of the exhibition of the "Dragon's gift" in Rietberg museum in Zurich and a number of reports in the Bhutanese and international media also raised interest and publicity. The final excavation at the Drapham Dzong ruins was completed in December 2010, successfully bringing to an end Phase I of the project. During this phase, the following were the main achievements: 3 excavation operations

were carried out, and preliminary analysis and carbon dating of some of the excavation finds were done; the excavations provided opportunities for practical training for Bhutanese counterparts and engineers; and a comprehensive measurement of the entire ruin complex was done in digital 3D by means of aerial photogrammetry, providing a comprehensive overview of the entire complex. A possible Phase II is currently under discussion to institutionalize archaeology in the country through awareness raising and education, and exploring possibilities of putting in place legal and organizational frameworks.



Tarayana Foundation:

Goal II, 2008-2010: Contribute towards strengthening rural livelihood interventions in target rural communities through working with and developing the capacity of civil society organizations.

Tarayana was formally registered with the CSO Authority, thereby receiving formal and

legal recognition as per the CSO Act 2007. The main focus of the support to Tarayana was on the two communities of Digala and Langdurbi in Zhemgang. Self-help groups from these communities were supported on income generation activities that were of interest to these groups.

Other projects:

The Thangkha Painting and Dairy Technology Development projects have progressed as planned. The small projects supported under Small Actions include: support for improving sanitation facilities for nuns through the Nuns Foundation, a local

NGO; summer camp for students from disadvantaged families; contribution to relief funds for victims of a major fire; support to vulnerable family; and support to the CSO authority.

SDC Programme:

The SDC portfolio in Bhutan includes three areas:

Support to the Judiciary, Support to the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Local Governance Support Programme (LGSP).

Support to the **ACC**: this includes support for institutional development and human resources of the ACC.

Support to the **Judiciary**: this is a joint programme with the Austrian Development

Agency and includes support for increasing physical access to courts, institutional support and linkages, and human resource development.

LGSP: this is a programme jointly supported by several development partners including SDC. The agreement for SDC support to service delivery (output 5 under LGSP) was signed during the visit of the Head, East Asia Division, SDC.

Health project Bumthang: A new Swiss supported project focusing on the Bumthang district hospital was started in May. This project with a timeframe of 3 years and an overall budget of CHF 400'000 was initiated by a group in Switzerland, the "Support Committee for the District Health in Bumthang". The project is carried out in partnership with Helvetas Bhutan. The project, led by a Swiss medical specialist Dr. Holzer, supports the Ministry of Health, the Bumthang district and the Wangdicholing hospital in the design and testing of a management model optimizing decentralization and participation of the public.

Inputs from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology: Two inputs were facilitated and partially supported: 1) A team of scientists led by Dr. György Hetényi worked with the Department of Disaster Management for earthquake hazard mapping in Bhutan 2) Dr Ralf Hansmann was teaching modules on Research Methods and Statistics and Emerging Environmental Issues at the College of Natural Resources and conducted a workshop for statistics organized by the Centre for Renewable Natural Resources Research Bhutan

Support from the Elysium Foundation:

Elysium Foundation continues to provide support for a range of activities, implemented either under existing projects under the Helvetas program or as separate projects.

Elysium Foundation supported activities in 2010

Activities	Project, implemented by
Direct financial contribution to the Youth Development Fund, Draktsho vocational center for special children, Tarayana, and RENEW.	Receiving NGOs
Rural infrastructure (Kizom and Choekortoe bridges)	Helvetas
Support livestock development, drip irrigation and credit/saving group components of the RLP project	Helvetas

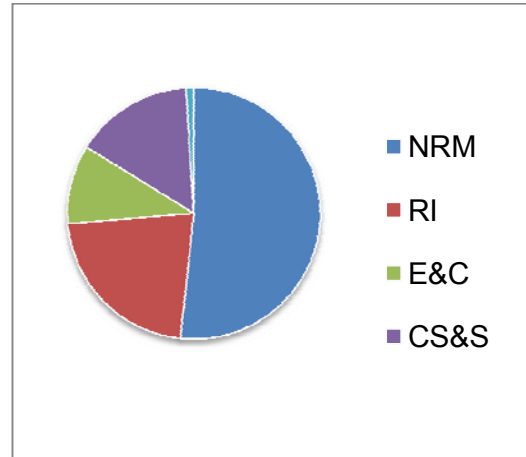
Budget and Expenditure 2010

The following table provides the details of budget and expenditures of 2010.

Programme/Project	Budget	Expenditure	Balance	%
Programme Office	205,247.00	272756.65	67509.65	18.7
Suspension Bridge Programme	528,856.00	481,377.20	(47,478.80)	-9.0
Participatory Forest Management Project	778,896.00	679,333.63	(99,562.37)	-12.8
Rural Development Training	153,982.00	104,302.30	(49,679.70)	-32.3
Rural Livelihood Project	563,316.00	514,473.95	(48,842.05)	-8.7
Support to Tarayana Foundation	139,042.00	120,276.40	(18,765.60)	-13.5
Dairy Technology Development	42,551.00	52,682.40	10,131.40	23.8
Support to Local Governance	262,969.00	359,301.55	96,332.55	36.6
SDC Support Governance Programme	53,577.00	25,216.35	(28,360.65)	-52.9
Leveraging Cultural Diversity	194,938.00	76,517.90	(118,420.10)	-60.7
Policy and Planning Support	14,999.00	19,145.75	4,146.75	27.6
Market Access	128,997.00	244,006.80	115,009.80	89.2
Tang Bridge	3,635.00	13,400.45	9,765.45	268.7
Thangkha Painting	38,189.00	38,741.75	552.75	1.4
Drapham Dzong Archaeology	72,243.00	36,822.25	(35,420.75)	-49.0
Small Actions	30,587.00	104,486.30	73,899.30	241.6
TOTAL	3,212,024.00	3,142,841.63	(69,182.37)	-2.2

Budget per working area

As in the past year, the NRM working area has the major share of the budget with almost 52% of the total, followed by the RI working area with 22%, including the Elysium Foundation support for two road bridges. The EC working area share fell to 10% because of the closure of the Expansion of CoEs Paro and Samtse project. The CS&S working area has a share of 15%.



Main Plans 2011

- Consultative meetings, stakeholders' workshops, drafting and finalization of the next Country Programme (2012–2018)
- Review and planning of possible next phases of support to local governance and Tarayana Foundation
- Planning of possible next phases of collaboration in rural livelihood and rural development training.
- Internal assessment and documentation of all phases of SDC support to the Suspension Bridge Programme

Selected 2010 publications:

Helvetas, March 2010	Bhutan in Transition – Perspectives of Future Helvetas Activities
Social Forestry Division, May 2010:	National Strategy for Community Forestry - The Way Ahead
Helvetas-Bhutan, 2010:	Gender Strategy
Helvetas-Bhutan, 2010:	Final Report, Expansion of Colleges of Education Paro/Samtse

All above documents are available at www.helvetas.org.bt